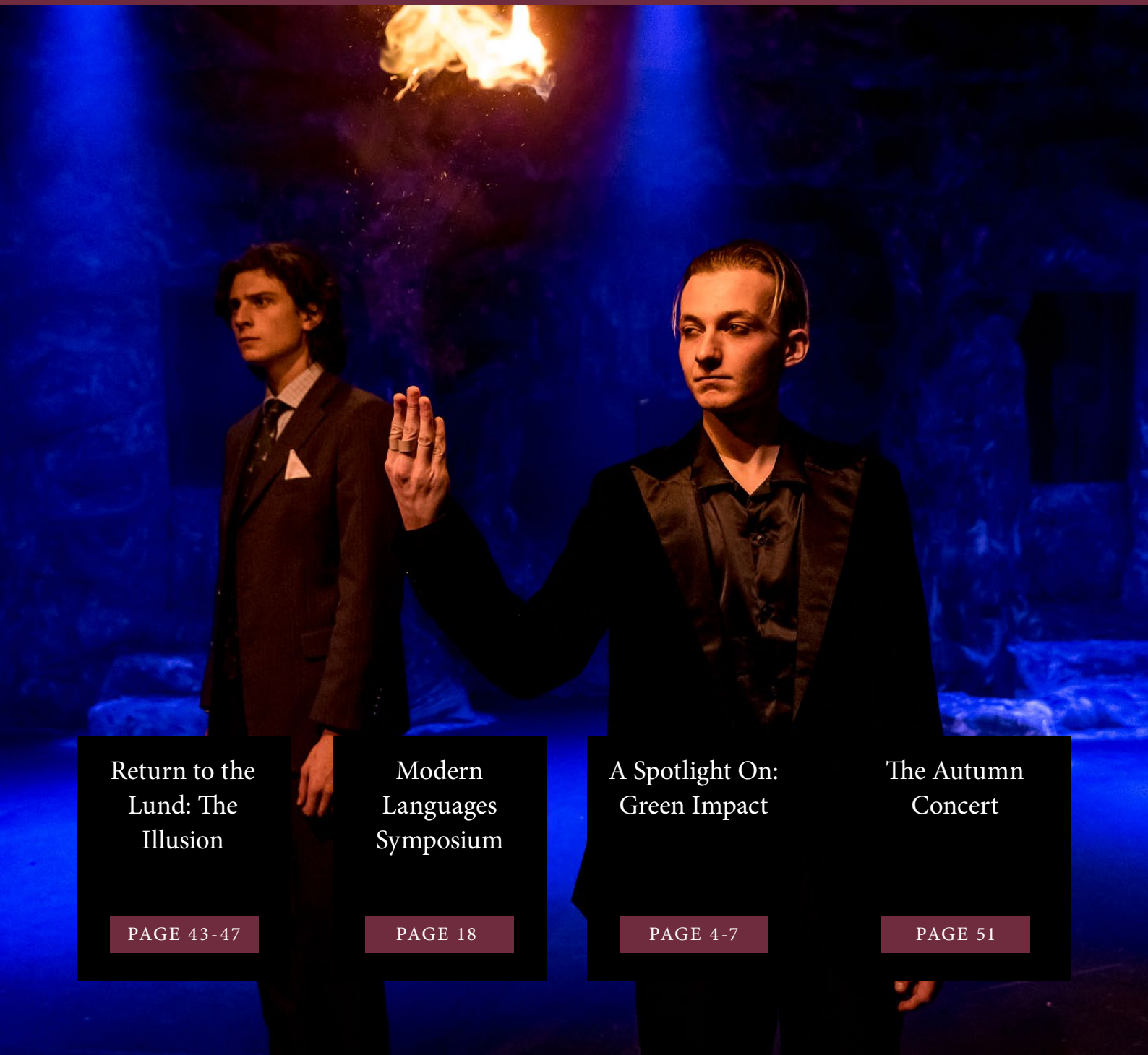


THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE DECEMBER 2021

Celebrating the events and achievements of the Autumn Term at UCS Senior School.



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Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frogнал



Many readers will doubtless be familiar with the adage of only fully appreciating something when it's gone. Some of us may already have experienced this over something or someone – and, indeed, be regretful for it. You will each have a view as to how many positives have emerged from the pandemic but, for me this term, as the school routine has returned pretty much to normal, I have very much valued the chance to reappraise what UCS offers to its pupils and, furthermore, to enjoy watching our charges make the most of those opportunities.

What good fortune, then, to have been visited by the Independent Schools Inspectorate during the last week of November. The focus of an educational inspection is on pupil outcomes: the school is tested on how well its provision enhances academic achievement and personal development, and there are eight categories assessed in each of those two

areas. The inspection was a super chance for UCS pupils to showcase what they are capable of, in and out of the classroom, and they did us all proud.

At the same time, inspection also verifies that a school is compliant with all eight of the Independent School Standards Regulations, such as safeguarding and health & safety. In what was exquisite timing during inspection week, the Ham & High ran an article on the recent release of *Behind the Bar*, filmed by an Old Gower and partly shot at our old pavilion ten years ago. I appreciated particularly the quote “we were looking for an old-fashioned urinal with a drippy unfriendly atmosphere”. Fortunately, lest the inspectors had read the article, it did go on to confirm those old facilities as having been modernised.

Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frogna!



On 11 November, we held our annual Act of Remembrance; a chance to remember those who fought to defend liberty, justice and democracy, and to consider all the others whose lives have been – and are still being – irreparably affected by war around the globe. For me, Remembrance also brings into sharp focus the importance of today's values, such as mutual respect, freedoms and a sense of fairness. My hope is that, by placing them unashamedly at the heart of our education, UCS pupils will have the confidence to articulate and promote the values that best bind us together as a nation.

I was certainly encouraged by the findings of the inspection team, who were quick to spot our pupils' strong sense of right and wrong, their understanding of the importance of mutual respect, and an innate spiritual appreciation that there is more to life than just the material. This chronicle of the term, then, not only exemplifies the kinds of achievements experienced and enjoyed by UCS pupils; it also allows us to appreciate the growth of their personal development through their engagement in such activities. And I find that a very encouraging thing.

I hope you enjoy browsing this Frogna Newsletter and wish you all a peaceful festive season.

— Mark J. Beard, Headmaster

A Spotlight On... Environmental Impact



Following both his work at the Senior School and the successful establishment of the UCS Foundation working group on sustainability, James Firth was appointed as our Foundation Environmental Impact Coordinator in March 2021. Mr Firth answers some questions for this term's Froggnal on his role so far, his expanding team and the exciting steps that the UCS Foundation has been taking towards increased sustainability.

What do you do in your role at UCS regarding sustainability?

My role coordinates sustainability action across the Foundation, to ensure that we can make the greatest impact on reducing our carbon and environmental footprint. Everything we do at the school has some kind of environmental impact; therefore, the role aims to put a strategic framework over our sustainability activities. I also work closely with the Environmental Coordinators in each school along with Estates, the Bursary and Caterers.

How have your team grown over the last year?

We now have a lead Environmental Coordinator formally appointed in each school – Miss Lenton in the Pre-Prep, Mrs Casey in the Junior Branch and Miss Johnson in the Senior School – to lead on initiatives specifically at each level of the Foundation. Further to this, Mrs Anthony is the Foundation Biodiversity Coordinator, ensuring that the allotment area and other biodiversity projects are continuing to develop.

A Spotlight On... Environmental Impact



What involvement do pupils have in this aspect of school life?

Each school has a Green Impact club, giving pupils a platform to be empowered to drive sustainable change across the Foundation. It is hard to capture all the amazing activities that are being done across the Foundation in sustainability.

A brief snapshot includes:

- The Eco Warriors in the Pre-Prep are particularly active in using the biodiversity allotment area and the 'Planet Protector Badge' award scheme is especially popular!
- The Junior Branch has created a highly successful Independent Travel Scheme where all pupils compete by coming into school by a sustainable form of transport throughout the year.
- The Senior School Green Impact Society now has almost 80 members, with each year group meeting weekly to target a specific area. For

example, the Remove have been targeting the impact of our waste and have been working hard to ensure that recycling is valued across the school. They have managed to push our recycling rates up to over 75% and are now targeting the final few single-use items that are on the school site.

"Since I joined Green Impact UCS in the Autumn Term of 2020, I have been amazed at all the progress being made. I did not expect it to have such a huge impact on the school's carbon footprint, but the work which has been done is incredible. It has been really exciting to watch the society evolve, and I think that it has a bright future. Green Impact UCS is a fantastic group of environmental enthusiasts from across the school, and is a great thing to be part of!"
— William Brady, (Lower Remove)

A Spotlight On... Environmental Impact



What are the most important initiatives going on at UCS at the moment regarding the environment?

The Estates Department is identifying possible renewable energy providers so that the energy consumed will in future come from a renewable energy source. Alongside this, they are investigating installing solar panels to further reduce the amount of energy that we demand from fossil fuels. Both of these initiatives, if successful, tackle the school's greatest emission area – which equated to almost 50% of our emissions footprint last year and therefore is of great importance. The Foundation has also recently submitted the second year of a comprehensive set of data that will capture our carbon footprint and identify areas where we are making improvements and more importantly show areas that we need to continue to target. The key findings will be made publicly available so that the school can demonstrate how it is tackling its emissions and also how it is progressing in its aspiration of being 'net zero' by 2030.

What have been the main successes so far?

The Junior Branch's Independent Travel Scheme has halved the number of pupils being driven to school since 2018. How pupils travel to school has a big impact on air quality alongside CO2 emissions; therefore, this change in behaviour is testament to the hard work that the Junior Branch has done to make this scheme a success. We are now looking at bringing this into the Senior School to ensure that good habits are not lost.

Waste management and recycling have also been an area of success in recent years. We have doubled recycling rates since 2019 and now have an onsite cardboard baler that ensures that all cardboard is recycled more efficiently.

A final achievement was UCS being shortlisted as 'Sustainable School of the Year' in the 2021 Sustainable City Awards. Great recognition for everything our pupils have achieved over the last few years.

A Spotlight On... Environmental Impact



How can pupils and staff support UCS in becoming a more sustainable school?

The last carbon audit calculated that each year the school emits the equivalent of 1.33 tonnes of carbon dioxide per pupil. Actions that we take as individuals add up to make a significant difference. For example, the Junior Branch managed to reduce its energy emissions by 10% in the course of a week through all staff and students actively trying to turn off electrical appliances when not required! Here are a few ways that individuals can contribute to UCS becoming more sustainable:

- *If you can, walk or cycle to school or use public transport – leave the car at home!*
- *Switch off appliances and lights when you have finished using them.*
- *Eat fewer products from cows. Cows are by far the greatest emitters on our plates; therefore, if you were to reduce your meat consumption, it would have a significant impact on your daily carbon footprint.*

- *Talk to your friends and family about sustainability – the greater the ripples spread out from UCS, the greater the positive effect we can have.*

What are your goals moving forward?

My priority is reducing the emissions produced by our energy consumption. The school has set a target of reducing emissions by 40–60% by 2030 – in line with the IPCC’s 2018 recommendations – so making our buildings more energy efficient and ensuring that we get our energy from renewable sources is vital in achieving this.

Furthermore, my other priority is to work towards achieving ‘net zero’ by 2023 insofar as we offset our current emissions. Stopping emissions immediately is unfortunately an impossibility; however, while we target cutting emissions, the Foundation can ensure that it invests in projects that reduce or store carbon equivalent to what we are producing at the moment.

— Contributions by J. Firth

The Lower School



The new school year started in earnest. Free from some of the shackles of the Covid restrictions, it was wonderful to see UCS back in full flow. Some 120 new Entry pupils arrived at the end of August for their induction day in a flurry of new uniforms under bright blue skies. We had spent hours planning and preparing for what we hoped would be an informative, reassuring and fun day. While I was delighted everything ran so smoothly, it became clear that the importance of new timetables, lockers, coaches to the fields, and classroom locations paled into insignificance when compared with lunch arrangements. The Refectory was open for the first time in 18 months and a lunch of sausages and mash guaranteed the Entry pupils returned home in fine spirits.

The Shell returned on 1 September ready for action and it was fantastic to see the Lower School gather for the first time in the Great Hall for our first section assembly. Our new pupils settled remarkably quickly and took full advantage of everything offered to them throughout the school

day. Clubs and societies, understandably, proved incredibly popular and I was particularly delighted to see so many signatories to those clubs operating before school. Half past seven might seem early to start basketball practice, swimming training or a running club but not for many of our pupils! Their enthusiasm has remained sky high despite the cold dark mornings of late.

The idea of themed terms captured the imaginations of our boys and enabled them to spot the links between a number of key academic areas. Our Learning Values Week challenged pupils to consider how they learn and what are the real lessons to be learned in school. As half-term approached, every member of the Lower School represented their House on a blustery October afternoon at the House rugby and hockey competitions. The matches were competitive but the camaraderie within the teams and between the teams was clear for all to see. The House Maths competition was introduced this term and was keenly contested by each form group in a grand

The Lower School



final staged in the Great Hall. Mr Mace kept scores and eventually EBVL and EAEM were inseparable at the top of the Entry leaderboard and SRCT took the crown in Shell.

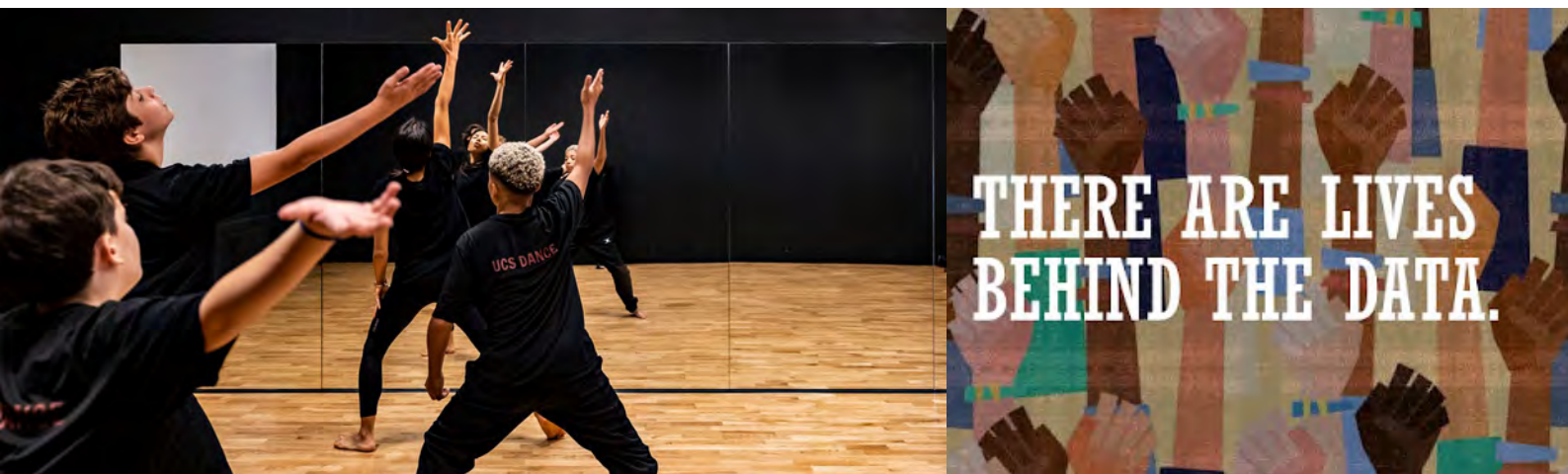
On the subject of Houses, we decided that we would rename the Houses this year. Over 140 nominations were received from Lower School pupils and I was delighted with the thought that so many put into their nominations. Each nominee was linked to the UCS Learning Values (resilience, resourcefulness, responsibility and relationships) or the Lower School Life Values (aspiration, bravery, compassion, decision-making and self-reflection) and the new names will be revealed in early 2022.

As the days have grown shorter, I have been buoyed by the spirit of the pupils in our two youngest year groups. The weather may have been biting cold but they have worked hard and played hard. They have raised money for numerous good causes through Community Action events, played wonderfully in recitals and concerts, and competed

tenaciously on the sports field. Their work on the school allotment is remarkable and the engagement of the Shell pupils in the Big Draw art workshops was tremendous. I wish all our pupils a restful festive break and look forward to seeing them in 2022.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Middle School



August into September is always an exciting time as the long summer draws to a close, public exam scores roll in and we prepare for the new academic year. September 2021 was doubly special as we welcomed back the three Middle School years to Frogna. Whether newly formed Lower Removes finding their feet, Remove getting used to us and each other after such time away from everything or the Upper Remove achieving similar with the added gloss of GCSEs on the horizon, the place became abuzz. One highlight has been the chance to hold Middle School assemblies once more; a little different in being distanced and masked, these were still a fantastic opportunity to meet together and hear from each other. The Remove took the lead in preparing pupil-led assemblies and we heard about Artificial Intelligence, as the theme chosen by RJA; cue fascinating views of what the future might hold for us. During Black History Month, RDJB presented a humbling and thought-provoking view of black lives in America. Behind a range of statistics from stress levels and life expectancy to social mix and racial bias, we were reminded “*there are lives behind the data*”.

With the school in full swing it has been good to see and hear contributions from Middle

School boys in Careers Fairs, at lunchtime and evening concerts, on the Games fields and in the Theatre. Middle School Council has been a cauldron of ideas; many epitomising the way the three year groups are thinking. Food Miles and the environmental impact of what we eat, as well as the footprint of our school, have been keenly discussed. Representatives from a number of forms reported the enjoyment gained from clubs and societies containing a mix of girls and boys from other year groups. We have discussed inclusion and representation and the Form Representatives have returned to their classes with further questions and challenges for the months ahead. (*‘What do you find difficult to call out?’* and *‘How can we be better allies?’* are two themes to have emerged recently). As we look forward, of course the Upper Remove are increasingly focused on their mock GCSEs and the ‘real thing’ and it is thus pleasing to note how many remain committed to their music, sport, drama, and clubs and societies. It is a fine example to all within Middle School; we are not a 9–4 school and the vibrancy from all that occurs within and without the classroom is something we should celebrate with much pride.

— Contributions by S. FitzGerald

Sixth Form



In September, for the first time in its brief existence, the new Sixth Form Centre opened its doors to both year groups, ushering in the new *Transitus* and welcoming back the Sixth. At times lively, at times studious, it enables both sides of the Sixth Form experience to exist – the social and the academic – and it has been a wonderful return to normality to see the space filled with life.

The returning Sixth have thrown themselves into the new term with determination – and what a term it has been for them. Many with new responsibilities, they have powered through coursework deadlines, school plays, concerts, matches, clubs, competitions and – of course – the ever-present UCAS process! With almost all UCAS forms now submitted, many students are already seeing their university offers streaming in – an encouraging moment in what can be a very challenging year. Across the term, those students who are preparing for interviews have been taking part in morning discussion forums, undergoing mock interviews, and stretching themselves beyond the curriculum in weekly Academic Enrichment. The process is thorough and, whatever the outcome, will leave a lasting impression of academic confidence.

Beyond university decisions, pupils in the Sixth have also completed and put to print the most recent edition of *The Tortoise*, and will soon be handing that over to the new *Transitus* editorial team in the new year – just one of many positions of responsibility that will be passed down to the year below.

Indeed, the *Transitus* have certainly made their mark this term, while also finding their feet with A Levels and grappling with the new challenges presented by Sixth Form. Whether it be through mentoring Lower School pupils, taking part in Young Enterprise or running the Peer Education Project, the students of *Transitus* have embraced the full scope of what it means to find themselves at the top of the school. Their involvement in the co-curricular provision alone has been encouraging and impressive, as has the enthusiasm with which they've engaged in Friday volunteering and the opportunities that have arisen with our partnership schools. A very dynamic start to what will hopefully be a full and enriching year.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Nobel Laureate Lecture Series



In September, UCS held its inaugural Nobel Laureate Lecture Series. This was to honour the three Old Gower Nobel prize winners and to foster a love of learning and of STEM beyond the classroom and curriculum for UCS and partner school pupils.

The event provided a hugely exciting opportunity for both UCS pupils and those from Westminster Academy, UCL Academy, Michaela Community School and London Academy of Excellence, Stratford (LAE) – all schools with which UCS has collaborated for a number of years. A Sixth Form pupil from each institution presented a talk on a favourite area of Science or Mathematics.

Audience members, comprising pupils from UCS and partner schools, were enlightened by their peers about the worlds of genetics, Diophantine equations, supersonic flight, angiogenesis treatment and the fight against Covid. The speakers were outstanding ambassadors for their respective schools and also for young people in the world of STEM. They were followed by keynote speaker

Dr Suzanne Imber, renowned planetary scientist, who discussed her current mission to Mercury and the future of solar system exploration. She was recently awarded the Rosalind Franklin Medal for contributions to planetary science and in 2017 won the BBC2 show *Astronauts: Do You Have What It Takes?*.

Anisha, a pupil at LAE, Stratford who presented on the effectiveness of angiogenesis inhibitors in treating cancerous tumours, commented, *“What I enjoyed most about presenting my research was hearing what people learnt from it. It was initially a challenge to simplify my topic, but it was so rewarding in the end to see that people both understood and enjoyed it.”*

Nobel Laureate Lecture Series



Mohammed from Westminster Academy spoke about research into fighting Covid. He said: *“When I arrived at UCS I was a bit nervous; it was my first time giving a scientific presentation in front of a large audience. Then when I met the other students that were presenting, everyone was really encouraging and had great ideas. It was a wonderful experience to present in front of STEM enthusiasts and a privilege to watch other students present their amazing ideas and work they have done.”*

The evening was organised by Amy Holland, STEM Partnerships and Enrichment Coordinator. She was delighted by its success, saying: *“It was a pleasure to listen to young people talk so passionately about their subject area and to promote the world of STEM. Dr Imber was an outstanding role model and her talk about Mercury gave insight into collaborative research and the future for solar system exploration. It was most impressive to see a large audience come to support our speakers and explore the field of STEM further and I hope the evening was enjoyed by all.”*

Following the success of this event and our ongoing commitment to working with our partnership schools, we are hoping to host Nobel Laureate Lectures in other subject disciplines. Additionally, I would like to thank all of the pupil speakers for their engaging and insightful talks. I hope that the younger pupils in the audience were inspired by their courage and expertise and take up the opportunity to get involved at the next opportunity.

— Contributions by S. Bennett

Inside Frogнал



This term saw the return of our *Inside Frogнал* series. This is a termly event for parents of Senior School pupils to hear about an aspect of the provision at UCS. The idea for it came about during the lockdown and was developed by Edd Roberts, Assistant Head (Partnerships and PR) at the time. Previous instalments focused on evidence-based revision techniques, shed a light on the school's Revision Toolkit and how it can be used at home, and looked at academic curiosity and how parents and teachers can harness children's interests and passions for learning. Inside Frogнал takes place remotely to enable parents to log in wherever they are.

October's Inside Frogнал took on a pastoral focus and examined the topic of Sex and Relationships Education. This hugely important aspect of our pupils' personal and social development in the Senior School is overseen by Darius Bluck, Head of PSHE, and Alex Hurst and Richard Johnson, Senior Tutors in the Sixth Form. Mr Bluck and Mr Hurst put together talks that outlined the types of material covered, how it is taught and how parents might seek to engage their children in discussions

about Sex and Relationships Education at home. They also helpfully included the external agencies and organisations with which the school liaises to ensure these lessons are resourced with up-to-date and appropriate content. Rebecca Baxter, Head of Sixth Form, also delivered a talk on the work she did last academic year with the school's Steering Committee, specifically considering the importance of 'pupil voice'. The evening was hosted by Andrew Wilkes, Deputy Head Pastoral, who chaired a live question-and-answer session for parents. The questions were wide-ranging and covered an array of topics such as how to engage pupils in discussions on sexism, where parents can find information on topics being taught in PSHE and how pupils can be connected with charities or support organisations if they need additional support.

Thank you to the four colleagues who spearheaded this term's Inside Frogнал and to all those parents who attended. Details of the next episode will follow in the new year.

— Contributions by S. Bennett

North Paddington Food Bank Collection



On the final day of the first half of term, we held our annual collection for the North Paddington Food Bank. This event was planned and organised by Dylan Ireland and Xavi Mesquita, both in the Transitus, and followed a tradition of yearly collections for the North Paddington Food Bank. Pupils were stationed in the playground before school representing either their year group (Entry and Shell) or Deme (Middle School and Sixth Form) and each were told an item of food to bring in. The Entry boys in particular took their responsibility to bring in biscuits very seriously! It was fantastic to see so many pupils and staff volunteering and there was a real buzz on the playground.

Xavi's involvement in the collection was in part inspired by his own volunteering efforts outside of school, especially at his local foodbank during the lockdowns of the past 18 months. He explained: *"Volunteering over the lockdown showed me first-hand the massive impact that small acts of generosity*

and kindness can have on people in difficult circumstances. Speaking to people who used my local foodbank changed my perspective on the day-to-day reality that millions of people face." Reflecting on the UCS collection, Xavi added: *"During uncertain times like these, donating even a little can make a real difference to those affected by food poverty."*

Both Dylan and Xavi fully intend to continue supporting charities like, and including, the North Paddington Food Bank. Dylan praised the work of his friends and peers in running the collection, commenting that *"we had an amazing volunteer team helping us out and we managed to have one of our biggest collections to date. We're hoping to continue our work on this project and have an even more successful collection next year!"*

— Contributions by S. Bennett

Lund Gallery



It has been a busy and extremely rewarding period for the Lund Gallery during the Autumn Term. We began with local artist Jenny Blake's exhibition *Swimming Wild: Hampstead Ponds and Beyond*. As you can imagine, an exhibition of this nature went down very well with our community. The ponds are regularly frequented by pupils and staff alike (some making it all the way through the winter months) and Blake's exhibition was an opportunity to revel in the nostalgia of hazy summer days. As part of this exhibition, *Transitus* and *Sixth Artists* enjoyed a swimming-themed life drawing session in the gallery, taught by Jenny herself.

The 2021 *Sixth* leavers were next to exhibit in the gallery, having missed the opportunity to show in the Summer Art exhibition. As is normal protocol, however, the *Old Gowers* were thrilled to be invited back to see their work in a gallery space. Most of the exhibitors are now studying at art institutions, with some having travelled as far as Scotland, and we look forward to developing projects with them in the future.

Our third exhibition was truly impactful and arguably the most important show this term. In light of recent discourse and the growing importance of issues regarding sex and relationships, the Lund Gallery worked with MA student and ex-UCS teacher Sas Mackie on a project that explored themes surrounding consent.

The *Consent Show* project commenced with a workshop involving students from UCS and Channing School, and then operated an 'open call' to young people worldwide to submit their work for exhibition. The resulting selected works provided talking points for both students and staff. PSHE and form times took place in the gallery and the Middle School Gender Politics Society ran a special workshop led by Ms Trinder and Ms McVicker. The works provoked discussions concerning body boundaries, possessions, roles and responsibilities. The private-view of this show was a brilliant event and included pupil performers as well as stimulating discussion regarding the pieces on display. We are delighted that the space

Lund Gallery



of the gallery has been used in such a way this term to complement the work taking place across the school on our pupils' personal and social development.

Finally for this term, our creative staff exhibited: Parallels was a dynamic presentation of varied and talented makers. UCS pupils were wonderfully inspired by seeing the work produced by some of their teachers. Indeed, the show was evidence of the broad range of opportunities available to pupils who select creative pathways, with ceramic stoneware, painting, digital illustration and jewellery just a few of the media on show. We are really excited to share with you what the Spring Term holds for the Lund Gallery.

If you would like to join the mailing list for future information on shows and private-view evenings at the Lund Gallery, please contact Victoria Trinder on victoria.trinder@ucs.org.uk

— Contributions by V. Trinder

Modern Languages Symposium



In early November the Modern Languages Department hosted the Modern Languages Symposium in which a group of eminent external speakers from the fields of journalism, law, tech start-ups, STEM and diplomacy provided workshops for our Upper Remove linguists and our Transitus Languages Ambassadors.

The aim of the event was to showcase practical examples of how languages offer a far-reaching skillset in a range of real life careers, and these essential transferable skills were demonstrated superbly by our speakers, all of whom had studied Modern Languages at A Level, Oxbridge and beyond.

Pupils learnt first-hand how in an unstable world and a competitive jobs market, languages are crucial tools in giving candidates the edge in a variety of vocational disciplines. Pupils were genuinely amazed at the plethora of career opportunities afforded by languages, and the myth that languages lead only to teaching or interpreting was well and truly dismantled.

Professor Stephen Hart of University College London gave a fact-filled keynote address which focused on the need for Modern Languages to be repositioned in the curriculum as complementary to the traditional disciplines of Medicine, Engineering and STEM subjects – with a view to deconstructing the traditional silo mentality that disciplines are somehow autonomous, rather than essentially cross-functional and multi-disciplinary.

Over the course of the day, pupils saw that theory put into practice via no fewer than ten separate workshops delivered by, among others, Simon Wilson, Head of Journalism Europe and America Region for the BBC World Service, and Danny Wittenberg, Foreign Desk BBC 6 and Ten O’Clock News, Old Gowers both, who gave very generously of their time. In addition, pupils gained a clear insight into the advantages imparted by languages and STEM subjects, with another Old Gower Simon Hanassab, currently studying for a PhD in Artificial Intelligence at Imperial, resolute in his conviction that his A Level German was essential to the launch of his academic career at the prestigious research university ETH Zürich.

— Contributions by H. Laurenson

Learning Values Week



In the second week of term, Entry pupils spent time in their lessons discussing the UCS Learning Values. The week culminated in a Team Building Day held at the Kantor Centre. Pupils appreciated being given the time to get to know each other better and reflect on how resilience, responsibility, resourcefulness and relationships could be developed both in and out of the classroom.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

One of the most memorable moments at the start of the Autumn Term was the Entry Team Building Day. Everyone gathered at the sports fields and took part in activities which were designed to strengthen and improve the relationships within each form group. The day was unforgettable and was full of support, laughter and friendship. The variety of activities were tailored to give pupils, who had only known each other for a week, the opportunity to interact and form friendships which hopefully would last for some time. The four Learning Values (responsibility, resourcefulness, relationships and resilience) played a role in each activity. We quickly realized we needed to possess each of the Values to complete each task. In my opinion, two of the most essential Values were probably resilience and relationships. I learned that in every endeavour it is necessary to persevere through the struggles that crop up now and again. Relationships help us get through every situation thrown at us. The Team Building Day, I would say, was key to our development. I mean, without it, I doubt I would be the boy I am today.

— Isaac Redi, (Entry)

Themed Terms



During 2020–21, a group of staff led by Mr Underwood (Assistant Head Academic) carried out a review of the curriculum taught in the Lower School. One of the recommendations from the report was that links between different subject areas should be reinforced throughout Years 7 and 8. With that in mind, during this academic year pupils in the Lower School will be looking at a different theme each term. It is hoped that pupils learn skills and acquire knowledge in the context of real-life situations. This will enable them to build connections between subjects and make better sense of the world.

This term's theme was *Global Connectivity* and aspects of each course within the Entry and Shell have been tweaked to accommodate this initiative. In Science, pupils examined how scientists collaborate across the world to solve problems with a focus on recent Nobel Prize winners. In French, pupils emailed their counterparts in French schools while in History the boys discussed aspects of colonisation and how cultures interact. In assembly, Mr English discussed his love of learning languages

and how it has helped him appreciate different cultures. In Art, pupils looked at architecture from various cities and produced stunning, layered charcoal pieces. In Geography, they took part in a mock COP26 conference. Debates at this mock conference were fascinating and well-informed, and it was pleasing to hear some of the best speeches at a final event during the last week of term.

Next term's theme will be wellbeing and in the summer we will look at risk-taking.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Careers



With the start of a new academic year we saw a wealth of new opportunities from Careers. The addition of a new careers platform, Unifrog, has given pupils the opportunity to research their future careers, learn more about different industries – whether from webinars, videos, podcasts or articles – as well as log the skills they develop in and out of school. Each year group will receive specific lessons on the platform as we progress through the year. We have also seen the fortnightly Careers Bulletin highlight opportunities for virtual work experience, and insight evenings in everything from cyber crime to Medicine, finance, consulting, Law and Engineering. We even had an opportunity to win an interior design scholarship.

On most Tuesday lunchtimes we welcomed a wide range of speakers for our Careers Talks programme, including Diane Perlman, the CMO of Blis and previous head of Microsoft’s Ventures Accelerator Programme for startups; meanwhile, our Charity Week talks included a discussion on the fascinating roles within Médecins Sans Frontières and hearing

from the head of business development at Shelter, alongside insight from student ambassadors for the Engineering Development Trust’s YINI (year in industry) initiative. As the year unfolds, we hope to expose pupils to a diverse array of careers and encourage them to go to as many talks as possible, even if they hadn’t considered such career paths before.

In November, the Upper Remove and Remove both had specific Careers Fortnights, where they began to learn more about their future opportunities. The Remove heard from an outside speaker from InvestIN about Careers Clusters and how to make the first steps towards exploring their interests and discovering which jobs may align with them. The Upper Remove had not one but two off-timetable events: first up, the Careers from Humanities afternoon, where they listened to speakers who studied one of Latin, History, English or Languages for their degree. They learned that you could

Careers



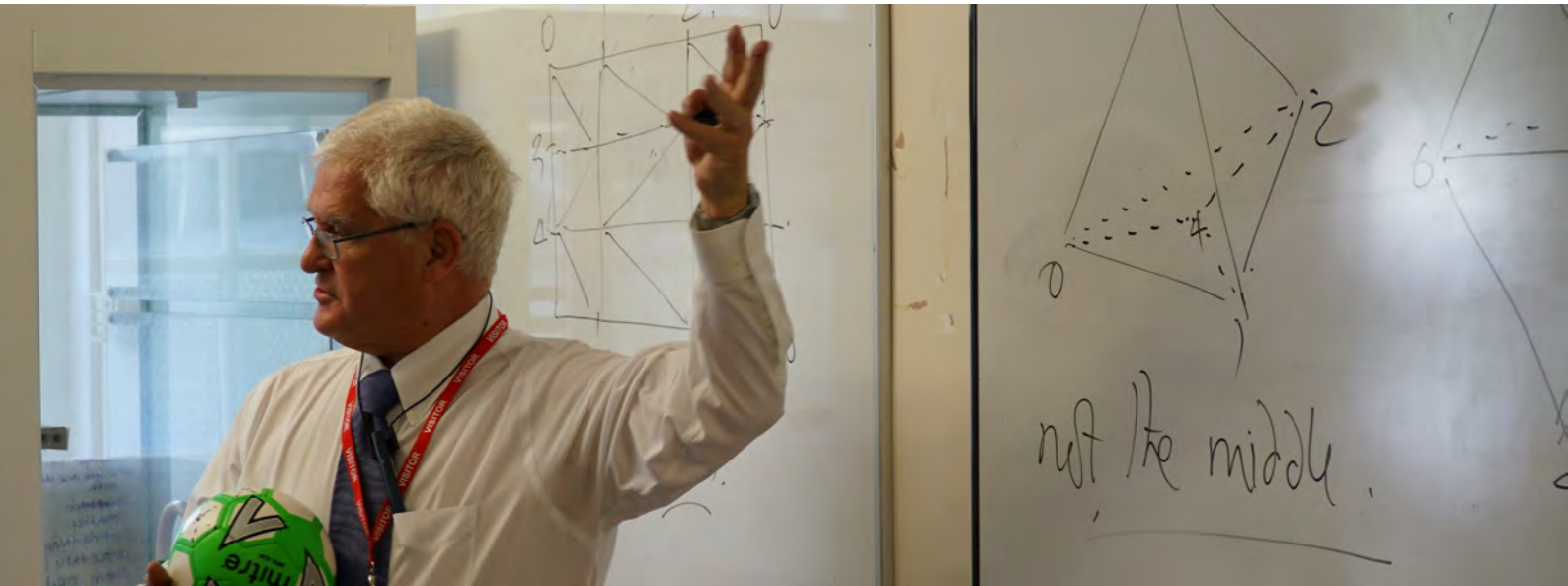
become an interpreter for the UN or a footballer by studying languages, and how English could open up jobs in anything from the Civil Service to working for Lonely Planet. Indeed, hearing about careers in law, Teach First, The Times and many others enhanced students' awareness that one's degree choice does not limit but usually broadens future options. Next up was the Virtual Careers Fair where the Upper Remove heard from companies such as Rolls Royce, found out more about the US university system, and got one-to-one careers advice from in-house advisors.

Finally, we had the first round of ISAM applications for work experience opportunities in financial services. This first round involved the Transitus being offered the chance to apply, and we had a fantastic selection of applicants to consider. Pupils are currently waiting for the final decision from ISAM regarding who the lucky few will be – and for those who are chosen, a tailor-made week of work experience awaits. The next round of applications will be offered to the Sixth in the new year, so watch this space!

While the Autumn has been incredibly busy, we look forward to the Spring Term with eager anticipation. Our in-school Careers Fair, alongside the Transitus Networking evening, to name but a few events, are all to come. We hope that the pupils have enjoyed the array of opportunities offered so far and that they continue to take up those still on the horizon.

— Contributions by H. Yovichich

Enrichment Weeks



This term saw a new set of departments group together to run whole-school Enrichment Weeks. First came the Art, Computer Science, History of Art and Maths Enrichment Week titled: 'Connect Disconnect'. The week featured headline events such as the Lower School Microbit coding sessions, the Morris Lecture on the topology of surfaces by Professor Francis Johnson, and a computing lecture on racial biases in AI technology, among many more. Our pupils were also offered the opportunity of receiving crits from visiting artists and the chance to experiment with coding in after-school sessions.

These activities were planned to enable pupils to see and experience the interconnected nature of subject disciplines and push the boundaries of traditional classroom teaching. We are always looking for ways to enhance and stretch our pupils' understanding of content, as well as their own interests and passions.

The second Enrichment Week of term brought the English, Classics, Philosophy and Music

Departments' turn, with their title being 'Now and Then: Where Time Meets'. This busy week showcased several external speakers, from Helen Lovatt on the Argonauts to Clara Schumann on creative writing, along with a series of ensemble performances. The highlight had to be Armand D'Angour's lecture on Ancient Music. Armand and his team from Oxford University were the first to record the ancient Greek musical notations on certain artefacts and recreate these songs for students.

We are really looking forward to the Enrichment Weeks in the Spring Term with offerings from the Economics, Geography, History and Politics Departments first up in the final week of January, followed by the Sciences and Design and Technology in March and Psychology, Dance and Sport just before Easter. Thank you to all colleagues for their contributions in these really exciting events and their continued work in enriching the curriculum at UCS.

— Contributions by H. Franks

Academic Enrichment in the Sixth Form



This term our Sixth Form pupils attended Enrichment sessions every Friday afternoon related to their university course choice to further their understanding of their chosen field. These small-group seminar-style sessions prepare our pupils for life after UCS as well as giving them the opportunity to study aspects of the subject beyond the A Level and Pre-U specifications.

Autumn also saw a fresh development in the shape of two new courses: Film studies from the Drama Department, and a Business Enrichment course organised by the Economics Department which ran alongside the ever-popular Economics course. Film studies focused on the history of cinema, combining academic literature with selected case-study films. Students worked chronologically through film history, beginning with the silent films of the 1910s up until the Netflix era of cinema. They looked at the classical Hollywood narrative, Orson Welles' trail-blazing *Citizen*

Kane, the French New Wave, the introduction of the blockbuster, and cinema through streaming platforms. Guest speakers for the Business and Economics courses included Professor Tony Cockerill on 'The Economy after Brexit and Covid', Professor Debopam Bhattacharya lecturing on 'An Introduction to Econometrics', and King's College London's Professor Ko de Ruyter who spoke to pupils about the increasing usage of technology in businesses.

The third course, which sits outside the usual subject-based courses, is one for the would-be Medics. Its sessions concentrate on developing students' understanding of specific medical knowledge but also include a medical ethics course run by Dr Viswanathan from the Philosophy Department.

— *Contributions by H. Franks*

Natalie Haynes



On 4 October, pupils from UCS and partnership schools had the delight of experiencing a lecture by Natalie Haynes. The lecture ranged in subject, guided by both the interests of the audience and the speaker herself, her effortless charm and wit easily engaging the entire crowd. By blending modern pop-culture references with Classical Literature, she rendered these often remote-seeming stories accessible and relatable.

There was a distinct focus on femininity and feminism within the Classics. This is a topic often left untouched or unexplored in classes because of the sheer sexism present in the ancient world; however, by not addressing it, women can end up being even less of a modern subjectual focus than they were contemporarily. Women become perceived as nothing more than toys of men. Helen of Troy, for instance, is usually seen as no more than a sexual object – if she is characterised, it is as temptress – and Haynes discussed how Theseus, traditionally regarded as a Greek hero, married her as a child. (Haynes noted how the age at which Theseus married Helen slowly increased as the story was retold, suggesting that even the ancient world was disgusted by this.) By highlighting this, it immediately encouraged us, Haynes’s rapturous audience, to view Helen as more than an object of

desire; to view her as victim of a patriarchal society, unwillingly passed on from man to man.

Not only did Haynes viewing of the Classics through a feminist lens lend more emphasis to the stories of women within ancient fiction; it also allowed for our own modern patriarchy to be examined. One example was the way in which our translations of stories such as Pandora’s Jar (not ‘box’) focus most on women’s negative personality traits and physical attributes; they are idealised and demonised.

The talk thus made us question our own preconceived views of women in society, give women an amplified voice and simply enjoy the musings of an internationally famous modern Classicist, something which is no mean feat to achieve, on the modern and ancient worlds.

Nobody left that talk without a sense of contentment and intellectual stimulation, a pairing not many talks and speakers are able to simultaneously provide. Haynes summons this effortlessly.

— *Contributions by O. Sykes*

Clubs and Societies



Returning to Froggnal without year-group bubbles was wonderful news for clubs and societies. Over 65 clubs and societies operate each week at UCS, without counting Sports clubs and Music ensembles.

In addition to our many longstanding clubs and societies whose appeal endures, this term has seen the creation of a host of new endeavours. Economics and Finance Society has been a popular new offering. Classics Society has welcomed a number of academics from UCL, Oxford and more, as well as Remove students speaking about LGBTQ+ representation and censorship in myth.

Wellbeing Society and Mindfulness Club have provided opportunities for pupils to take time in the busy school day to reflect and look after themselves. Two Philosophy groups have invited pupils from the Shell, Transitus and Sixth to debate some fundamental questions, including free will and morality. Froggnal Bothy Society, brings together pupils and staff with a passion for hiking to discuss recent experiences and plans for adventures. UCS On Board has profited from Mr Fernando's expertise in and knowledge of board games, and Sahil and Shaurya in the Entry have

established a Stamp and Coin Collectors' Club, launching in January.

"For me, Froggnal Bothy Society has helped me settle in the school and connect with people that share an interest in walking or hiking. Since I started attending, I have felt a sense of belonging within UCS." — Kristian Partridge

"Politics Society allows us to test our arguments and has improved our knowledge massively." — Ross Doran

"Debating has been one of the most valuable and enjoyable parts of UCS for me. The hugely useful skills it gives you, from being able to think on your feet to being able to get up and deliver a speech to a crowded room, have stuck with me. But more than all of that, debating has given me one of the most incredible, supportive and enjoyable experiences at UCS" — Tom Taborn

UCS clubs and societies are constantly evolving and developing; if any pupils would like to start a new club, they should email jessica.lewis@ucs.org.uk to discuss their ideas further.

— Contributions by J. Lewis

An Evening of Economics



In November the Economics Department held its Evening of Economics. Dr Juan Castañeda from the Institute of International Monetary Research (IIMR) spoke to more than 100 pupils from both UCS and our partnership schools about Monetary Economics. His fantastic talk was titled: ‘The inflationary effect of Covid-19. Will inflation persist or be a transitory phenomenon?’

He focused on how monetary policy can be best utilised to control inflation, which is currently outside of the government target, and the implications this has on our economy. This promoted great discussions in lessons as it allowed students to think from a real-world perspective as opposed to textbook theory. We are grateful to Dr Castañeda for generously devoting his time to speak to all our students.

Rahul Mathur (Transitus), the President of the Economics Society, did an excellent job hosting the event.

In addition, this event saw the launch of the very first Tuvey Economic Research Prize. With gratitude to the Tuvey family, the Tuvey Economic

Research Prize supports and provides funds to pairs of pupils who research an economic question of their choosing. The purpose of the prize is to assist pupils with genuine economic enquiry, in collaborative work and, perhaps uniquely, to encourage them to conduct primary research. A further, unique feature of this prize is that it supports collaborative work with our partner schools. Pupils were given details of this exciting opportunity during the course of the evening and in subsequent lessons.

For those interested in more information, please contact Ms Shah via kirti.shah@ucs.org.uk

— Contributions by P. Fernando and K. Shah

Peer Education Project



This term, UCS launched Peer Educator training for the Peer Education Project. The Peer Education Project is a brilliant programme created by the Mental Health Foundation that aims to give young people the skills and knowledge they need to look after their own mental health, and that of their friends. It is called the Peer Education Project, because it is our very own Transitus pupils who will be delivering these lessons to our Entry boys.

After a written application process, 15 Transitus pupils were selected to be this year's Peer Educators. The quality and volume of applications was phenomenal and the selected pupils demonstrated a keen interest in mental health and an excitement to be part of the process of educating their peers.

I think that some of the best people to teach about youth mental health are young people themselves, so by training our Transitus pupils to deliver mental health lessons, the hope is that we are able to break down some of the barriers young people have when being taught such topics by adults.

Training for the project commenced with a whole-day training workshop where pupils learnt about different strands of mental health, how to work as

a team and how to teach and deliver effective lessons. After this session, in groups of three, our Transitus pupils have been working together to refine their lessons in preparation for delivering them in the New Year to our Entry cohort. They have all been working incredibly hard and I cannot wait to see the impact this will have!

"I think the Peer Education Project is a really good opportunity for both us [Transitus] and the Entry, with mutual benefits. I'm really looking forward to speaking to them and helping them learn about mental health, but also learning more about it myself."

"On 3 November I took part in training for the Peer Education Project. It was an amazing day that taught me a lot about how to convey serious topics to Year 7s in an interesting way. We went over how to run the lessons and spoke about mental health itself. I'm very excited to start these sessions with the Year 7s because I feel it's incredibly important to teach younger people about mental health and show them that asking for help is okay. I hope it has some impact on them as I know I would have loved it at their age."

— Contributions by B. Kumarasinghe

Sixth Form Union



This year has seen the inception of the Sixth Form Union, which in just a few months has already firmly made its mark on the Sixth Form and within the wider school community. The students applied in April and later took part in hustings in front of the rest of their year group. They were subsequently voted into their positions as officers for wellbeing, events, women, diversity, and LGBTQIA+.

Since September they have been furiously inventive with their activities, and consistently community-minded, meeting regularly to discuss ideas and plan events. Indeed, the LGBTQIA+ officers – Nerea and Julien – have been interested in school policy, including looking into the representation of the LGBTQIA+ community across the school. The diversity officers – Arista and Louis – have also been prodigiously busy, delivering an assembly to the whole school for Black History Month and organising a student-led cabaret evening to raise money for Black Minds Matter. Amber and Georgie, our women's officers, arranged a mixer at the start of term for the new Transitus girls, and also marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women with a donut sale raising money for Good Night Out – a charity that campaigns against drink spiking.

Amber also recently delivered an assembly to the Transitus and Sixth to increase awareness around eating disorders and offer suggestions about how to support friends who might be struggling. The wellbeing officers have put on assemblies for World Mental Health Day and Anti-Bullying Week, and invited the new Transitus boys to a welcome event back at the start of term. They are also working on a new initiative, creating a Student Support Service which will be designed to offer peer support throughout the school. Meanwhile, assisting with all of these endeavours are the events officers – Bella and Emmy – who have been omnipresent throughout as invaluable members of the team. The first ever Sixth Form Union has set the standard.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Inclusion and Representation



Out of the work conducted last year by staff and pupil members of the Diversity and Equality Steering Group, there emerged a large number of recommendations, which have been ratified into a significant new section of the School Improvement Plan. Responsibility for these items lies with individual members of the Senior Leadership Team and they span all areas of UCS life, from staff training to the academic curriculum, from PSHE, form time and assemblies to education on inclusive language. Taken together, these items form the basis of the school's plan to ensure that both staff and pupils in the UCS community are socially conscious, kind and literate in matters of race, gender, disability, faith and sexuality, and that equity is at the heart of the school's approach.

The Diversity and Equality Steering Group has been restructured into a permanent Inclusion and Representation Committee. The I&R Committee has nine permanent staff members, all of whom have responsibility for different items on the School Improvement Plan. Initiatives undertaken this term include the incorporation of Inclusion and Representation representatives into the Lower and Middle School Councils, the launch of a new pastoral reporting system to encourage and

empower pupils to report incidents involving any forms of prejudice, and the continuing review of the PSHE, assemblies and form time programmes to ensure that their coverage of issues related to diversity, equality, inclusion and representation aligns.

Alongside the permanent arm of the I&R Committee there is a staff and pupil volunteer body. This term the volunteers have conducted an investigation into the school's co-curricular provision. Working together, the volunteers devised a survey that was circulated to all pupils to evaluate their experiences of the school's co-curriculum. Concurrently, they carried out interviews with key co-curricular staff, as well as pupils with experiences they wished to share. The group met weekly to share findings, identify trends and make recommendations for next steps.

If any pupils or staff would like to contribute to the work of the Inclusion and Representation Committee, or feedback on their experiences at the school, please email Ms Lewis at jessica.lewis@ucs.org.uk

— Contributions by J. Lewis

Collaborating with South Hampstead in PSHE



On Wednesday 10 November, UCS launched its first Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) collaborative event with South Hampstead High School for Girls. The consent workshop was hosted by the School of Sexuality Education and brought together Lower Remove-age pupils from both schools. The workshop forms part of our ongoing RSE programme and focused on the topics of consent, healthy relationships, gender and peer-on-peer abuse.

The workshop provided our pupils with the chance to learn about these important matters in a safe environment overseen by subject specialists, and to listen, discuss and explore them from each other's perspectives. It involved a number of activities, including time for group discussion work, role play and a focused Q&A.

For UCS pupils, this was a unique opportunity to be able to take part in mixed-gender discussions,

something that normally wouldn't occur for them until Sixth Form; the pupils showed exemplary maturity and improved their breadth of knowledge and understanding around the topics.

The workshop was an outstanding success and, consequently, we now plan on running a number of future workshops in collaboration with other schools.

— *Contributions by D. Bluck*

CSCP Ovid Myth Competition



In October, the Classics Department taught lessons to Entry pupils on some of Ovid's myths using the Classical Tales retellings by Hugh Lupton. Following the lessons, pupils were asked to put together a voluntary submission for the CSCP Ovid Myth Competition, which involved coming up with a creative response to a myth in any of the four categories – Performance, Artefact, Creative Writing and Animation.

Four pupils from EPJO were selected to enter the competition as they each produced excellent responses to the myth of Actaeon and Diana. Ayal Schwartz put together an outstanding BBC News Report on the story, where he played different characters involved in reporting what had happened, including one of Actaeon's friends, one of Diana's nymphs and Ovid himself. The performance showed off his superb acting, a fantastic selection of costumes and thoughtful analysis of the myth itself. Ayal went on to win the first place prize in the Performance category - an impressive feat, especially given that it was

a national competition with 60 entries from 25 different schools.

Sahil Prasad was highly commended for his entry to the Animation category, which was produced with 250 separate frames.

Additionally, Rocco Shelley painted a beautiful picture of Actaeon's transformation into a stag for the Artefact category and Max Littner wrote a brilliant rhyming poem to relate the story for the Creative Writing category. All four pupils should be incredibly proud of their achievements and ability to channel their enjoyment of Classics into wonderfully creative outcomes.

CSCP Ovid Myth Competition



See Ayal and Sahil's videos by following the link below:

<https://classictales.co.uk/ovid-competition/ovid-competition-2021-winners>

*Suddenly spotted by his own loyal hound,
Actaeon the stag had been found.
The chase was on, the dogs were excited
The best kill of the day had been sighted.
Barking furiously, each and every one,
Actaeon couldn't do anything but run.
His friends looked round for him but didn't wait
Actaeon would have to join the hunt late.
Little did they know, the hunter was now the hunted
Actaeon tried to shout their names but only grunted.*

An extract from Max Littner's poem

— Contributions by E. Desmond

LAE Visit



UCS has been working in partnership with the London Academy of Excellence (LAE) for a number of years. A fundamental element of this partnership has been creating opportunities for pupils at both schools to work together. The pupils in UCS House at LAE visited UCS in October and took part in a morning of Academic Enrichment titled The Forum with around 20 members of the *Transitus*. The morning was designed to stretch them to think about their subjects holistically and beyond the confines of A Level and Pre-U specifications, as well as to encourage them to build relationships and collaborate with one another. The group watched a series of lectures given by three UCS Heads of Department – Alun Vaughan (History), Charlotte Hawes (Psychology) and Helen Laurenson (Modern Languages and Spanish) – on the theme of ‘conflict’. They were then put into mixed groups and asked to produce their own responses to this theme. The responses spanned podcasts, written lectures, poetry and presentations, all of which demonstrated outstanding creativity, thoughtfulness and collaboration. Topics covered ranged from ‘Conflict and Music’ and ‘Conflict in the London Riots’ to an examination of the conflict between ‘Self-Censorship and Externalisation’.

“I felt that the LAE day improved my problem-solving skills and my ability to work in a team. It was quite challenging to write on a very broad and complex topic with people I had never met before. This challenge was incredibly rewarding and enriching as it encouraged good communication and building quick relationships with people. On a social level, it was nice to talk to people who have a completely different school experience to ours and it was very interesting to hear their stories. The culmination of the day was really great as we had a piece of writing that had been collaboratively written and was something that the whole group could be proud of.”

— Hugo Kinder, (*Transitus*)

Below are some samples of the work:

“Self-censorship is the act of voluntarily or purposefully withholding information from others, which can have a positive or negative effect on oneself. Self-censorship can be used to keep peace and prevent the spread of hate. Alternatively, it can be detrimental to one’s mental health as people feel unable to express themselves. This could be due to external pressures like parental expectations or peer pressure.”

LAE Visit



“I have personally experienced this feeling during lessons where it is a struggle to speak up and voice my opinions, as there is always a fear of being judged by others who may have contradicting views. Taking part in group discussions brings with it a fear of unintentionally offending others around me and their beliefs, which may cause further unnecessary arguments outside the classroom.

“And yet conflict can bring change, change for the world, change in people’s opinions, and change for groups and dominations as a whole. It brings a light to the cracks and imperfections of our world, and it creates awareness of problems people may not have thought existed. Although conflict may be seen as a negative thing, it creates a platform for people who have never had the confidence to speak to bring their opinion to the public.” - Extract from ‘Self-Censorship or Externalisation?’ by Minnat, Hannah, Olaide, Lucas, Onakanmi and Ruby

“Music has been an important centrepiece throughout history, affecting many different events and ideas. However, less notably, it has affected conflict in a variety of ways.

“Music is important in the reduction of conflict when it helps to unite people and resolve disputes. Organised by former Beatles lead guitarist George Harrison and Ravi Shankar, a concert was held twice on Sunday 1 August 1971 to raise international awareness and fund relief efforts for refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) following the Bangladesh Liberation War. Some 40,000 people attended to listen to the artists. This shows how music is an important tool in uniting people for an important cause and can serve to try and find solutions to social issues. Furthermore, the 1985 Live Aid concert organised by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure raised \$245 million for famine relief in Ethiopia. Live Aid was held simultaneously at Wembley Stadium in London and at the John F. Kennedy Stadium in Philadelphia. This allowed music to bring wider audiences together while trying to spread awareness and help other countries. It exemplifies how music has been used over time to try and unite different groups of people for a common cause and how it is a very powerful tool in resolving conflict.

LAE Visit



“Another avenue to explore the themes of music and conflict is wondering ‘How far does music play a role in instigating conflict?’. A prime example that comes to mind is the notorious rap genre ‘drill’. Named after a slang term for attacks between gangs, drill is ominous hip-hop with lyrics – like trap and gangster rap before it – about drug dealing and street crime. Likewise, the music mirrors the sound of machine guns. However, what makes this sub-genre particularly interesting is the controversy surrounding the common use of vivid and violent imagery which some condemn as a major contributor to gang violence. Looking at the genre’s origins, most credit Pac Man, a rapper from Chicago’s South Side, as the first to use the term in a musical context, back in 2010. Yet drill’s rising profile was soon hampered by the very violence that inspired its name. Pac Man was killed in 2010. Gangsta rap, a predecessor of drill, often depicted gang violence without judgement. As the popularity of gangsta rap rose, so did police interference. Like blues music before it, rap became a medium through which the struggles of the black community resonated most deeply. Of course, such inequality is also widespread in the UK and so unsurprisingly UK rap links with gang conflict.

“In a 2017 report in Fact magazine, a teenager from a Brixton youth centre was quoted as saying: ‘If Chicago drill is a gun, ours is a knife.’ As a result, many have called for the censorship of the most extreme versions of drill music and many videos on YouTube have been taken down. However, in a 2020 article for the British Criminology Journal on the criminalising of drill, Jonathan Ilan, senior lecturer in the Sociology Department at London’s City University, stresses that censoring drill does more harm than good, as it further alienates marginalised communities and ultimately exacerbates the conditions which lead to urban violence in the first place.” — Extract from ‘Music and Conflict’ by Tanya, Tamsyn, Samirah. Archana and Susima

— Contributions by S. Bennett and R. Baxter

Race For Kids



In October, UCS parent Annabel Bartfeld arranged for the UCS Sports Fields to host an RBC Race for the Kids in support of Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH). This annual event takes place globally and, since the pandemic, it has consisted of many different races held simultaneously at assorted locations in aid of the GOSH Charity which cares for seriously ill children.

More than 60 pupils participated in the race at the UCS Sports Fields, all dressed in GOSH purple t-shirts.

Mrs Bartfeld said: *“It was a huge success. We have raised in excess of £24,000 and even the sun came out on the day which helped to create a wonderful atmosphere! A lot of fun was had by all and I was impressed by the stamina of the kids. I thank all of those who donated for this cause, which is very close to my heart.”*

The whole event, including fundraising by other running groups, raised over £200,000 for GOSH.

In November, the UCS team of runners found out that they were in the top five fundraisers in the whole event. They received a fantastic congratulatory message from the actor Tom Ellis which can be found on the UCS Sport Twitter page! All of the money raised by the team will go towards funding life-saving and life-improving treatments for the children at GOSH.

— Contributions by S. Bennett

Sixth Form Volunteering



UCS has a longstanding and deep-rooted connection with the local community. In uncertain times, we are pleased to have continued working alongside our partners in the local community and beyond. This term, Transitus pupils have contributed in numerous ways to the school's Partnerships & Volunteering Programme to ensure that we continue to have a positive impact on the local community. Pupil placements have ranged from sports coaching, to volunteering in charity shops and primary schools. In each case, they have illustrated that partnerships between UCS and the wider community succeed because they are mutually rewarding and enriching.

"I've gained a lot of experience helping adults and children improve their table tennis skills. I have also developed more confidence and leadership skills when it comes to coaching and will probably do a level-one coaching course very soon. Also, it's good interacting with the main coach because he is an inspirational and acts as a role model to me on

account of his table tennis ability. That's the level I would like to get to."

— Benjamin Barbarash

"For the past few weeks I have been volunteering at the All Aboard charity shop in Golders Green. I have helped by sorting through donations and organising those that are fit for sale. I have also done steaming of smarter clothing and operated the till when necessary. I have helped too with tagging clothes and organising the store."

— Mohammed Alsabty

"I volunteer at the Mind charity shop in Highgate, and normally my volunteering consists of pricing items, going through donations and helping on the shop floor. I really enjoy volunteering there. The staff are all very welcoming."

— Amelie Cunningham

— Contributions by M. Reiderman

Economics Lectures



This term, as part of the Enrichment Programme, the Economics Department ran a series of lectures on Friday afternoons given by academics from the University of Cambridge. Humanities and Social Sciences Subject Partnerships Coordinator Jade Jenkinson facilitated the participation of a number of talented Economics students from Michaela Community School in these gatherings.

The talks included:

- **The Economy after Brexit and Covid** (Professor Tony Cockerill)
- **An Introduction to Econometrics** (Professor Debopam Bhattacharya)
- **Introduction to Game Theory** (Professor Tony Cockerill)
- **Conservation and the Economy** (Vassilis Gkoumas)
- **Agricultural Policy and Optimal Rural Land Usage** (Professor Ian Hodge)
- **Climate Change in Latin America** (Miguel Saldivia)

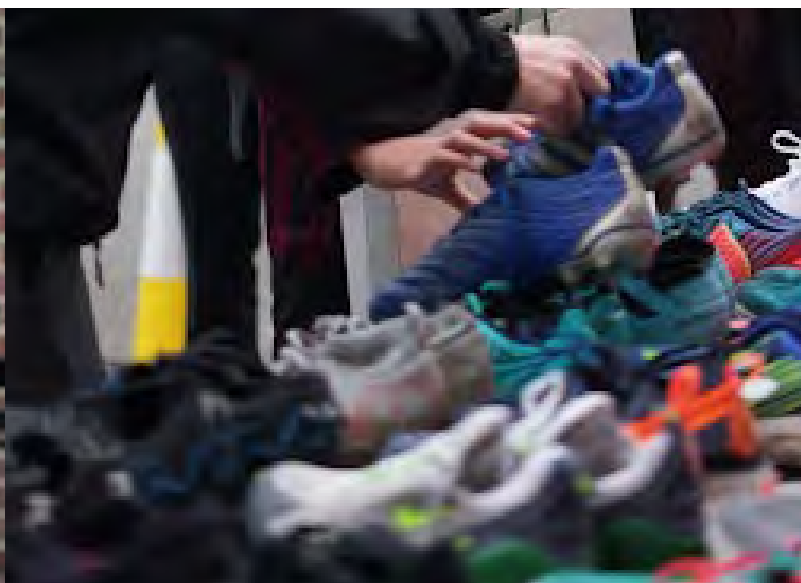
Our pupils made the most of these sessions by taking down notes and asking pertinent questions of the speakers. Our Cambridge applicants also had a pre-lecture audience with each of the speakers where they were able to go into greater depth about the topic and even ask questions about the application process.

‘It’s been a pleasure to establish a working relationship with The Michaela School and I’m really excited to develop this further as the academic year unfolds’
 — J Jenkinson (Subject Partnerships Coordinator, Social Science and Humanities)

‘They really enjoyed it. Our teacher said that they were made to feel very welcome and they were pleased that they had the opportunity to ask questions. Thanks so much for the opportunity’
 — M Taylor (Head of Sixth at Michaela Community School)

— Contributions by S. Bennett and P. Fernando

Bloomsbury Kit Collection



Bloomsbury Football Foundation and UCS have worked in partnership for several years now, with a number of pupils volunteering with Bloomsbury to assist their coaches during training sessions. November saw the launch of the ReBoot scheme in which UCS pupils donated over 500 pairs of football boots and trainers they had outgrown. Via its network of schools, community groups and local councils, Bloomsbury distributed these donated items to young people across London who would struggle to afford new pairs.

“We are delighted that the UCS Senior School and Junior Branch supported Bloomsbury Football Foundation’s ReBoot scheme on Friday 19 November. Bloomsbury Football aims to improve the lives of young people in London using the power of football and to ensure that every child has the opportunity to play irrespective of their family’s ability to pay. We recognise that in addition to the fees charged by clubs, the cost of boots is also a barrier to participation. ReBoot aims to tackle this by collecting

boots and trainers that children no longer need and getting them up and running on new feet. The 500-plus pairs donated by pupils of UCS will provide hundreds of children in the local area with the opportunity to take part in our regular football programmes. Otherwise they might have been precluded from participating.”

— Charlie Hyman, CEO and founder of Bloomsbury Football Foundation

— Contributions by M. Reiderman

Cards of Care



For the second year running, UCS pupils have designed and created hundreds of festive cards with personalised messages to older members of the local community. Sadly, whether in a state of lockdown or not, older people are especially vulnerable to loneliness and social isolation which can lead to a serious decline in health and wellbeing. The writing of festive cards is a collaborative project between UCS and an organisation called Cards of Care whose aim is to ensure that “social isolation doesn’t have to mean loneliness”.

Pupils designed and wrote their cards in Form Time and a group of Transitus pupils spent an afternoon sorting the cards to make sure they were headed to the correct person in the correct location. Their care and organisation made the whole operation run smoothly and they should be proud of the impact they have had.

“Thank you so much for once again supporting Cards of Care. We are so grateful to UCS for always being

one of the first schools to jump into action and shower the residents in care with light and love to brighten their world!”

— Nicci Menashe, Founder of Cards of Care

— Contributions by M. Reiderman

Drama



As I type, the Lund Theatre is buzzing with 21 Sixth students taking part in a Brecht workshop to aid their A Level devising process, led by industry professional Nick O'Brien. Tomorrow, yet more of the same students will be attending the dress-rehearsal for Deme Drama, and a week from now the same stage will host the *Black Minds Matter Cabaret* organised by Arista Abbabatulla, a student of Drama and member of the Sixth Form Union. Our Middle School Production, *Shakespeare In Love*, has now been cast. Ms Alborn, the director, auditioned scores of young actors and was hugely impressed by the talent, appetite and professionalism of the auditionees. With a cast of 31, this will be a fantastic ensemble comedy and a welcome return to the stage for the Middle School. The launch of Trinity acting lessons has been a triumph. Mr Swanson's energetic, inventive, entertaining and zealous lessons have proven a real hit, with lessons oversubscribed and the students well on their way to achieving fantastic examination grades next term.

Our Senior School Production, *The Illusion*, was magical. Our Transitus and Sixth pupils – many of whom are not students of academic drama –

worked together tirelessly and tenaciously through self-isolation and blended-rehearsing, through thick and thin, and ended up with a sensational production which could not have been a more fitting return to live theatre in the Lund. From Carys Bedford's set design to Zoe Davis' costume design; from Oliver Sykes' assistant direction to Sofia Rehman's marketing; or from Emilio RevelChion's stage management to Ms Tran's movement direction, this was a true ensemble piece. All of this was expertly tied together with typical precision and style by Mr Abbott, who worked indefatigably on this piece and to whom we are all very grateful. Off stage, our pupils have also enjoyed the resumption of live theatre trips this term. Our Transitus and Sixth were in the room where it happens – the Victoria Palace Theatre – where they were blown away by *Hamilton*, while the Remove got their first dose of live theatre this year at the Wyndham's Theatre with *Life of Pi*. It's been a really busy term for Drama and Dance, and we are all the better for it.

— Contributions by C. Bhantoo

Return to the Lund: The Illusion



It had been 20 months since the last school production and we – staff and pupils – could not have been more delighted to invite you back into the Lund Theatre for this year’s Senior School Production.

During one rehearsal, I told the cast how Corneille had described the play as “*un étrange monstre*” and, although they were a little preoccupied by my terrible pronunciation, I was attempting to convey that *The Illusion* is a consciously imaginative and deliberately quirky, mercurial beast of a play. It is mainly a comedy but it’s also a melodrama, and kind of – well, a little bit of – a tragedy. It’s a love story and it’s a drama about fathers and sons and fathers and daughters. When Corneille wrote his strange monster in 1636, it was considered too avant garde, and not just because of its mischievous meddlings with genre and structure. Kushner’s free adaptation of this play retains the invention of the original text, while developing the great twist at the end of the story. In fact, it was this very twist at the end of the play that encouraged us to choose *The Illusion* to reopen the Lund Theatre after so long.

If the play really is the monster that its playwright described it as, then it is undoubtedly the job of the cast and crew to tame it. And so we started each rehearsal, sat around a table, unpicking every intricacy in the text. That is what really impressed me about the cast: their understanding of the academic alertness required when acting; they cared not only about how the play looked, but about how it sounded. Then we moved on to staging the scenes, and their bizarrely brilliant comedic inventions all too often left Ms Tran, Mr Bhantoa and me in hysterics.

For the first time, we expanded our production team by appointing Sixth pupils in newly created roles. They were at the very heart of the creative process, with Zoe Davis as costume designer, Sofia Rehman as assistant producer, Emilio Revel-Chion as deputy stage manager and Oliver Sykes as assistant director. I cannot overstate how impressed I was by their professionalism and innovative contributions to this production. The stage crew, as ever, were essential in the preparation of the production.

Return to the Lund: The Illusion



At one point, the Lund was overrun by an army of 30 pupils who were diligently cutting fabric to realise set designer Carys Bedford's uniquely ambitious vision, while a swarm of Sixth Formers rigged a light under the guidance of our Theatre Manager, Martin Hutchings. Meanwhile, members of the cast emailed me with offers to attend extra rehearsals as we navigated around the inevitable hurdle of self-isolation related absences.

It would seem that the long famine of live theatre from school life had only increased our pupils' appetite for that uniquely communal, important, magical thing that is a school production.

— *Contributions by C. Abbott*

Return to the Lund: The Illusion



We welcomed a number of pupils from the London Academy of Excellence (LAE) to the performances of *The Illusion* and they very kindly agreed to review the production. This involvement was facilitated by Subject Partnerships Coordinator (Performing Arts), Connor Abbott.

“Twenty months since the last school production, parents and peers gathered to witness the long-awaited reopening of the Lund Theatre with an incredible Senior School production of ‘The Illusion’, performed by pupils in Transitus and Sixth.

“Originally written by Pierre Corneille in 1636, ‘L’Illusion comique’ was considered an experimental and advanced play for its time – Corneille tampers with and twists the traditional rules of playwriting, which was unfamiliar to 17th-century audiences. For this exact reason, it was also considered too radical and was forgotten until later adapted by Tony Kushner in 1988 as ‘The Illusion’.

“The play follows Pridamant, a regretful father, in search of his son whom he banished 15 years ago. Pridamant journeys to wizard Alcandre, who grants him three visions of his son. However, when the visions begin, his son’s identity transforms into

three parallel versions. Soon enough, Pridamant finds himself caught within the visions, as the lines between reality and façade are blurred by Alcandre’s illusions.

“The near-impossible feat of conveying a ‘mise en abyme’ (a story within a story) was superbly accomplished by the cast, with mention to set designer, Carys Bedford. The immediately impressive set transformed the Lund Theatre’s stage into an ominous cave and the ingenious construction of a visible stage behind the cave’s walls perfectly conveyed Alcandre’s illusions coming to life. Moreover, off-stage successes reflected on-stage triumphs – in particular, formidable performances from Amiran Antadze and Eddie Baum playing Pridamant and The Amanuensis, who embodied their tragi-comic characters, eliciting both laughs and sorrows from the audience.

“All in all, I really enjoyed the evening, and it was a pleasure to see such an incredible show from our partner school, UCS. A great success for director Connor Abbott and all the pupils working on the play since September.”

— Uzaima Khan (LAE, Stratford)

Return to the Lund: The Illusion



“The Illusion’ is a play written by playwright Tony Kushner, loosely adapted from Pierre Corneille’s play titled ‘L’Illusion comique’. The play begins with Pridamant entering a dark cave, asking for the magician named Alcandre. With the help of Alcandre’s magical powers, Pridamant can find his estranged son and see what his life is like through magical visions. The play continues with Pridamant and Alcandre watching these visions as Pridamant’s son’s life unfolds in front of him. The son is trying to win the affections of young Melibea, but forces conspire against their relationship.

“This very engaging and dramatic play was brought to life by an impressive set design – mirrors in the walls created mystery and could shift upwards and downwards to let people into the visions and out of the scenes. Brilliant lighting was used throughout the visions, as yellow/white light symbolised the action, while the light abruptly switched to purple whenever the father intervened in the illusions.

“The main characters in the three different illusions (Calisto, Melibea and Elicia) change names and

appearances (courtesy of different actors) in each scene, but they are still distinct to the audience as their clothing matches their previous self. There are various soliloquies throughout, mostly by Prince Florilame, rival of Calisto, which are used to confess love using imagery and poetic language.

“Throughout this play the sorcerer’s slave plays a comedic role as he mimics the father and Matamore provides comedy as they embark upon random outbursts. The father, the sorcerer and his slave sit in the back of the first two illusions: Pridamant interrupts many times, questioning Alcandre who usually doesn’t give palpable answers – instead clicking his fingers to recommence the action.

“Initially Pridamant despises his son since he has run away from home, but after the illusions he begins to grow fond of him and wills him on in his quest for love. This climaxes in the final illusion where the son (now named Theogenes) is imprisoned due to his love for Hippolyta, but breaks free and runs away with the maid and the princess. Theogenes attempts to court her and is almost successful, but when she

Return to the Lund: The Illusion



leaves he is stabbed by a third suitor (and his gang) and he perishes. The father feels deep sorrow over his son's death, weeping and mourning for him, wishing he could reverse his fate.

“However, this is where the resolution occurs: the father is told by the sorcerer that his son is an actor and has not actually been living the scenes but merely playing the parts. His father is at first overjoyed but then feels angered that his son has amounted to no more than an actor since leaving home. The father pays the sorcerer for his troubles and sets off to find his son at a theatre in Paris. The moral message of the play is that you should be grateful for your children; the same lesson learned by the father in regaining an emotional connection with his son.

*“The play ends dramatically, leaving room for the audience to question what is reality and what is an illusion. It is a phenomenal play, acted superbly with efficient support from the stage crew.”
— Harry Baynes (LAE, Stratford).*

Hamilton Trip Reviews



Acting

On Wednesday 10 November, the Drama pupils in the Transitus and Sixth watched *Hamilton* at the Victoria Palace Theatre. This is a musical so renowned for its brilliance that the audience are often cheering and laughing before a character has even said a word. Whereas often an audience may need to settle into a production and hold their judgement during the opening sequences, this show has become so well loved that even before the safety announcement is over the entire auditorium is enraptured. The unprecedented fanfare around Lin-Manuel Miranda's masterpiece, the near insurmountable heights of expectation inspired by his musical genius, may suggest that (especially if one has seen it before, as I had) there is no scenario whereby it could eclipse existing anticipation levels and attain even higher echelons.

And yet it does. The detail is so minute that, even as a repeat viewer, you see new things. There is a reason why Angelica Schuyler's quick-witted, raw, soul-bearing ballad 'Satisfied' has over 180 million plays on Spotify, and the first song, aptly named 'Alexander Hamilton', more than 200 million. The soundtrack is of such high quality that it sometimes feels as much like a concert as it does a musical.

There is never a song too lyrically repetitive or time-filling; rather, the genre-blend of pop, hip-hop and more traditional musical theatre creates a shifting, immersing soundscape that connects with those of all ages. The movement and lighting are spectacular, though the spectacle never feels forced; it instead feels necessary in order to match the sheer grandeur of the music.

And if there is any notion that the soundtrack, the lighting and the physical theatre leave the acting to suffer in comparison, this is immediately quelled by the two leads. Alexander Hamilton is innocent, young, inspires excitement, but is most importantly an intellectual 'prodigy of Princeton College'. While the performance doesn't quite capture Hamilton's insolence and cheekiness, every other key facet of the character is made evident to the audience, and the actor achieves the most important thing of all – to put us squarely on Hamilton's side, to make sure that it is Hamilton we are rooting for. The actor playing Aaron Burr is perfect. The constantly repressed rage, the need for social perfection and to reach the top of the social ladder – a need he never is able to fulfil – is captured perfectly, making his (very literal) explosion at the end of the play all the more satisfying.

Hamilton Trip Reviews



Discussing the musical afterwards, there was not a single person left dissatisfied. The anticipation was justified. The production reached the highest echelons of excellence. There was really only one burning question which remained: did Hamilton throw away his shot?

— *Contributions by O. Sykes*

Lighting and Sound

We went to see *Hamilton* on Wednesday 10 November at the Victoria Palace Theatre. The show from a technical perspective was fantastic, from dramatic lighting states to the subtle yet impressive set design.

The lighting was carefully used to reflect the mood of the scene and often the drama involved, such as flashing lights which were on beat with the music and dancing happening on stage. Another feature of the lighting were the profile spotlights deployed to create sharp-edged circles of light around actors

on stage, resulting in powerful visual imaging. Furthermore, the double spotlight for the Burr vs Hamilton fight emphasised the importance of the duel and how both characters were locked in battle with each other. The two spotlights were also kept separate to demonstrate how, by the end, there was a complete breakdown in communication between Hamilton and Burr which ultimately led to their final duel.

All the sounds were produced by a live orchestra, so it was fantastic to hear continuous live music throughout the show. Echoes were frequently used in scenes, for example when Burr sang about shooting Hamilton in the first scene. This highlights the moment's significance to the audience, making it more pronounced. In the song 'Battle of Yorktown', meanwhile, the cannon sound really engaged the audience and added layers to the song.

— *Contributions by S. Beard & C. Willmot*

The Return of Practical Exams



In October, over 60 students of GCSE and A Level Drama performed their practical pieces to an audience of parents, staff and friends in the Lund Theatre.

Upper Remove students were tasked with responding to a stimulus (a photo, a poem, a newspaper headline, etc.), creating a piece of drama in reaction to that stimulus and performing it in the style of verbatim. Verbatim theatre uses the words of real-life people as a script, which allows for forensic examinations of topical issues. Topics ranged from the ethics of Disney to coming out as gay, and all of the pieces demonstrated great intellectual curiosity, creativity and sensitivity.

A week later our A Level students performed their reinterpretations of scenes from Brecht's *Mother Courage* and Miller's *All My Sons*. These were touching, imaginative and ambitious productions which demonstrated students' wide-ranging skills in acting, movement and singing.

In both year groups, some students opted to be assessed on their design skills. This led to some fantastic lighting states and sound cues, overseen by our Theatre Manager, Martin Hutchings, and delivered on the department's suite of industry-standard lighting and sound equipment.

— Contributions by C. Bhantoo

Music: Autumn Concert



Large scale ensembles made a long anticipated return the Great Hall in the form of the Autumn Concert on Thursday December 2nd. Concert Band opened proceedings, filling the open spaces with the potent mix of massed woodwind, brass and percussion instrumental colours. Vaughan Williams's *English Folk Song Suite* was performed with precision and verve under Mr Walton's baton, with a standout clarinet solo from David Verran in the haunting setting of *My Bonny Boy*. Next up was *Malagueña* by Ernesto Lecuona, known in his time as the 'Cuban Gershwin', and the spotlight shifted to the percussion section who tackled the pulsating Latin rhythms with flair. By way of contrast Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Mr Gibson, brought a real sense of intimacy to Mozart's *Piano Concerto in D Minor K466*. Leo Sassoon delivered the solo part with an exceptionally mature sense of style, drawing luminous cantabile tone and rippling passagework from the Great Hall Steinway. The first half closed with two superlative performances from Senior Jazz, directed by Mr Da Silva. Bobby Timmons's

Moanin' was characterised by an easy going bluesy swing, while Randy Brecker's *Some Skunk Funk* scintillated with its driving grooves, siren head choruses, and virtuoso solos from Joe Young (trombone) and Max Globokar (electric guitar).

The second half saw another outstanding concerto performance in the shape of Charlie Tyler in Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No 2*. Charlie appeared to have mastered the formidable technical challenges of the solo part with ease and projected the music with power and lyrical sweep; Symphony Orchestra relished the magnificent melodies and sumptuous sound world under Mr Dawe's direction. Finally, the evening closed with Mr Gibson conducting Mussorgsky's *Night On A Bare Mountain* in a fiery performance that brought out every possible ounce of drama from scurrying strings, shrieking woodwind, and demonic brass.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Ensembles Concert



After a two-year absence, a large-scale concert in the Great Hall, in front of parents, finally returned to the UCS calendar in the form of the Ensembles' Concert on Wednesday 17 November. This concert showcased many of the smaller ensembles run by the Music Department across all year groups and formed a celebration of the sheer range and diversity of what is on offer.

In an event featuring no fewer than 12 performances there is insufficient space to do everything justice, but a number of themes emerged. First, the accomplishment of Lower School groups, ranging from the finesse of String Orchestra in *'Rey's Theme'* from Star Wars, the commitment of Big Band in Herbie Hancock's *'Watermelon Man'*, through to the infectiously enthusiastic singing of Boys' Choir in Dan Ludford-Thomas's *'We Will Find a Way'*. Second, the excellence of woodwind and brass playing that included a toe-tapping rendition of Sondheim's *'Broadway Baby'* by the UCS Brass Quintet, a performance of Beethoven's *String Quartet in F*

that was full of sensitive light and shade and the tremendous achievement of the Flute Group, comprising Entry and Shell pupils, in bringing off the ensemble challenges of Spanish Love Songs. Finally, there were some outstanding Chamber Music from the Lower Remove Piano Trio, scintillating in Haydn's *'Gypsy Rondo'*; the Verpoest Piano Trio, stylish and assured in Beethoven's Variations; and the Senior String Quartet simply outstanding in a stunning reading of Shostakovich's *String Quartet No 8* that will last long in the memory of everyone privileged to be present.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Trombone Masterclass



On Wednesday 10 November an audience of UCS brass players, their parents, and staff were treated to a Trombone Masterclass by Matthew Gee. Matthew is one of the UK's premier exponents of this fascinating and complex instrument, serving as principal trombonist of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Aurora Orchestra, as well as having a busy solo career during which he has released four solo albums and commissioned many new pieces for the trombone. He also teaches at the Royal Academy of Music and is president of the British Trombone Society.

The Masterclass started with contrasting performances by Matthew Gee himself, first the avant garde *Improvisation No. 1 for Trombone* by Enrique Crespo, which exploited the dramatic power and huge range of the instrument, followed by the sweet lyricism of Elgar's 'Chanson de Matin', originally conceived for solo violin. This was followed by UCS trombonist Joe Young who was coached in JS Bach's 'Courante' from *Cello Suite No 4*: a recurring theme of the evening was the

need for trombonists to borrow repertoire from other instrumentalists as music written for the instrument itself is somewhat limited! Hector Hills then followed with Ferdinand David's *Concertino* – one of the very few concertos written for the trombone in the 19th century.

Throughout the Masterclass, Matthew Gee gave invaluable technical tips to Joe and Hector and generously shared with the rest of us a treasure trove of insights on practice and performance that he has gained as an elite performer down the years. The two UCS trombonists acquitted themselves wonderfully well in the spotlight, and a special thanks was due to Margaret Czapor for her sensitive and supportive piano accompaniment throughout.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Rugby



1st XV

The UCS 1st XV made excellent progress as a squad despite a tough season with injuries. The team learned a great deal and were able to develop their communication and organisational skills as a group while maintaining a strong mentality regardless of setbacks. The 1st XV managed to start the season strongly, with a convincing win against Queen Elizabeth's, Barnet showcasing tactical awareness, adaptability and fight throughout the game. The 24-11 scoreline was generous to the opposition who couldn't handle UCS's kicking game spearheaded by Joe Abrahams and Toby Sawtell.

Then came Merchant Taylors' School, a particularly strong outfit that really challenged the UCS boys. Despite the unfavourable scoreline and injuries, however, the team put up a great fight and were rewarded for their efforts with two tries. An admirable improvement followed against Shiplake College and UCS were unlucky to lose 31-17,

having maintained a sportsmanlike attitude with real determination and willingness to get back into the contest.

Next up, a nail-biter against Watford Grammar School. UCS led till the last touch of the match, a costly missed tackle which allowed their full-back to run the length of the pitch and score the eventual winning points.

Finally, UCS played Latymer Upper School and completed a comprehensive victory with impressive performances from Yugi Ishizuka-Wright and Shunta Goto.

Regardless of the defeats, the UCS team will remember this season proudly, with many Transitus boys stepping up and assuming important roles. The forwards made impressive strides in organisation, helping to guide the team during tough moments throughout the campaign. Nevzat Tosun-Stone, Theo Falconer and Ben Macdonald

Rugby



were influential in driving the side forward with a willingness to compete in every possible way. Alex Benson played a huge part at full-back with ball in hand, also displaying fantastic kicking ability.

The squad should be very proud of how they have overcome challenges this term and would like to thank Mr Brown for his continued support and leadership throughout.

— *Contributions by L. Joseph*

U14As

So far, the rugby season for the U14As has been quite turbulent, despite several resounding victories over teams such as Queen Elizabeth's, Merchant Taylors', Watford Grammar and Richard Hale. However, these results have been counterbalanced by a few disappointing ones; for instance, Windsor Boys outclassed us on the day, and most recently UCS suffered misfortune in the Middlesex County Cup semi-finals with a narrow loss to the London Oratory.

Even so, the greatest thing that this season has given us is an implementation of new intricate and flowing plays into our naturally athletic and powerful rugby, something that seemed a distant dream at the start of the campaign. Moreover, the squad depth is immense, with lots of very skilled players making competition for places fierce and leaving every boy needing to pull their weight. With players such as Jacob Colman and Theo Fairclough making debuts, and many more threatening every single position on the pitch, this has only pushed us and made us strive to be better.

We began the campaign with a set of strong powerful forwards, including Ayaan Sanger, Luka Moriarty, Victor Rancon, Theo Sawtell, Daniel McAndrew, Adam Faidi, Gulliver Lewis, Michael Mouskos, Charlie Lewis and Theo Fairclough. Each of these boys really stepped up their game and delivered crucial performances combined with maximum effort. Their contribution has been complemented by the sheer athleticism and precision of a back line featuring names like: Ollie

Rugby



Kramer, Monty Jones, Oli Benjamin, Rafi Bartfield, Leon Velay, Ben Krol, Matteo Roberts, Jaydon Jacobs and Jacob Colman. Certainly, the U14As have a formidable line-up and a strong platform to build on. It's only a matter of time before the international scouts show up!

— *Contributions by A. Sanger*

U13As

The U13A team started the season well as the opening game against Queen Elizabeth's saw UCS come out strong winners, 30-5. The try scorers were Michael French, Tomoya Hartley (2), Guy Reuben and George Skrypec (2).

The winning streak carried on into the second fixture where UCS beat St Paul's 15-10, with tries from Alec Lyons, Michael French and Tomoya Hartley. Unfortunately, the victorious run ended, albeit honourably, against Watford Grammar School. The match was extremely close and finished up as a 25-25 draw. Both teams put in a brilliant effort, with our tries scored by Tomoya Hartley (3),

Dylan Kremer and Sammy Kain.

The next opposition were Haberdashers' and UCS got back to winning ways with Tomoya Hartley (2), Sammy Kain (3), Monty Dunn and Samuel Fielden helping the side prevail in a high-scoring contest, 35-25.

Sadly, our unbeaten sequence was broken when we played St George's, in what was another try-fest. UCS performed brilliantly but couldn't quite get the win. If the victory went to St George's, 45-35, Tomoya Hartley still claimed four tries and Michael French three. The top-scoring Hartley has crossed the line in every game, scoring a stunning total of 12 tries from five matches.

At the time of going to print, the team were also playing at the Middlesex Festival. Lots of great games and tries scored, although no final results since this was a festival and not a competition or tournament.

— *Contributions by G. Reuben*

Netball



With Covid restrictions relaxing, the UCS netball team have finally been able to make a return – or, for some, a start – to training and matches. It has been really exciting to get back into the norms of netball and to be given the chance to train free from the limits of social distancing. With an excellent squad of Transitus and Sixth girls, we have been thrilled to finally be able to put all of our hard work and training into practice and play competitively as a team against other schools.

In recent weeks, the UCS first team have shown such resilience, camaraderie and determination in training and when competing against other sides – South Hampstead and Highgate, to name a few – and on many occasions have returned to UCS victorious! A year of netball amid Covid has certainly fostered an even greater appreciation among the girls for restriction-free play and, as a team, we are all so excited about what the rest of the academic year has in store.

— Contributions by S. Zamet

Velodrome Cycling



A team of six riders from Frognaal have made their debuts at Herne Hill's historic track this year. It is a crucial development for them, because track-riders need – and therefore will hone and nurture – their skills of balance, awareness, safety in the peloton, pushing hard on the straights and gunning for the banks. Track bikes are simple and can be unforgiving: they represent cycling in its purest form – don't be looking for the brake hoods or the free wheel; stay low down in the drops; push the pedals; feel the steel; look before you make a move. UCS riders have slotted in with girls and boys from Dulwich College and Alleyn's, and can boast of having been coached by Joseph and Tony, both with young Brit track stars to their names.

The Frognaal team have put down some scorching times, already in anticipation of their inaugural inter-school fixture next May. Helmets, gloves and bikes (and sometimes an ice cream) provided – all you require is the ability to ride, a good base level

of fitness, and some staying power and vision. No previous experience is necessary: in no time at all your coaches will have you slipstreaming Pairs on the Blue or chasing Tony's Fat Rat. This is a Games option like no other, an opportunity to make your street cycling more savvy, and a chance to see and to race in a historic London Velodrome, home of the 1948 Olympics. Transport on Thameslink takes 20 minutes.

As coach Joseph says, at Herne Hill Velodrome the Olympic dream never ends. Speak to Mr Mee for more details or to join the Google Classroom in order to see the UCS team in action.

— Contributions by A. Mee

Football



1st XI

Although only a year and a half had passed since our players had last participated in UCS football fixtures, for many students it felt like an eternity. This made the start of the school year an especially exciting one for pupils who could not bear the drought any longer.

With Covid restrictions easing, our new Kantor Centre in pristine condition, and the pitches cut to perfection, an inevitably busy Autumn Term of football was in store for all ages. In fact, every age group has experienced some competitive football this term, because they all entered the local Middlesex Cup.

Much of the ensuing success in these fixtures has come down to the Tuesday-night training sessions, which have united the players as well as allowing them to improve their ball-handling skills. These various activities have focused primarily on developing pupils to play in the UCS way: keeping possession and having players be comfortable on the ball. Attendance numbers have been encouragingly high this term too; particularly noteworthy the commitment shown and high

attendance from Transitus and Sixth girls. However, all our players have worked admirably hard during the sessions, something which will pay off as the season gets busier with more matches. The boys and girls squads are both looking significantly strong!

The under-18s and 17s have had many productive sessions, improving their composure on the ball and showing a strong attitude. This positive mentality has prevailed throughout their fixtures. You could chart it back to their very first session, when Mr Sousa appeared with a fresh bag of balls of the highest quality. From this point, an enthusiastic tone was set in training, and such positivity has continued to flourish. The 1st XI hit form in the early stages of their cup journey as, with faith in Mr Sousa's philosophy and ideas, strong team performances were achieved against the likes of Fortismere School and Highgate Wood.

The involvement of players across the entire school has also been a source of genuine promise this autumn, and pupils should be confident that a fun and competitive campaign now lies ahead.

— Contributions by S. Abrahams

Update from The Alumni Office



The start of the new academic year witnessed a return to some degree of normalcy for the Alumni Office and the Old Gowers' Club. After more than a year of postponed events, we were finally able to resume in-person gatherings (more on that to follow). It really has been wonderful to see people in person again, and we hope that 2022 offers the same opportunities. Certainly, there is a lot to look forward to during the new calendar year – the Class of 1997's 25-year reunion, the Old Gowers' Annual Dinner, the Class of 1972's 50-year reunion, and much more.

We were also very excited to hear about the release of *Behind the Bar*, a murder-thriller shot ten years ago in West Hampstead, which features the changing rooms of the old UCS Pavilion. The film, directed and produced by Conrad Blakemore (OG 1974–78), will be shown on television on 12 December, from 3.15am on London Live.

On behalf of the Old Gowers' Club, we want to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season, and all the best for the new year!

On 9th September, we were thrilled to be able to welcome back 150 former pupils and current staff to the Great Hall for a celebration of the Class of 2020. Their time at UCS was cut short after the start of the original lockdown in March 2020, and it was wonderful to see so many of them back at school after so long.

Mr Beard spoke first, followed by former Co-Captains of Monitors, Jack Paul and Sima Ogden. They concluded their words by leading us in a rousing rendition of *'Paulatim'*, with Nicolas Sanschagrín accompanying on the piano. We tried to incorporate fun elements into the evening, such as a photobooth and an ice-cream trolley. Those extras seemed like a hit and may well have to be a permanent feature at our events from now on!

All of the 2020 leavers have gone on to do really exciting and interesting things after UCS, and it was great to catch up with them. We can't wait to see them again at future Old Gower events.

— Contributions by E. Dwek

2021 Act of Remembrance and Headmaster's Brunch



The Act of Remembrance is one of the most special and moving events in the school calendar, and it is further enhanced by including members of the Old Gower community. Each year, there is an open invitation to OGs to join UCS as we remember those who gave their lives so that we could be free. It is poignant to see the names of fallen Old Gowers on the memorials from the Boer War, World War One and World War Two.

In 2020, we were unable to invite anyone to school because of the pandemic, so instead we made available a livestream of the ceremony. Although this wasn't quite the same as being able to do the ceremony in person, it actually meant that more OGs could participate – from London, the UK and further afield. In consequence, we have made the livestream a permanent fixture of the Act of Remembrance.

This year, we were pleased to welcome nearly 40 OGs and guests back to school for the Act of Remembrance, followed by a brunch hosted by the Headmaster in the Gower Room.

— Contributions by E. Dwek

