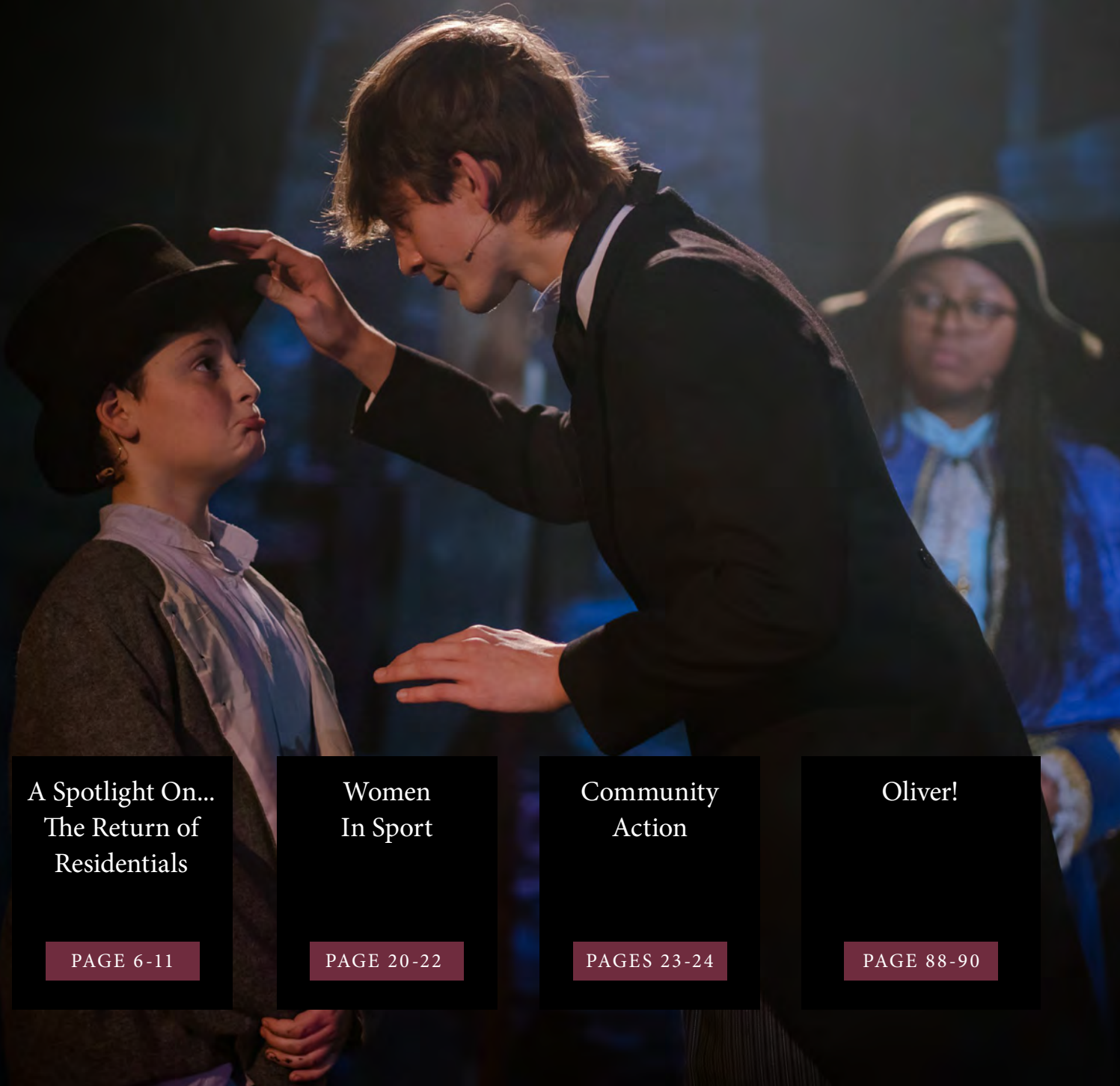


THE FROGNAL

UCS NEWSLETTER — ISSUE DECEMBER 2022

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



A Spotlight On...
The Return of
Residentials

PAGE 6-11

Women
In Sport

PAGE 20-22

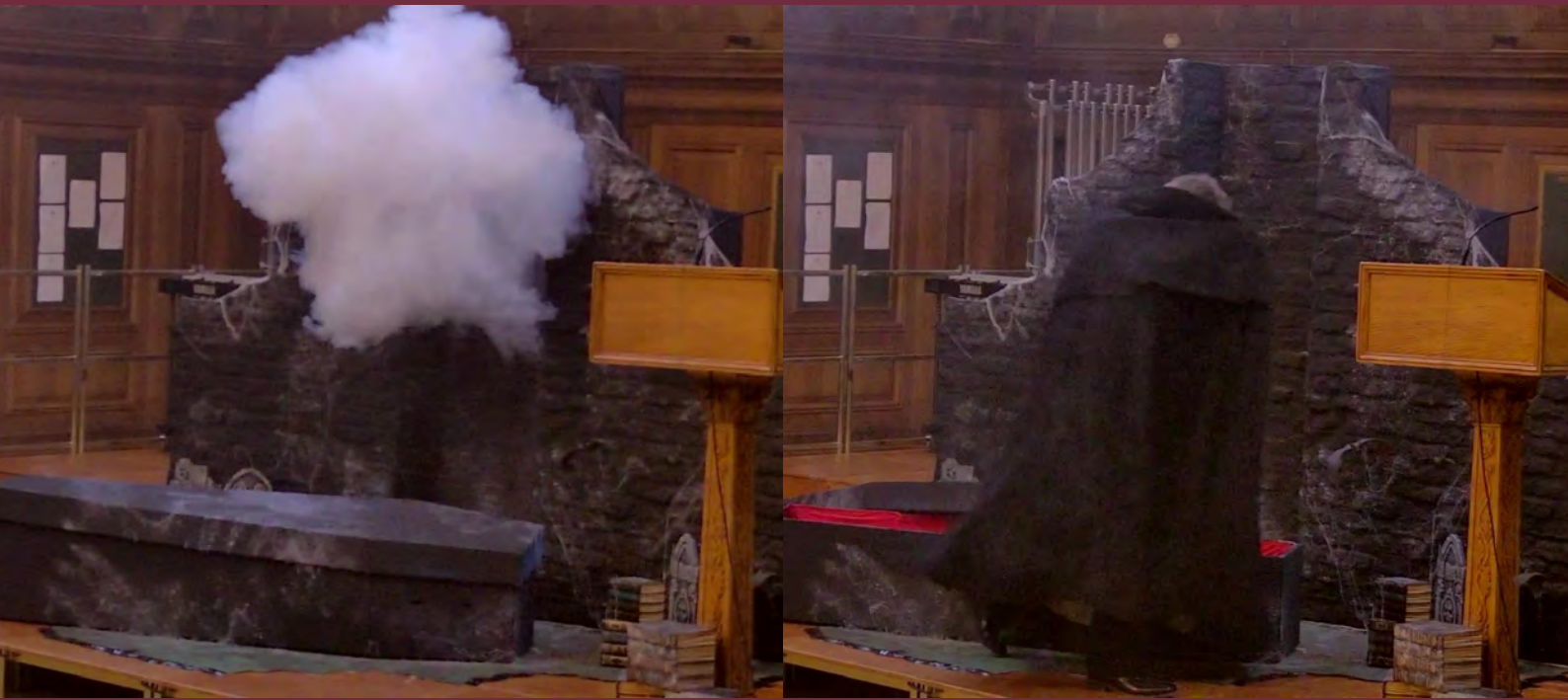
Community
Action

PAGES 23-24

Oliver!

PAGE 88-90

Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frogнал



Last Friday morning before school, I found myself lying in a coffin. For those of you who do this routinely, you will know it presents a quiet opportunity to contemplate life, the universe and everything. But this particular coffin was in the Great Hall, positioned on the staging used the night before at the breath-taking Autumn Concert. What a masterclass in how groups of people, bound by common purpose and fellowship, can create something so powerful and positive, often greater than the sum of its parts.

If I listened carefully enough, I could still hear the reverberation of the very last note of the night, that emphatic E played in unison by cello and bass at the conclusion of the first movement of Rachmaninov's stirring second symphony. This triggered a memory of the solo trumpet calling out the soulful notes of the Last Post at our Act of Remembrance in November, an important

occasion for our community, including Old Gowers, to come together to honour the fallen and remember why they died.

My mind then moved me to a different darkened space, to the audience of the Lund Theatre when we heard the final bars of Oliver! What a show that was, and one of the finest examples you could hope to witness where, again, a seemingly eclectic group of pupils spanning the complete age range from 11 to 18, are encouraged to work together to produce sheer joy.

My reverie was interrupted by new sounds perforating through to my entombed ears as the school started to stir to life. Footfall in the Hall; calm adult voices of staff consulting one another over the upcoming day's business; pupils cheerily greeting each other right across the balcony. Form Room doors and Office doors alike opening,

Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frognaal



shutting or slamming depending on the energy levels of those concerned.

Then I could hear what I knew were the Lower School pupils assembling in the Hall and, from above, came a spooky noise as the school organ came to life, filling the entire space with a haunting cacophony that built ever more eerily to an anticipatory crescendo. There was sudden silence and then, very nearby, a massive crack sounded out, nearly giving me a heart attack which would have delivered me to the maker most conveniently. Instead, Count Dracula emerged from the coffin and stalked across the stage to talk to the Lower School about this year's Mufti Day theme: characters from fiction.

And at that Mufti Day, the school raised a record £2,000 for charity, showing the buy-in and generosity of spirit that typifies the UCS

community. Indeed, it is always at this time of the year that the word 'community' assumes the quality of a mantra. That's partly to do with the cheer-leading promotional work that, by early December, has underpinned our annual fundraising drive, Community Action, for at least the previous six weeks.

I like to think there is a healthy balance to Community Action. Under its comprehensive umbrella, there is never a diminishing of an individual Deme, House, year group or sectional identity; if anything, these groups are strengthened by the sheer intensity of the activities which pupils undertake alongside their nearest peers with such camaraderie and generosity. And yet, at the same time, the various pupil groupings do pull together in the same direction. There is unity of purpose in their diversity.

Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frognal



It is the quality and rightness of their closest relationships that will enable pupils to go forth and share their gifts with the wider school community and local community. For this reason, we insist on good habits and strong values ab initio. We set a great store by ‘kindness’, as a starting point for pupils and not just an idealised destination. One article in this publication explains the induction process for students joining our Sixth Form – and describes how one pupil’s first day was memorable for “how kind and warm the teachers are” and “the feeling of mutual support in every classroom”. We may be getting the balance right.

This term, UCS pupils have stepped out into the wider north London community. Transitus students have participated in weekly volunteering with local organisations every Friday afternoon. Middle School pupils have lined up to volunteer as

literacy mentors to local primary school children. Lower School boys helped to tidy up Hampstead Heath and, at their own instigation, set up a winter coat collection for WrapUp London. And that’s before we mention the now canonical pupil-led October collection for North Paddington Foodbank.

In the same spirit of collaboration, pupils from UCS and LAE Stratford – one of our partner schools – worked together on an Art project which was inspired by Oliver! Rehearsals and which crystallised into the ‘Breaking Character’ exhibition in the Lund Gallery concurrent with the musical itself.

Community and being one with each other is, of course, a theme of this time of year. So, I wish all members of the UCS family a happy festive season

Welcome To The Autumn Term Edition Of The Frogнал



while also thanking you for the term that is just ending. We actually began the Autumn Term by joining together to mourn Her late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Hopefully the school activities of the subsequent months show that we have remained a strong and unified community, at once inwardly reflective and confidently outward looking.

Totally unsolicited, quite innocently, and all the better for both, there came recent affirmation that we may be on the right track. The winner of the Lower School Headmaster's Christmas card competition, a boy called Ethan, had subtitled his piece of art on the theme of community, "my new school is my community". That says much.

— Mark J. Beard, Headmaster

— Image by Ethan Shochat

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residentials



School trips have always been an intrinsic feature of UCS life, thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and teachers alike. Their provision has always been as expansive and as ambitious as possible. Trips serve as vital extensions of the co-curricular scene and provide practical, visual and lived-out experiences of academic enrichment. More than that, they tend to outlast in the memory the more routine aspects of a formal education. This Autumn Term, therefore, we have been delighted to see the provision of trips fully restored – which has meant residentials around the UK and, crucially, abroad – for the first time since the pandemic ended. We hope you will take nearly as much pleasure from reading about them as we did from participating in them.

Subject: Spanish

Location: Valencia, Spain

Pupils involved: 28 Upper Remove Spanish students

Purpose: To gain an insight into daily life in Spain by staying with host families; to learn about Spanish culture and society; and to practise speaking Spanish in a variety of contexts. Highlights: Spanish classes in the morning with Españolé International House; day trips to Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias (Arts and Sciences complex), Oceanogràfic oceanarium and Museo Fallero (look up ‘ninots’); beach volleyball, paella-making workshop and city tour complete with churros con chocolate; and sharing dinner with host families.

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residentials



Pupil view: *When we arrived in Valencia, we were greeted with a wave of warmth, packed off with our hosts, and the Spanish-speaking experience had begun. The first thing that strikes you about Valencia is the mix of old and new buildings, patch-worked together, with an amazing number of ancient churches, towers and squares to visit – which was exactly what we did. Every morning, we went to the nearby Spanish school and had lessons until lunchtime. After class, we had an hour to have lunch and explore, and then a planned activity every afternoon. The aquarium was my personal favourite as we got to see an incredible dolphin show, walked through a shark tunnel and even saw whales!*

Subject: Maths and German

Location: Berlin, Germany

Pupils involved: 19 Transitus and 3 Upper Remove pupils

Purpose: To learn about the German language and culture, and to see Maths in action in the city of Berlin

Highlights: Private tour of the BMW Plant factory; walking tour of Berlin; Zeiss- Großplanetarium (planetarium); and the East Side Gallery

Pupil view: *The trip to Berlin to explore the cultural and mathematical elements of the city's character was profoundly enlightening. A highlight of the trip was seeing the BMW factory on our final day, a location so exclusive we weren't even permitted to take photographs in the factory itself! Our immensely enthusiastic tour guide took every opportunity to explain both the functionality of the machinery around us and on a wider scale how the company operated between its many factories across the world, providing food for thought for both future engineers and economists within our group. Our evenings spent in the hostel with its German teenage residents speaking in an awkward mixture of their imperfect English and our even more imperfect German were also a blast, culminating in a student-organised talent show that will doubtlessly become a story for the ages.*

Subject: Italian

Location: Palermo, Italy

Pupils involved: 1 Transitus, 6 Upper Remove and 8 Remove Italian students

Purpose: A small window of 'summer' before getting into the deep English winter(!); an

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residentials



opportunity for students to really immerse themselves in the language and culture of Italy; and a more authentic experience since Palermo isn't a traditional destination for language exchanges.

Highlights: Morning Italian lessons at a local language school with two fantastic teachers; afternoons dedicated to cultural activities such as tours of Palermo and the little coastal town of Cefalù; the beaches there and at Mondello; visiting the Pupi laboratory and theatre where traditional Sicilian puppets are created and brought to life by a Palermitan family; the Antonio Salinas Archaeological Museum, the Botanical Garden and the Chiesa di San Giovanni degli Eremiti; a street food tour of Palermo sampling local, delicious and traditional food; finally, the language exchange involving Italian students of English – a great opportunity to use Italian for a real meaningful purpose like... talking to Italians!

Pupil view: *The most memorable trip had to be the street food tour where we tried panelle (chickpea fritters), crocchete (croquettes) and most interestingly panini con la milza (spleen sarnies!). We learnt that in the interreligious cultural melting pot that was*

Sicily, Jews and Muslims would not eat the spleen or lungs of butchered animals so such innards were given to the Christians as food not to be wasted. And so, on the streets of Palermo, you can buy cheap milza sandwiches which are very nice – just don't ask what's in them!

Subject: Rugby

Location: Lake Garda; Verona, Italy

Pupils involved: 51 Lower Remove and Remove pupils, comprising the Under-14 and Under-15 rugby teams

Purpose: Three training sessions and two games per team, meaning a total of four tour matches.

Highlights: Rugby training in bright sunshine on pitches with mountain views; sight-seeing in Verona and soaking up the Italian culture; a day at Gardaland Resort, Italy's number one amusement park – enjoying the adrenaline-filled rides and winning huge stuffed animals as prizes; Ben Krol, Oliver Kramer, Monty Jones and Theo Sawtell sealing a climactic U15 victory in the last game.

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residentials



Pupil view: *The U14s kicked off first in northern Italy, flying out of the blocks with eye-catching tries and big tackles but unfortunately were undone by an impressive second-half comeback from their opening Italian opponents. The U15s, playing against a side a year older, initially held off their hosts thanks to a strong defensive wall, but inevitably leaked some tries. Even so, a doughty UCS fought back to get a hard-fought try through Ben Krol. A game between two fine teams, which UCS lost unluckily despite a superb display with plenty of grit and character. For their second matches, the U14s once again played a great game but just fell short. The U15s, desperate for victory, showed their talents and, with too many try scorers to name, capped off a brilliant rugby tour with a win.*

Subject: Drama

Location: Bristol

Pupils involved: 10 Sixth Drama students

Purpose: To watch great theatre – *Outlier* at the Old Vic and *The Doctor* at Bath Theatre Royal; to

learn more about the city of Bristol; and to foster creative ideas for upcoming devised pieces.

Highlights: Naturally, *Outlier*, which explored the effects of isolation, drug abuse and addiction on teenage lives, and *The Doctor*, a challenging and thought-provoking study of identity politics; also, discovering Bristol's history – including links to the aviation industry, slave trade and the street artist Banksy – through a walking tour and visit to the M Shed Museum.

Pupil view: *Because a lot of Bristol's cultural features have inherent dramatic potential, we were able to take much inspiration for our devised pieces, and the freedom to walk around and look for ideas independently was a change of pace to the process of devising theatre. Overall, the trip was extremely enjoyable, exposing us to the richness of Bristol, in terms of its culture and the theatre it has to offer.*

Subject: Geography

Location: Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex coast

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residentials



Pupils involved: All 85 GCSE Geographers, most on a residential trip staying in a field centre on Mersea Island

Purpose: To complete a fieldwork investigation, which entailed collecting data on how humans influence coastal processes along the Essex coastline, for the physical Geography GCSE exam. The pupils did cliff sketches, measured the beach profile and conducted groyne height analysis, among other activities.

Highlights: Dormitory life; climbing the Naze Tower; Mr Fitz serving students every night in the residential centre canteen; floodlit basketball in free time; Mr Firth's morning running club along the seafront; Bertie Chapman crab hunting; Miss Harris and the climbers scaling the high wall at the activities centre; high-quality fieldwork write-ups; and great company from the students throughout.

Pupil view: Upon arrival, it was clear UCS were not the only school in this seaside town for a case study; every segment of beach was occupied by

classes from different schools. Our trip involved a briefing about Walton which informed our case study, followed by time on the beaches and cliffs doing fieldwork. Both parts were fun. We also had a talk about the storied Naze Tower, an 18th-century navigational tower and historical landmark. This included the local coastal erosion problem and current attempts to slow down erosion and save the Naze headland. Remarkably, since the 1300s over seven miles of countryside have been claimed by the sea, and the cliffs retreat about two metres a year. We also got a chance to climb to the top of the tower and observe the spit coastal feature, backwaters housing 100 seals and cliffs.

Subject: Biology

Location: Juniper Hall, Surrey Hills (Field Studies Council centre)

Pupils involved: 30 Sixth Biology students

Purpose: To carry out core practicals on ecology to complement part of the OCR A Level syllabus and to enjoy practical Biology in the field.

A Spotlight On... The Return Of Residential



Highlights: Discovering what we had caught overnight in the Longworth mammal traps as a sample of nocturnal creatures common to this habitat: a mouse and a vole, both very cute!

Pupil view: *As A Level Biologists we are required to complete some ecological studies and so, to maximise this learning experience, we spent two days and one night in the 'field' – well, at Juniper Hall. We carried out two main ecological studies. First, at Mickleham Downs, we performed some systematic sampling along transects already laid out. From the data collected, we constructed scatter graphs and kite diagrams and conducted a Spearman's rank statistical test. Day two was about fresh water sampling at the river Tillingbourne. Here we collected data using kick nets, trays and identification keys as part of our own individual investigations. Nice work if you can get it!*

Subject: Headmaster's Lower School Award – Adventure Section

Location: Essex

Pupils involved: 58 Shell pupils across two trips

Purpose: The Headmaster's Lower School

Award requires pupils to monitor, assess and plan their development in five aptitude areas: academic, adventure, co-curricular, community and sustainability. It provides a framework for aspirational pupils to engage in constructive self-reflection and make decisions that lead to a broader, richer set of skills and experiences. As part of this programme, Shell pupils participated in a two-day bushcraft trip to rural Essex where they learnt various survival skills such as shelter construction, fire- making and management, and woodwork

Highlights: Learning how to skin and cook a rabbit!

Pupil view: *This was a brilliant weekend and I would highly recommend the trip. We learnt about important survival skills as well as building relationships. I would definitely do this expedition again in a heartbeat! We returned to London recharged, rejuvenated and looking forward to starting in earnest the new academic year.*

(For longer pupil-written accounts of some of these trips, please read on to the relevant sections of this publication.)

The Lower School



As usual, the Autumn Term has been action-packed and we were thrilled by how quickly the new Entry pupils settled into school life back in September. The Shell have led from the front and I have been delighted by a number of the projects they have organised for Community Action over the last six weeks. The pupils attending the Young Leaders Award have done exceptionally well and are now over halfway through this quite demanding programme. This term we have seen some brilliant results on the sports fields, several fantastic concerts and a truly remarkable whole-school production. It has been fantastic to witness our younger pupils throw themselves into all aspects of school life and work so well alongside the older pupils. Our Pre-Prep reading programme has also been a highlight and it has been fabulous how the Reception pupils have enjoyed hearing our Shell boys read to them in the AKO Centre every Tuesday lunchtime.

Back in September, a new set of Lower School House Captains took office. These captains will be in post until February half-term and then a

new crop from the Shell will take their place. The current captains are:

- **Bannister** – Jonah Kermisch and Shaan Thawani
- **Bonington** – Sam Downs and Alfie Heslam
- **Kendall** – Freddie Chubb and Sahil Prasad
- **Macarthur** – Louis Hodes and Armaan Shahvarooghi
- **Seacole** – Matteo Carriere and Max Wilson

The captains immediately leapt into life and delivered a series of terrific House assemblies to the Entry and Shell. The Houses were renamed last year and the captains linked the UCS Learning Values and Life Values to their House namesakes. Later in the term, a number of captains put on a superb whole-school assembly on charitable endeavour and matched this, in terms of quality, by organising some outstanding Community Action events. The coat collection for WrapUp London organised by

The Lower School



Alfie Heslam and Sam Downs of Bonington was a real high point.

Freddie Chubb commented, *“I was delighted to be nominated House Captain. I have really enjoyed the role and have relished the opportunity to encourage Entry and Shell pupils to take part in various activities. We have also spoken in House assemblies and I have learned a lot about how Guy Kendall opened up UCS to allow more pupils to attend through a bursary programme.”*

As usual, House competitions have been keenly contested. Last year, Seacole and Macarthur found the going tough but these two Houses have risen to the top of the pack over the last three months. Competitions have included: hockey, rugby, the great global connectivity quiz, table tennis, Maths

and singing. We now look forward to the Spring Term which will include the ever-popular House Pancake Flipping competition!

— Contributions by E. Roberts

The Middle School



A recent Middle School assembly presented by boys in the Remove reflected on the World Cup in Qatar. It spoke a little about football, the most likely winners, players for whom it is their swansong and of course the likely progression of the home teams involved. What impressed me more in a lucid and well-considered presentation, in front of all their peers and teachers, was the sensitivity shown by this group from Olders. It was a mature appreciation of the wider discussion that this World Cup should be provoking. From the rights of the LGBTQIA community to those of workers, from the award of the event to Qatar to potential corruption within FIFA, we were reminded of the need to think beyond the kicking of a ball. To someone who has been a member of the UCS community for a number of decades, such an assembly epitomises the spirit and ethos

of our school. We are keen to look beyond the comfortable sofa that is Frognal. We want to use our position not to sit back and relax but as a springboard to make a difference. We are keen to empathise and to act and to give more than we take.

The Middle School has made a huge difference this term. From the fantastic Oliver! to Deme Song, Drama and Dance, a wide variety of boys have supported both each other and teaching colleagues in making a difference to all of our lives. Many of you have entered into the spirit of Community Action and given time for the benefit of others. The team spirit that is evident on the playing fields of UCS is equally seen on stage, in the concert hall and even within the classroom. The final Middle School assembly celebrated excellence and

The Middle School



contribution of such variety and quality in sport, music, charity, academia and community. A conversation after the Under-15 Middlesex Rugby tournament in late November further epitomised making a difference in a selfless fashion; one of the schools present is new to rugby and the UCS team moved players around to make things a fairer contest. Eventually winning narrowly, our generosity was much appreciated and in marked contrast to another team worried about points difference in the competition who went on to rack up a cricket score. The UCS example was one of empathy and giving.

So, as we draw to the end of another intense, tiring but incredibly fruitful term, we should reflect on making a difference and not be satisfied with what

is in the past but consider what we can do going forward. It was Anne Frank who said, “No one has ever become poor from giving,” and I look forward to even more from Middle School boys that is as much for others as it is for themselves.

— *Contributions by S. FitzGerald*

The Sixth Form



This Autumn Term has been one of industrious and creative energy for students in Transitus and Sixth. Starting Sixth Form in September, the Transitus cohort quickly established themselves within the social, academic, and co-curricular landscape of their new section, finding their feet with A Levels and grappling with the new challenges presented by these crucial two years. They have become as vital and involved as their predecessors; mentoring Entry forms, teaching lessons on mental health with the Peer Education Project, taking part in Young Enterprise, volunteering to work alongside students from LAE for a day of academic challenge, and much more besides. Their engagement with the co-curricular provision has also been impressive, with a vast Transitus contingent in the recent school musical *Oliver!*, performing in concerts, playing in matches, and getting involved in the many clubs and societies. A very dynamic start to what will hopefully be a full and enriching year for them.

The returning Sixth have also embarked on the new academic year with enthusiasm and determination,

embracing the many responsibilities and challenges of being the top year group in the school. This period has been dominated, mostly, by thoughts of Higher Education; whether that is in the UK or beyond; university or Drama school; GAP year or not. Regardless of the destination, this term has been focused on discussions, applications and preparation. At this point, with university offers streaming in, the worry starts to lift and the possibilities of life beyond UCS begin to crystallise. However, outside of that, A Levels and activities still carry on. The Sixth are excellent leaders. They have been wonderfully active in their various Deme competitions this term, rallying the lower years' competitive spirit and performing in Deme Song, Deme Drama and Dance, and the Deme Sports. They have also led the way with Community Action, organising events and running activities to raise money for their chosen charities. Overall, then, a vibrant and exciting term for the Transitus and Sixth.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

The Death and Remembrance of Elizabeth II



The news of the passing of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022 came as a shock to all members of the school community. As the news began to sink in, the school came together to discuss various ways in which it could remember her extraordinary life of service to the country. The school flag flew at half-mast throughout the period of mourning, and a Book of Condolence was sourced in which members of the community could pay their own tribute to the Queen via its pages, which will now become part of the school's record of the event. We were also proud to be able to display our copy of the famous Annigoni portrait of Her Majesty in the Great Hall and subsequently in the AKO Centre as part of a wider display during that time.

In his assembly to the school in the days following on from the announcement, the Headmaster spoke to pupils about the Queen's visit to Frognaal in February 1980 to help the school to celebrate the reopening of the main buildings after the great fire

of two years previously. In her speech in the Great Hall, Her Majesty had reminded the school that we are often at our best in adversity, which provides us all with the opportunity to demonstrate both our affection and loyalty to the institutions we hold so dear. So we remain as grateful today to Her Majesty for those words and for her visit as we did some 40 years ago, and the continued presence of the Queen's tree outside the Giles Slaughter Wing is a constant reminder of that link.

— Contributions by A. Wilkes

Deme Performing Arts



Deme Song

After being pipped to the post in last year's Deme Song, it is fair to say Underwoods felt they had a point to prove heading into October 2022. Adding to the pressure was the realisation that this was the last shot at glory for a supremely talented group of Sixth musicians. As a Deme Warden I would have fancied our chances with two or three top musicians in their final year; when one has seven at their disposal, it becomes a nagging worry that your Deme won't be crowned number one.

Marshalled superbly by Ed Choi and Leo Hall, an ensemble of students from each Underwoods year group put in hours of work to give themselves the best possible chance of victory. The entire Lower Remove year was left in no doubt that this is the competition dearest to Underwoods hearts, and accordingly every single new member of the Deme was involved in some way in the final performance.

Ed described the strategy as this: "We picked Mr Blue Sky for Deme Song because we thought it would allow for whole Deme participation with lots

of strings, woodwind and brass and also because it's a very upbeat and lively song that people could dance along to. Time of My Life was picked for similar reasons, while also showing off Leo and Sophie's brilliant singing and Oli's incredible sax playing."

On the day, a superb rendition of Mr Blue Sky warmed up a partisan crowd, before the roof was raised by a note-perfect performance of Time of My Life that sealed the win, ensuring our Sixth will depart UCS as Deme Song champions.

— Contributions by K. Bugler

Deme Performing Arts



Deme Drama and Dance

In November, the Demes gathered in the Lund for our annual Deme Drama and Dance contest. Each Deme presented a scene from a play, a choreographed dance and, for the first time, a variety act.

It was also wonderful to welcome back two Old Gowers, Matti Rowe and Aurnyn Jones, as the contest's judges. Both former Drama pupils at UCS, Matti and Aurnyn have since gone on to study acting at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Central School of Speech and Drama respectively.

In Deme Drama, there were some excellent interpretations of contemporary drama with Olders

presenting a funny version of Broken Biscuits by Tom Wells. Flocks offered an interesting take on Antigone and, for Black Hawkins, the show went on with a last-minute understudy. In the end, the victors were Evans who presented a well-performed duologue from Noughts and Crosses.

Baxters also triumphed with their variety act, a poignant monologue from Transitus pupil Elena Wykes. Meanwhile, Deme Dance was, as ever, fiercely contested and hugely popular. Baxter's choreographed mash-up of Singing in the Rain and Umbrella was brilliantly done.

— Contributions by C. Abbott

Women In Sport



Girls' participation and competition in sport at UCS has expanded further over recent years, and it has been wonderful to see football and cricket matches on top of the usual netball calendar. We're always looking to increase physical activity among our pupils, in both competitive/team sports and individual exercise options. Teenage years are a particularly problematic time for girls in terms of participation in sports; many factors reduce their likelihood to continue with their sports or take up new ones. Increased exam pressures, physical changes, and the anxiety around feeling looked at and judged are all significant barriers. We sought to overcome these where we could, and as a team of female staff and pupils, set up a timetable for this year's Women in Sport Week to include a broad range of activities, suitable for beginners and experts alike.

— Contributions by C. Hawes

After talking to other students about Women in Sport Week, the general consensus was that this week provides a lot of opportunities for girls at UCS to be encouraged to get into sports. It's really refreshing

to see all the activities included and presentations showcasing the sporting success of girls and female teachers at UCS, especially in male-dominated sports such as boxing. It shows girls that there are spaces for them, and that if they want to they should and can participate. I believe Women in Sport Week is invaluable because it connects all the girls through sport and shows how much fun sports can be.

— Contributions by J. Ezechukwu

Reports from Women in Sport Week

Beth Cobden Talk

The week began with a really interesting and informative talk by England netball player Beth Cobden. Beth spoke to us about her success in netball and how she managed to go from being just a schoolgirl who enjoyed playing netball, to being in the England national team that won Commonwealth Games gold. Some messages we took from the talk were: how to manage our time, between schoolwork and sports training, and that if we are struggling with anything in netball always go back to the basics.

Women In Sport



Beth also gave us advice for university netball trials and her main message was to never give up. It was an inspirational talk that I think we all learnt a lot from.

— *Contributions by A. Benjamin*

Acroyoga/ Gymnastics

Ms Tyson led a brilliant session which gave the girls an introduction to acroyoga and its basic poses. We began with a partner warm-up, some trust-building exercises, then launched straight into some simple partner poses. The ‘Bird’ pose proved to be the class favourite, with lots of laughs, tumbles and eventual success. This was a great opportunity for us to explore new ways to move our bodies, build trust with our friends and learn about the core principles of acroyoga in an innovative, exciting way.

— *Contributions by T. Kermisc*

Staff vs Students Netball

Possibly the best staff team in UCS history were still no match for the first team, who despite some very generous umpiring dispatched the staff 14-7 (ish!). For the first team, both Bea Harker and Bea De Souza-Girao were out of position and still incredible. For the staff, there was stunning defence from stalwart Mrs Foster, who has played

every staff match since the fixture’s introduction over a decade ago, and spot-on shooting from Miss Kumarasinghe, who was under a lot of pressure given the staff didn’t have any other circle attack players (props to Ms Yovichich for putting in a quarter at GS). Mrs Hawes and Ms Tyson were their usual astonishing selves. Thank you for staff support and fab photos, and hurray for no ambulance this time!

— *Contributions by S. Madhvani*

Boxing

Dr Quirke ran a girls-only introductory session to boxing during the week. This was a really fun and supportive way to learn the basics of boxing, which included the three main ways of punching as well as building up the technique along with stamina. I think all the girls found this a really nice way to learn the first steps of boxing, as most classes would be male-dominated and perhaps far more intimidating. Dr Quirke was a great teacher and we all had a great time!

— *Contributions by C. Willmott*

Women In Sport



Gym Session

The girls-only gym session was really fun and productive, and it was useful to get some tips on how to use the more complex gym equipment in a safe, comfortable environment. It felt really supportive and motivating to have that protected gym time just for girls, as it often can feel a bit intimidating being surrounded by so many boys all day at school, and often at the gym too! I feel that integrating these sessions into the week would be really beneficial for the girls at UCS, and it would encourage us to make the most of the amazing facilities here.

— *Contributions by R. Marks*

Waterpolo

We finished off Women in Sport Week with a Friday-afternoon waterpolo session kindly run by Mrs Hawes and Miss Harris. For most this was an introduction to the sport so we first went through the rules and basics, before pairing off for drills in which we practised the required one-handed passing and catching as well as some shooting. We ended the session with a mini match which was great fun with lots of goals from both teams. I think I speak for everyone when I say we had a great time.

Hopefully we'll have the opportunity of a repeat later in the year.

— *Contributions by L. Dafter*

Community Action



As always, UCS pupils have gone above and beyond this term in their fundraising efforts and their generosity of spirit has shone through. From guessing the number of sweets in a jar to a literature-themed mufti day, from five-a-side football to a teacher talent contest, everyone has played their part to make a success of this year's Community Action initiative. In my first year as a Community Action coordinator, alongside Mr Enemuwe and the guiding hand of Ms Lewis, it has been a pleasure to support the students in planning, advertising and leading their own events. The level of responsibility taken by the Deme Captains in spearheading all of this endeavour has been impressive to witness, and the

Lower School's creativity and passion have exemplified the resourceful nature of UCS pupils. Please enjoy these accounts directly from two pupils who led their own activities.

— Contributions by S. Alborn

This term, the Lower School has had a big impact on UCS's Community Action activities. We have seen many different events raising money for this year's two Lower School pupil-chosen charities: Secondary1st for the Entry and the Red Cross Ukraine Appeal selected by Shell. Secondary1st

is a charity focused on fighting breast cancer. It funds many studies, giving grants to finance research with the ultimate goal of developing new immunotherapies that counteract cancer spread. The Shell charity is one that I'm sure you have heard of, the British Red Cross's Ukraine Appeal, supporting people devastated by the war in Ukraine.

Many Lower School pupils have planned, organised and staged events to raise money for these deserving charities. Milo, Max, Sacha and myself (all Shell) have baked and run a homemade bake sale stall every Friday – often selling out at breaktime! There has also been a popular 'Sponge the Teacher' event, a teachers' Baby Face Competition and initiatives led by the Young Leaders Award students including a Team Treasure Hunt. Community Action is a great opportunity to apply the UCS learning values, as all activities require our resilience, resourcefulness, relationships and sense of responsibility in order to run successfully. I have really enjoyed taking part in Community Action 2022 and already have lots of ideas for future fundraising I would like to do at UCS.

— Contributions by J. Kermisch

Community Action



After two years of social distancing, masks and limited in-person gatherings, UCS's annual fundraising event, Community Action, came back with a bang this autumn. The six Demes, the Sixth Form Union and the Lower School all chose a charity to fundraise for, organising a series of events during the second half of this term. The chosen causes were diverse in their aims. Several responded to active humanitarian crises (Baxters and Shell picked appeals for the crises in Pakistan and Ukraine respectively while Evans raised money for the refugee charity Choose Love); others combated cancer (Macmillan Cancer Support and Secondary1st); and others still dealt with health and wellbeing issues faced by children (ECHO, Malala Fund and Child Poverty Action Group). Each Deme as well as the Lower School and SFU had short time slots within whole school assemblies to promote the message of their favoured charities, which definitely helped motivate the pupil body to get involved with fundraising and contribute as much as they could to the charities.

The first Community Action event of 2022 actually came before the official start date, as four Olders pupils – Jake Marchant, Sam

Harding, Max Riche and Luca Jason – participated in a notoriously difficult 'Tough Mudder' assault course in late September, managing to raise £4,578. Olders also held a sponsored 'Run in the Dark' on 5th December at the school fields, where students and staff defied the darkness to undertake a 5km run. Keeping with the sporting theme, the entire Deme of Flocks banded together to walk, run, cycle and swim an astonishing collective distance of 3,500km (equivalent to the diameter of the moon) over the half term; kudos to Samir Rahman in Transitus for coordinating this shared enterprise. There were other continuous activities across these six weeks or so of effort and ingenuity, such as the return of the old favourite cookie and Domino's pizza stands outside the Bentham building every break and lunchtime respectively, with pizza sales accounting for over £4,000 in funds by the end of term. But really, there were far too many events to mention all of them in this article, which is a credit to the incredible passion and enthusiasm of our pupils and teachers in making this one of the most memorable Community Actions ever.

*Here's to another great instalment in 2023!
— Contributions by A. Kassam*

Women In Senior Leadership Network



This term we hosted our first in-person meeting of the Women in Senior Leadership Network. We welcomed 70 delegates to our Great Hall, including UCS staff members, representatives from different schools around England, the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) and a recruitment consulting partner. At the end of the morning, colleagues left feeling inspired, supported and energised. It was a fantastic opportunity to share experiences and learn so much from each other.

We started the Women in Senior Leadership Network so that women can be encouraged to apply for senior leadership positions and that, when they are promoted, they continue to be supported. Our idea is to use the experience of women from different schools throughout the independent sector to mentor each other. Across the programme we have 170 mentors and mentees so far.

At the in-person event, our first speaker, Noelene Murphy, Director of Studies at City of London Boys School, shared her experience as a woman in leadership over the decades. Much progress and improvement has been made, but gender stereotypes persist in many arenas. In our discussion groups we asked, among other things, whether women are at greater risk of burnout and imposter syndrome and what can be done to support them; whether mentoring should be gender neutral; and whether leadership actually means something different to women.

Claire Oulton, Head of Leadership Appointments at RSAcademics and formerly a headmistress of two schools by her early 30s, then took the podium: it was good to hear that people in senior leadership make mistakes too! Understanding the highs and lows of headship and the process of recruitment was eye opening.

Women In Senior Leadership Network



UCS is about free-thinking, diversity, pushing forward, and of course, learning. So this network and event very much fitted with our values. We move forward, together, learning from each other in a supportive environment.

The meeting really achieved its objectives: we hope delegates feel they can continue in their professional journeys with our support and that there is someone they can reach out to; colleagues can now draw on the wealth of experience out there. One delegate said the morning had been “life-changing”.

We will definitely have another gathering next year!

— Contributions by K. Shah

Jaren Ziegler: BBC Young Musician 2022 Final



There is a well-worn saying ‘Youth is wasted on the young’, which may be more a measure of an older person’s regret at wasted time or lost opportunity than a fair reflection of any young life. Certainly, whichever curmudgeon coined it (was it George Bernard Shaw?), they would certainly have retracted that line had they been at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester the evening of 29th September. Because youth was most definitely not wasted on the five flourishing musical talents who vied for the title of BBC Young Musician 2022 that long and dramatic night, among whose number was UCS’s Jaren Ziegler. Transitus pupil and viola player Jaren had hurdled two rounds of competition – from a starting field of 500 hopefuls – to first win July’s Strings Final, and then chase his dream of emulating 2016 champion Sheku Kanneh-Mason by lifting the overall crown.

His achievement was magnified by the fact he had combined Young Musician commitments with studying for GCSEs taken (with distinction!) last summer. “To reach the final is an absolute dream I never thought would happen,” he said ahead of his big date. “It’s an amazing feeling.”

Come September, Jaren was one of two 17-year-olds – alongside flautist Sofia – targeting the main prize together with a trumpeter, Sasha, a pianist, Ethan, and a percussionist, Jordan. A stellar fixture on the UCS Music scene, whose musical brilliance needs no introduction, Jaren looked perfectly at home as he swapped the Great Hall for the Bridgewater Hall. Accompanied for the first time in his career by an orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, and with Mark Wigglesworth as conductor, he performed William Walton’s Viola Concerto – “an incredible piece” – with stunning maturity and superb musicianship. Here was a young person at the height of their powers; it’s fair to say that he owned that stage.

The Viola Concerto contains “excitement, drama and sadness” – and the last of those three also tinged the climax to the evening, insofar as the trophy would elude Jaren on the judges’ vote. No matter. Jaren had promised to show what the viola could really do, and true to his word, he produced. And as the first viola player to ever appear in the

— *Photo © Dan Prince (BBC)*

Jaren Ziegler: BBC Young Musician 2022 Final



grand final, this Junior Royal Academy student also left an indelible mark on the competition. “It’s amazing to have Jaren as the viola’s advocate,” said Mark Wigglesworth. “He has an extraordinary ability with the viola to have the clarity of the violin but also the warmth of the cello. To combine the two is a dream!”

The event itself screened on BBC4 on 9th October (and remains available on the iPlayer). The live version had actually been more staccato than smooth because of the filming interludes for the presenters and panel of judges. However, at least those of us in the audience had the benefit of witnessing in full a special moment in time for Jaren and his family. As presenter Jess Gillam wisely noted: “This competition can be a lesson for life – resilience, persistence and knockbacks can be as instrumental in shaping a person as a win.”

— Contributions by P. Hart

The BBCYM final was an absolutely unforgettable experience and one that I will always remember. I hadn’t prepared the Walton Viola Concerto before I found out I was through to the final (as I really didn’t

expect to get there) so I had to work really hard throughout the summer doing around six to seven hours a day. I’d always dreamt of being in the BBC Young Musician final so I really gave it everything to prepare in the best possible way. I had a few stresses in the week of the final – I developed a blood blister in one of my fingertips and then one of my strings snapped on the day! In this situation, I had to pick myself up when things weren’t going my way, which was incredibly difficult but a great learning curve. When I got out on stage, I really managed to let go of these worries and it allowed me to really enjoy the experience. Overall, I was pretty content with the performance – there were, of course, things that I was not happy with but that is always how it is! There was a lot of pressure to perform but I think most of it came from myself as I had worked so hard to get to this point. I learnt a huge amount from the whole experience – to be able to play with the BBC Philharmonic was unbelievable and to work with Mark Wigglesworth was a huge honour. I’d say that the whole competition helped me learn how to deal with pressure and nerves on a scale that I’d never encountered before.

— Contributions by J. Ziegler

Joining the Sixth Form



The UCS Sixth Form welcomed 61 newcomers this academic year, and it was incumbent on the school community to make sure these students felt at home as quickly as possible.

The new joiners would likely have read about the strong relationships at UCS before deciding to come here, and the first step towards ensuring this became their lived experience was an induction day for new *Transitus* in June. Here future Year 12 pupils had the chance to meet their ‘Deme mates’ and build connections, with outdoor games bringing our young people together.

The newcomers’ second induction day followed on 2nd September – which probably seems an aeon away, so much has happened since – and its sequel was an induction evening for parents later the same month. These bespoke events certainly helped our new recruits and their families beyond the threshold. Less formally, they will have encountered the heart of UCS in the day-to-day reality of a school with its multi-layered support for pupils – Form Tutors, Deme Wardens, Heads

of Year, Subject Teachers and also a buddy system whereby a Sixth pupil provides extra advice and assistance.

September recruit Maya Selby confirms the strong sense of community. “I feel with every staff member that I can go to them for help. It was one of the main aspects that made me want to attend UCS,” she explains. “The student-teacher relationships and how the school and the year groups are bonded in such a unique way.”

Such interconnectedness is elaborated by “all the smaller communities within this warm and welcoming place”, attesting to the efficacy, and unspoken benefits, of Forms, Demes, Music, Sport, Drama, clubs and societies. No activity or structure exists solely to tick a co-curricular box or fill a gap in a timetable; there is a method to the sometimes mad business of UCS!

Even humble form time “helps to start the day in a relaxing way,” adds Maya, “as we have done mindfulness activities and organisation techniques.

Joining the Sixth Form



It's also great to see the same people each morning before lessons."

It was the overarching UCS ethos, meanwhile – the so-called “liberal atmosphere” – that attracted Thalia Kermisch to this corner of Hampstead, and she appreciates how “I don't need to be the best at everything – just to do what is right for me and work hard enough to reach that place”. She also noticed “from the very first day how kind and warm the teachers are and the feeling of mutual support in every classroom.”

Also hastening the settling-in process is the unfailingly positive atmosphere in the Sixth Form Centre, socially and academically. “Having small classes, paired with incredible student-teacher relationships, creates a welcoming and exciting

work environment. The laughter, smiles and motivation all lead to a hard work ethic,” reveals Maya.

For both students, UCS really does what it says on the tin, and much else besides. In their words, they have discovered a school that is, for Thalia, “exciting, uplifting, supportive and freeing” and, according to Maya, “motivating, colourful, stimulating, welcoming and inspirational”.

— Contributions by P. Hart

Hans Woyda Competition



The Hans Woyda Competition is a Maths competition involving 64 different schools. We participated in a team of four, and I was fortunate enough to be picked as the Upper Remove representative. There was one pupil from Lower Remove, Yash; from Transitus, Samir and Sammi took turns; and one from Sixth, Haoxuan. Together, we represented UCS at three different events against other schools across London. The competition required us to solve challenging problems in very short amounts of time, with most rounds lasting just one minute. Some problems were done individually, others collectively. Although stressful at first, the strong team bond we formed and the practice we did together meant we settled to the task. The team was incredibly kind, and I never felt judged if I made a mistake. Thanks to this positive spirit, we stayed calm and collected in the first event and came away with a win.

Feeling more sure of ourselves in the second event, we won by 31 points to 7. We did especially well in the group problem, gaining an extra six points. Our

teamwork and belief in each other had clearly paid off, although the third event posed a challenge with very testing questions and a highly skilled opposition. If slightly nervous going into this stage, we all worked incredibly hard. Our perseverance did not falter, and faced with very complex tasks, we tried our best and succeeded in some problems. However, we did come out slightly behind overall, albeit we had enjoyed the challenge just the same and were far from deflated. In true UCS fashion, we came away feeling happy with all that we had accomplished as a team, as we enjoyed meeting all of the other schools and exhibiting our shared love of Maths.

— Contributions by J. Park Lovering

Pupil Humanitarian Crisis Committee

About the Flooding

- Pakistan has been experiencing severe flooding, with 1/3 of the country underwater
- Caused by unprecedented monsoon rainfall and melting glaciers
- 3000 glacial lakes have been formed
- Over 100 days since the floods started, they continue to devastate the country, keeping millions of people displaced and without access to essential services, clean food or water.



As you might have read in previous editions of The Froggnal, pupils in the Senior School established a Humanitarian Crisis Committee in response to the invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent humanitarian crisis that emerged as a result. The group of pupils, formed of representatives from every section of the school, was designated to raise awareness of a range of humanitarian crises, how they develop, how pupils can get involved in supporting people affected, and also to share information about the work charities are doing in this field.

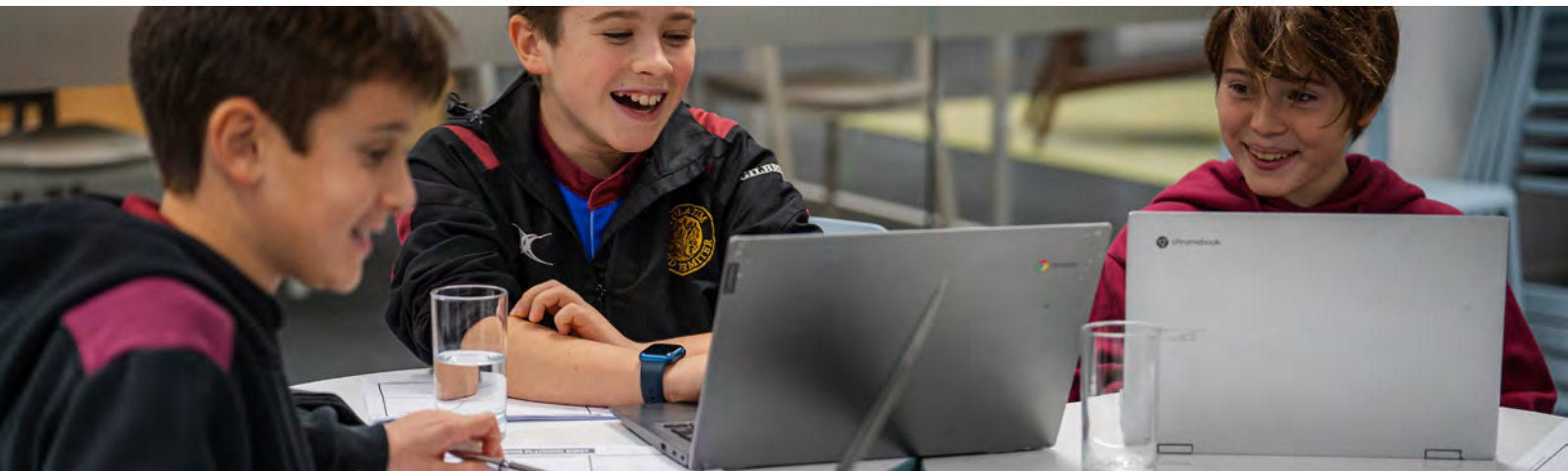
This term, the Pupil Humanitarian Crisis Committee chose to focus on the floods that have devastated Pakistan since the summer. Following a meeting, the group set about producing a whole school assembly and a series of form time resources with which to educate and promote discussion of the issue and its links to climate change and inequality.

— Contributions by J. Lewis & S. Bennett

Collaborating with different age groups throughout the school allows the committee's projects to reflect different perspectives and be more accessible for the whole school. The resources we have compiled have allowed us to focus on particular issues and raise awareness, for example, of the Pakistan floods, which I did not know much about before researching for the committee. Before the summer, we had five-a-side football matches, a mufti day, etc., to raise funds for humanitarian aid for Ukraine-related charities. This was my highlight of being in the committee so far. Getting other people involved to volunteer or take part was a challenge, yet fun and rewarding. I cannot wait to contribute more to this committee as it is so important for the school community to do more to help and provide people with essentials during times of crisis.

— Contributions by E. Goren, Sixth

Lower School Awards



A UCS education should go further than excellent academic results. The UCS experience should extend beyond the classroom and empower pupils to develop the strength and breadth of character to flourish in life and improve society at large. The 2022 launch of the Headmaster’s Lower School Award and of the Young Leaders Award provides a unique opportunity to fulfil these aims.

The Headmaster’s Lower School Award is open to all pupils and requires them to monitor, assess and plan their development in five aptitude areas: academic, adventure, co-curricular, community and sustainability. It gives a framework for aspirational pupils to engage in constructive self-reflection and make decisions that lead to a broader, richer set of skills and experiences. The Headmaster’s Lower School Award has seen pupils take part in a clean-up afternoon on Hampstead Heath, camp and learn bushcraft skills in rural Essex, volunteer to teach younger children to read and much, much more.

The Young Leaders Award required an application letter from pupils and is currently made up of a cohort of 16 Shell pupils. It is a leadership and character education programme that runs in

schools across the UK and exists to empower a generation of young people to transform society for the better and “be the change they want to see”. The course is divided into three modules focused on communication and teamwork, problem solving and critical thinking, and conflict resolution and management respectively. Each module culminates in a ‘leadership challenge’ which pupils work towards in groups. The first leadership challenge involved the design and implementation of an induction lesson for Entry pupils who had just joined the Senior School. The second leadership challenge entailed pupils launching ambitious new fundraising projects for Community Action, from a treasure hunt, to a mass game of hide and seek. At once mind boggling and character building!

— Contributions by A. Kassam

Lower School Awards



“The Headmaster’s Lower School Award has pushed me to take part in co-curricular activities which have enriched my experience at UCS. For starters, it has really helped with my sense of responsibility. For example, when taking part in the Lower School Production, I was entrusted with the responsibility of learning my script and cues, and being trusted to turn up to rehearsals. Taking part also made me more confident when performing in front of a large audience. I have built up my relationships too, because the clubs that I enjoy have allowed me to meet people my age with similar interests that I would not have met otherwise. My resilience has grown also during these Lower School years. In basketball, at first I couldn’t score and thought I wasn’t very good, but after attending every week with the encouragement of my friend, I was able to improve and now I am much better at shooting.”

Another activity which helped my resilience and resourcefulness was Big Band: I was struggling a little with the songs we were playing, but I practised regularly with my teacher and at home, and now I can play them easily.”

— Contributions by Shell pupil

Shell Bushcraft Trip



The end of summer brought excitement for those Year 8s who were going on a bushcraft trip to Essex over the weekend of 3rd–4th September. As soon as we got there, following an 8am start, we were entrusted with setting up the tents we were going to sleep in. To this end, we were divided into teams and provided with instructions on how to erect the tents. Next, we geared up to build a shelter using natural materials. This was hard work, we all got dirty, but eventually we finished the job with a sense of accomplishment and pride at the culmination of a morning of teamwork. Our shelters were promptly graded by how waterproof and warm they were.

All the hard work had given us a good appetite, so for lunch we made a calzone pizza which was cooked over a fire. If 'hunger is the best sauce', that was the best pizza I have ever eaten! Our next task was to learn knife skills and make a fire of our own. Everyone tried various techniques and a few succeeded in making fire; an important life skill. Then a lesson on how to set up traps, which was enjoyable but extremely challenging.

Afternoon gave way to evening. We went to the woods to forage for blackberries and apples which we used for the fruit crumble prepared for dessert

that evening. For the main course we had vegetable soup, bread and slow-cooked rabbit – the same rabbit we had earlier cleaned and skinned. It was a humbling experience to be cooking food in the forest and it made us appreciate things we get so easily in a supermarket.

Dinner was followed by a night walk. It was initially dark and slightly unsettling but our eyes subtly adapted to the darkness and we could see more and more. After the walk, we were tired and duly retired to our tents for a good night's sleep. The next morning we had a traditional English breakfast cooked on a fire, after which we gathered for our last activity which was to learn to make and throw Dutch arrows. Don't try this at home, kids!

— Contributions by S. Swarup

The Sixth Form Union



The Sixth Form Union consists of students who have been elected into office by their peers. The students applied in April, and 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, the current Sixth Form Union has been working to represent fellow students and has undertaken many initiatives to raise funds and awareness for a range of issues.

The LGBTQIA+ officers – Axel Cohen and Ruby Isaacs – celebrated National Coming Out Day by organising an LGBTQIA+ film night, and they have also communicated helpful ideas about LGBTQIA+ representation within the school community. The diversity officer, Oduko Soludo, has also been busy, delivering an inspiring and fascinating whole-school assembly for Black History Month, and arranging a student-led cabaret evening with performances of songs and work by black artists.

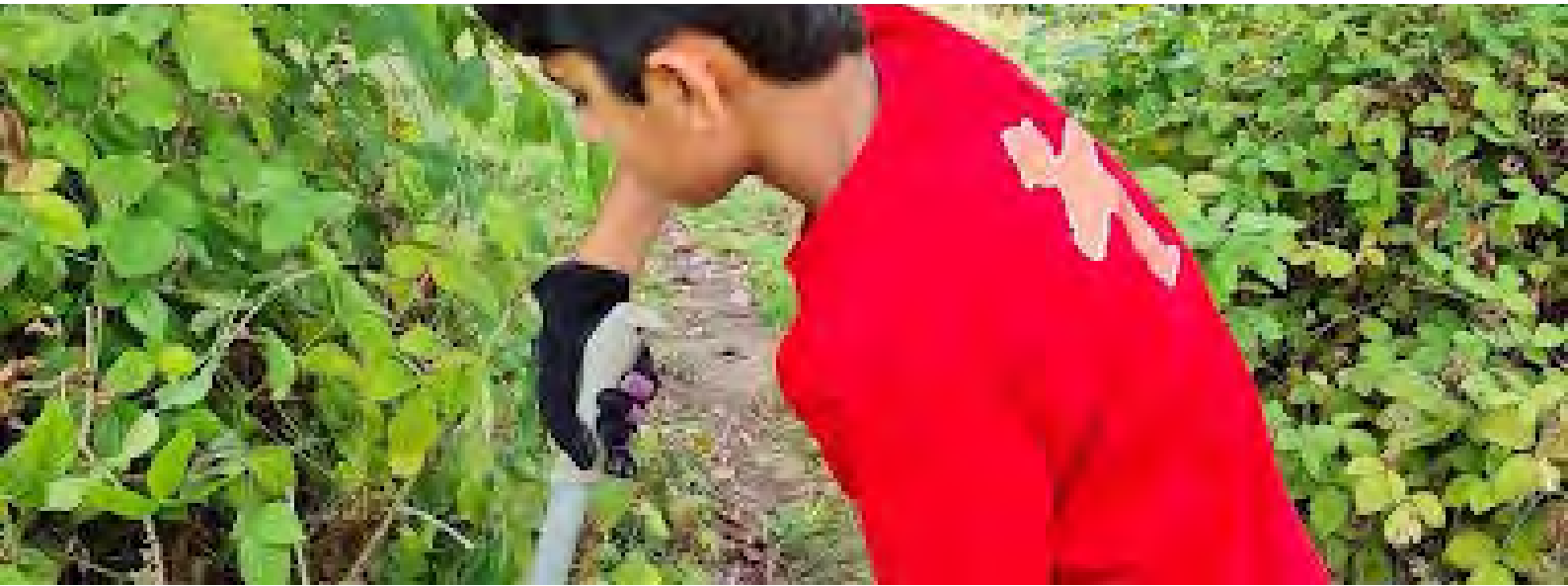
Rose DeLeon and Daisy Ellis-Thomson, our women's officers, organised Candy Grams for

World Mental Health Day, where students could send each other a heart-shaped lollipop and a message. The wellbeing officers – Ella Goren and Scarlet Clements Smith – have been running wellbeing events for the Sixth Form on Friday afternoons, as a means to decompress and relax from the pressures of A Levels. Supporting all of these endeavours is the events officer, Charlotte Marchand, who has been present throughout to ensure such events run smoothly and successfully.

In addition to the above, Union members have also done allyship training; a new initiative that will see the Sixth Form Union lead as Inclusion Ambassadors. The training established some key principles in allyship, and how to support fellow pupils in discussions specifically about identity. This should be an exciting and important new aspect to their roles, and a vital ingredient for improving inclusion throughout the school.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Shell Conservation on the Heath



This November, 25 Shell pupils took part in a voluntary trip to help a local community and conservation organisation tidy up a section of Hampstead Heath. They worked to help the Heath Hands charity by collecting and removing leaves for composting.

The activity formed part of the Headmaster's Lower School Award which encourages pupils to make a difference to their community. The Award was introduced in April 2022 and designed to encourage pupils to undertake a wide variety of activities while in the Lower School.

Upon arriving in the south-east corner of Hampstead Heath, the pupils were provided with gloves, rakes, sacks and leaf grabbers and spent several hours clearing leaves from grassy areas and paths. The boys worked extremely hard and their efforts became evident from the amount of ground cleared as the afternoon wore on. They filled 30 large sacks with leaves to be composted; this equated to more than a tonne of organic matter.

The boys really did throw themselves into their work. The Heath Hands team explained how the leaves can make paths slippery, block drains and cause grass to rot, so the boys immediately understood the importance of their work.

The projects that the boys have embraced during the community section of the Headmaster's Lower School Award highlight their willingness to make a difference and we look forward to working with Heath Hands again.

We were given a short briefing and then spent the afternoon clearing leaves. It was tiring but I was pleased to see how much ground we had cleared. I just hope Heath Hands had a big enough compost bin! I really enjoyed it – my first experience of doing voluntary work locally, and not my last!

— Contributions by I. Brittan, Shell

— Contributions by E. Roberts & M. Reiderman

Parents' Guild



The Parents' Guild here at Frognal are so happy to be able to host events back in the Great Hall and face to face.

In September, we were delighted to welcome parents back for a Macmillan Coffee Morning. Tables were set up for parents to chat and have hot drinks within their year groups and to meet new parents. There was a gently used uniform sale during the morning. Pupils, too, could buy Krispy Kreme donuts supplied by the Parents' Guild as well as other cakes kindly donated by parents. We also held an emoji-themed bake-off competition which was jointly won by two students who sent in amazing cake creations. Through the generosity of pupils and parents, plus donations from the guild, we subsequently sent £3,100 to Macmillan.

Our second social event of the term was Fireworks and Food Trucks. We were so lucky with the weather as the rain stopped just as we started to set up! About a thousand parents and pupils from across the Foundation supported the event, where burgers, pizza, Mexican food and a bar were just

some of the options available – with crepes and candy floss proving most popular. The fireworks, of course, were a huge success as always. The Guild supported Noah's Ark Children's Hospice and FeedLondon (under the umbrella charity Miracles) and proceeds of £8,000 will be split between the two charities.

Looking towards the rest of the school year, with the aid of the school and our students, we will also be giving to other charities including the Reboot initiative which donates unwanted football boots to Bloomsbury Football, which in turn distributes essential footwear to players in need. Branded UCS water bottles will continue being sold at the front reception.

— Contributions by T. Levenfiche

The UCS Poetry Competition



It was Philip Larkin who said that “novels are about other people and poetry is about yourself”. While readers of Virginia Woolf’s poetic prose or Allen Ginsberg’s prose poetry might dispute Larkin’s crude definition, it is hard to argue with his claim that, above all, poetry is a personal endeavour. Indeed, the impulse to say something about oneself is what compels so many of us to write poetry in the first place.

This year’s UCS Poetry Anthology – made up of poems by all of this year’s finalists – is an impressive tribute to this process of turning private thoughts into public verse. It is a joyous and moving collection that testifies to UCS pupils’ immense capacity for creativity and emotional honesty. With a nod to the titles of works being studied by pupils this year, all poems were written in response to the following prompts:

‘How I Live Now’ – Entry and Shell

‘Brave New World’ – Lower Remove, Remove and Upper Remove

‘A Room of One’s Own’ – Transitus and Sixth

All of this year’s poets were invited to read their poems at the annual Poetry Evening in November. This was a wonderful celebration of individual and diverse voices, overseen by visiting poet and judge Joe Dunthorne.

Congratulations to 2022’s published poets and thank you to the teachers in the UCS English Department for helping them to find their voice. Particular congratulations go to the winners of each section: Sam Downs (Lower School), Finn Kjaergaard (Middle School) and both Taliah Spencer-Jacobs and Dylan Ireland (Sixth Form).

— Contributions by H. Hardingham

Debating



Debating and Model United Nations have continued to be popular extra-curricular activities throughout the Senior School, from Entry through to Sixth Form. Participants at the busy lunchtime clubs have locked horns over diverse issues, ranging from whether vaccination should be compulsory to whether it is better to have siblings or to be an only child. More recently, the controversial decision to host the World Cup in Qatar has proved an especially popular and emotive topic.

As Jonah Gold (Lower Remove) puts it, “Debating Club is a great opportunity to learn about current issues and relevant topics and improve debating and public speaking skills in a friendly environment while also having fun. When you are not debating, you can have a go at judging a debate and I strongly recommend that all pupils in the Lower School and Lower Remove come along on Wednesday lunchtime for a good debate!”

This term, UCS Debating entered the South Hampstead School Public Speaking Competition, where Jake Altmann (Transitus) reached the finals,

and South Hampstead’s ‘Fictional Worlds’ Debating Competition, in which the senior team of Jake Altmann, Ronny Levy and Neora Bouhnik (all Transitus) won two of their three contests. At this latter event, UCS triumphed in motions set within the worlds of *Harry Potter* and *The Handmaid’s Tale* – however, *His Dark Materials* unfortunately proved our downfall. Additionally, UCS sent delegates to a model COP27 conference at the Halcyon London International School, representing Belarus, Chad, Ethiopia, Syria, UAE and Australia. Jonah Howe’s (Sixth) fervent rhetoric when representing the strategic interests of Chad earned accolades and admiration from the other schools attending.

— Contributions by T. Mackenzie

Careers



This term's Careers from Humanities afternoon saw the whole of the Upper Remove go off timetable to hear from a range of speakers about how their Humanities degrees helped them in their various careers. Pupils got to listen to Ben Mace discuss how his degree in Classics and further study of Mandarin had enabled him to translate the stories behind video games for major gaming companies as well as to work for the UN as a translator. Others heard about working in the Foreign Office and World Bank, with the numerous attendant adventures. The great diversity of careers, from journalism to marketing via finance, gave the Upper Remove a taste not only of potential future opportunities they may encounter, but also of how broad a spectrum of careers can accompany a Humanities degree. A huge thank you, therefore, to all the speakers and staff who enabled the afternoon to run so successfully.

We have been fortunate to welcome a fantastic set of speakers this term. Pupils had the chance to hear Diane Perlman describe her incredible journey

in tech marketing from start-ups to Microsoft and scale-ups with her current role as CMO of Blis. Next up was Old Gower Pooya Kamvari, who offered a fascinating insight into sustainable app development, along with the highs and lows of running a start-up. Most recently, we were delighted to host another OG in Alex Renton, executive producer of Top Gear, and discover that the key to success is hard work and putting yourself in the best possible position to find and take opportunities which present themselves. Alex also brought a very popular special guest, the Stig! For someone with so little to say, the Stig proved to be of significant interest to those who met him. Finally this term, we were thrilled to listen to Jonathan Turner as he charted his brilliant career in finance and venture capitalism.

Careers talks are a fantastic way for pupils to hear about how they can get into fields that appeal to them; plus, the highly variable routes our speakers have taken, along with tips about what has made them successful. There is also the opportunity

Careers



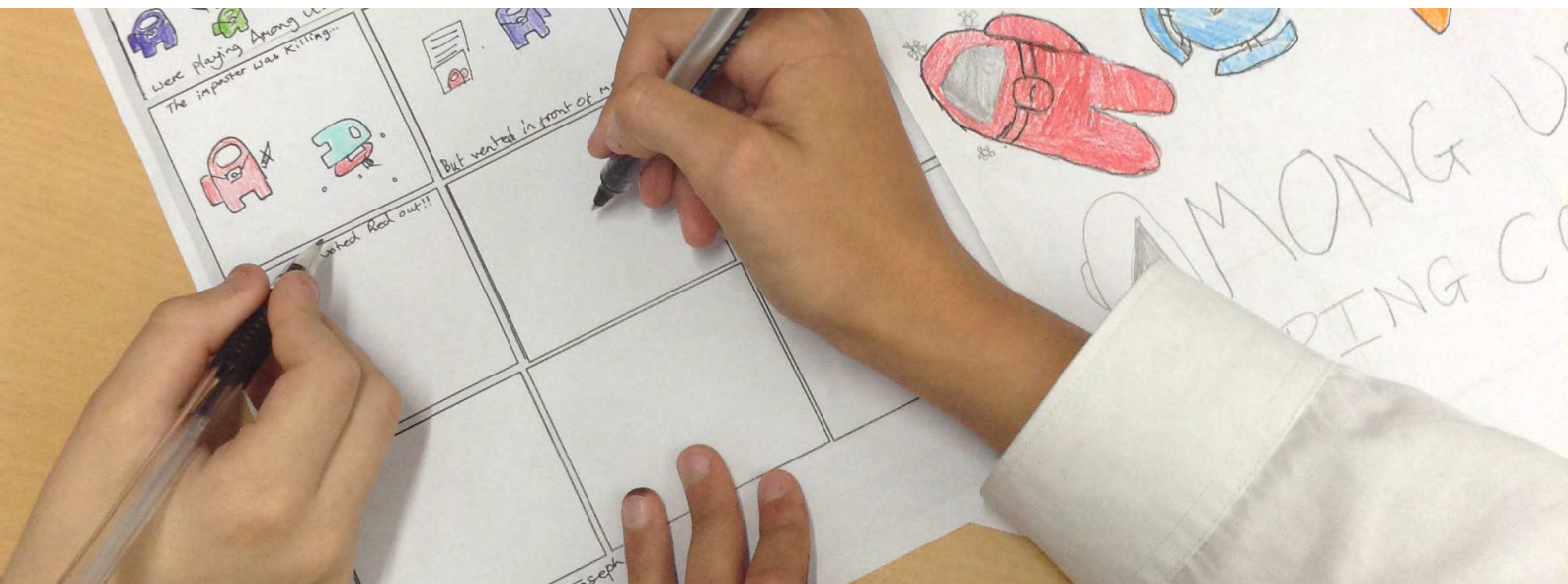
for students to network at the end of talks, with several receiving personalised advice. We strongly encourage pupils to come along and hear from our wide array of guests – it may surprise them who piques their interest the most. Next term we look forward to more speakers from careers in interior design, law and finance, as well as major events including February’s Transitus Networking Evening and our annual Careers Fair in early March.

The Transitus have also had the opportunity to hear about a number of work experience options and learn more about degree apprenticeships. Indeed, PwC visited Frognal in November to talk about its virtual work experience offering and also its exceptional degree apprenticeships schemes. Degree apprenticeships are highly regarded alternatives to traditional university courses and

are very competitive, since successful apprentices gain both a degree and salaried work experience with often guaranteed jobs at the end (based on a 2:1 outcome). PwC’s ‘flying start’ degrees cover such subjects as Accounting, Business Management and Technology, with many benefits attached. Furthermore, the financial service company ISAM also came in to talk to Maths students about work experience openings. We now look forward to seeing who will be chosen for this fantastic scheme!

— Contributions by H. Yovichich

Entry French Translation Workshops



Among the alumni of University College School are counted many illustrious and successful Old Gowers, and in the context of literature, there is none of greater standing than the English poet and writer Stephen Spender. His undoubted fondness for his years here was clear when he termed UCS “that gentlest of schools”. Through our participation in Queen’s College, Oxford’s Anthea Bell Translation Prize, we were contacted by the Stephen Spender Trust and invited to take part in the Festival of World Literature. Spender, whose mother was of German Jewish heritage, lived in Vienna, Paris and travelled to Spain during the Spanish Civil War as well as translating poetry by Miguel Hernández and plays by Bertolt Brecht into English.

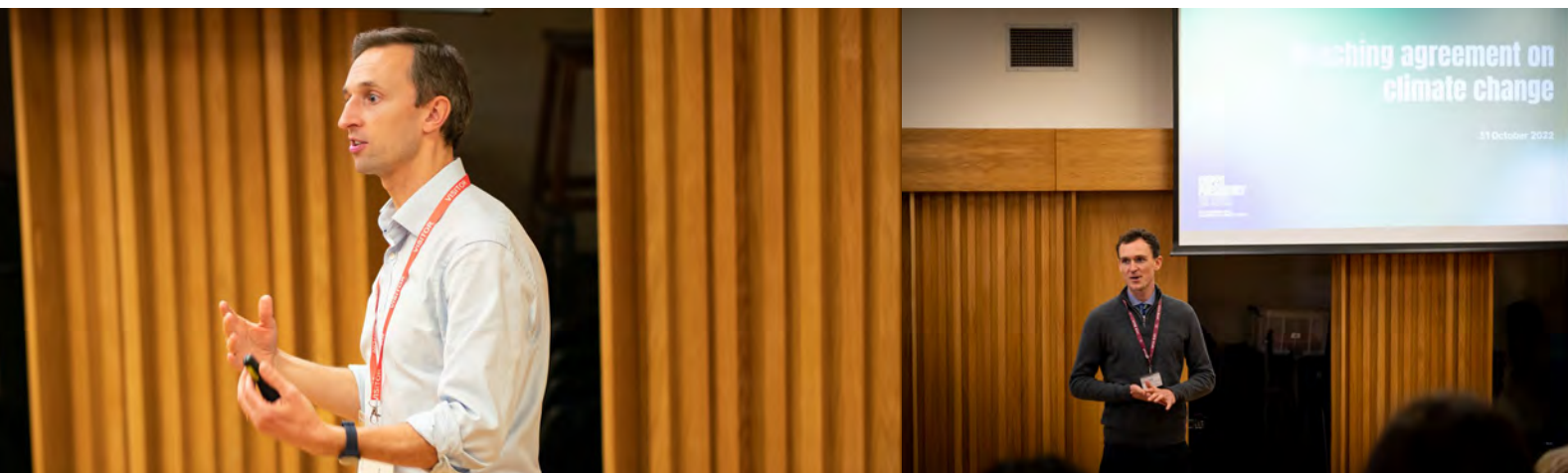
In September, all five Entry form groups participated in separate sessions as a form with professional translators who introduced them not only to the beauty of words in English and other languages, but also to the techniques of good translation, reading for gist and literal translation.

Pupils were encouraged to explore expression in French through the composition of art work and a comic strip narrative, with many pupils sharing their knowledge of other languages – Hebrew, Italian and Greek, to name a few.

Adam and Theo from EBAN interviewed one of the translators, Coralie, and were keen to find out more about translation as a profession, and the difficulties of transferring meaning across languages. Their conversation and other articles about the day were published in the Spanish issue of *Interlingua*, along with the best comic strip designs. All pupils faced a series of thought-provoking tasks, culminating in a group production of text and image. The day presented ample opportunities to explore language in action and to investigate different discourses and styles of communication, colloquial and literary.

— Contributions by H. Laurenson

Archie Young COP 26/27 Talk



For much of this term, COP27 – November’s United Nations Climate Change Conference in Egypt – was at the forefront of many people’s minds. Just days before it began, Green Impact and the Partnerships Team welcomed Old Gower Archie Young, the UK’s Lead Climate Negotiator, to deliver an inspiring talk. Addressing pupils from across the school, Archie spoke about his experiences in leading the COP26 summit and some of the challenges in climate diplomacy. He also drew upon his experiences at UCS, which instantly enabled pupils to relate to his journey towards becoming a fundamental figure in the country’s international presence. The COP27 event underlined how important it is to get pupils talking about international diplomacy along with climate justice, as countries deliberated on the latest update of international climate policy. The society closely followed the conference and discussed how pledges made on an international stage could map out at local level.

The climate crisis will be one of the defining issues of the coming decades and UCS has ensured that pupils are engaged in action by equipping them with data. For example, students have monitored the school’s energy usage, recycling percentages

and air quality, which provides them with greater agency and ability to lead the continuous improvement of the school’s environmental footprint. The latest Green Impact project, which coincided with COP27, involved a competition across all three UCS Foundation schools to see which could reduce their energy consumption the most through behavioural changes. Behavioural changes, although less glamorous, have the greatest impact on an organisation’s carbon footprint. Through pupil-led campaigns like ‘Switch Off Fortnight’, Green Impact continues to raise the profile of sustainability and encourage a ‘possibilist’ mentality which is so important when young people are faced with issues surrounding the climate crisis.

— Contributions by J. Firth

“It was great to receive an insight into the negotiations that occur and the complications that arise from getting people with contrasting backgrounds to unanimously agree on solutions to solve a global problem. This is usually achieved through a combination of resilience and determination.”

— Contributions by J. Harding

Adam Hennessey and Jeanette Barnes Workshops



November in Art began in an extremely exciting fashion with Enrichment Week, where two artists Adam Hennessey and Jeanette Barnes worked with all UCS year groups for a total of seven days.

Adam Hennessey is a painter working in London, who has recently had exhibitions at the New Art Projects gallery. They teach on the prestigious Turps Art School studio programme. Working with GCSE and A Level pupils, Adam delivered a series of painting workshops exploring painting backgrounds and understanding tone through painting. This helped the GCSE pupils with their final piece preparations and the A Level students with developing their portfolios for Higher Education applications.

Jeanette Barnes is an artist renowned for her monumental and energetic drawings of London landmarks. This was her second year working with Shell pupils, and she also delivered a

workshop to the Remove. All Shell pupils worked on a series of drawings for half a day exploring London landmarks and the school buildings. They developed their use of mark-making techniques and gained a better understanding of how to record tone. The Shell pupils were energetic, vocal and had a great time! The Remove artists were just as delighted to work with Jeanette, although their work was based on the photography they are currently exploring in GCSE lessons. Many thanks to Adam and Jeanette for leading the workshops and to the teachers and technicians for helping make these events a huge success.

— Contributions by L. Farago

New Scientist Live



This October, our curious Transitus Biology students made their way to the New Scientist Live event at the ExCeL London exhibition centre.

A Level biologists are always encouraged to enrich their learning beyond the curriculum and this event was a perfect opportunity to do precisely that. Even so, we were proud and pleasantly surprised by just how many attended, giving up their valuable weekends in the process.

At the event, the UCS contingent had the opportunity to listen to the most recent advances in Science and Technology which were presented by some of the most respected scientists in the UK through thought-provoking lectures.

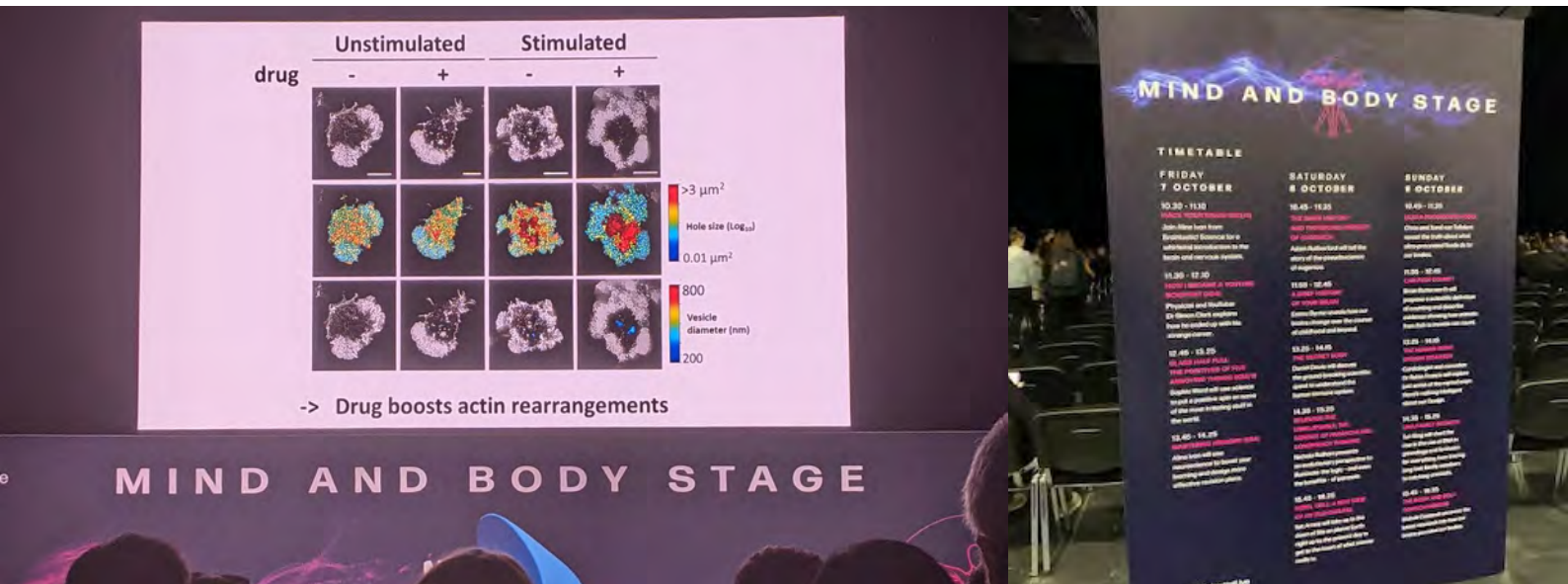
New Scientist Live 2022 consisted of five main exhibition stages, and the 'Mind and Body' stage

captured the imagination of Joshua Fidler. "I found the lecture entitled 'The Secret Body' about immunology, biochemistry and protein localisation mapping particularly fascinating," he said.

'Our Planet' was the festival's epicentre for everything environmental, and here Manar Awadh took in a lecture on marine biology which explained how, and why, 70% of organisms in the midnight zone of the oceans are bioluminescent, producing and emitting light.

Charlotte Goodgame and Samir Rahman were thrilled to hear Turi King, a renowned geneticist who played a part in the discovery of King Richard III's remains, lecture on 'DNA Family Secrets'. "It was a privilege to listen to such a knowledgeable scientist on this subject," Charlotte said.

New Scientist Live



There were also 80 interactive stands run by universities, charities and companies dedicated to the advancement of Science and Technology.

Maruf Samad and Oliver Shaw enjoyed the ‘Hospital of the Future’ exhibit put on by King’s College London, which illustrated emerging technologies and their usage in modern Medicine, including surgical robots and VR. Maruf said the event was “extremely worth attending and will definitely give you an edge for university applications, as well as being extremely enjoyable.”

Harry Abrahams discovered more about the development of Science over the years and was fascinated by a new pacemaker, about the size of an AA battery, that is placed into the heart.

Rather than sending pulses of electricity from a pacemaker fitted outside of the heart, like traditional devices, this pacemaker uses pacing electrodes in order to shock the heart more easily.

The pupils arrived back at school eager to feed back

all they had learned and with a renewed excitement at how they might explore Science and Technology beyond UCS. This made the Biology Department very happy indeed!

— Contributions by R. Potter

Bios Lecture Series



The Sixth Bios (PSHE) programme has featured a series of exciting, engaging and inspirational speakers. The first half of term had a focus on self-care, while the second half focused on relationships and sex education. The series of lectures kicked off with a talk on drugs.

Drugs: In a teenage brain, heightened risk-taking is part of normal brain function and scientifically higher than average. Consequently, scaremongering doesn't work. Instead, this session highlighted exactly what drugs do, and how. The aim was to educate our students to make informed decisions to help them stay safe, not if, but when they come into contact with drugs.

"This was entertaining, engaging and just good to hear a perspective of someone who has been through this. It wasn't just "don't do this, don't do that" – it was more constructive and a healthy conversation about drugs."

— M Teferi, Sixth

Sexual Wellbeing: The second session was an introduction to sexual wellbeing in a digital age, delivered by Everyone's Invited. As the sexual landscape of today rapidly changes, it is important

that we are delivering the right messages to young people about healthy relationships, consent and the intersection between sex and technology. This talk highlighted how media can shape our perception of issues such as gender, and how we can respect our own and others' sense of identity and sexual wellbeing.

"It was interesting to see how so much media we consume without thinking portrays unhealthy relationships and negative behaviour. Going forward it would make me question the media I consume and how it affects my perspective and outlook on what is acceptable and what healthy relationships are."

— D Ireland, Sixth

LGBTQIA+: The following week we welcomed Jude, a non-binary model and educator, who works tirelessly to bring inclusivity into mainstream media. While progress is being made for LGBTQ+ rights, there is so much more work to be done to increase understanding and inclusivity. Simultaneously, this can reduce bullying and feelings of isolation. Students learned about gender and non-binary identity; mastered terminology; discovered history and developed language to communicate their relationship with gender.

Bios Lecture Series



“I really appreciated Jude’s bravery in coming out. I liked that in their perfect world they could just be Jude, without any label of gender – it made me question what gender is.”

— I Raymond, Sixth

Body: Our fourth talk of the term was titled ‘Body’ and had a focus on body image. This generation has been thrust into a world of selfies, Photoshop and social media – which has only upped the ante. Students took a critical look at the world around them, got to grips with the psychology that feeds into negative body image, and re-evaluated their self-worth to develop strategies to face the future.

“This talk was so engaging and the message was delivered clearly. I really liked how the speaker discussed both male and female body image, which is not something always mentioned.”

— V Mehra, Sixth

Teen Performance: We then welcomed Hayley Pedrick, a lifestyle medicine expert and executive coach with 12 years of clinical experience, and a clinic on Harley Street, to discuss ‘Teen Performance’. Hayley walked us through how to create the optimum learning space, using your

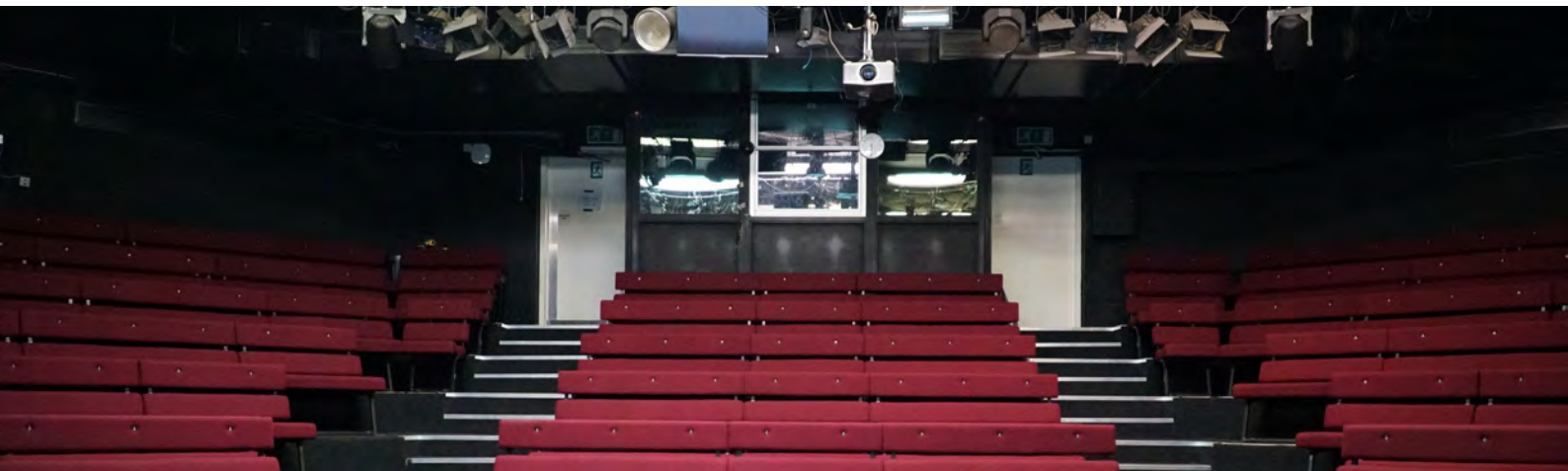
body’s ultradian rhythms, and techniques to support late-night learning while minimising sleep disruption. She also focused on dietary strategies to support mental clarity under pressure – which is essential with A Level exams in the not-so-distant future.

“It was captivating to hear the scientific outlook on productivity which will, without a doubt, help me in the future, in school and beyond, to improve how I work.”

— J Abrahams, Sixth

Rape Culture: The second half of Autumn Term witnessed a second visit from Everyone’s Invited, who delivered illuminating talks on ‘Rape Culture’ and ‘Sexual Violence’. During the talk on rape culture, we looked at how rape culture pervades a modern society dominated by media and sexism. Pupils considered the ways in which rape culture exists in everyday life. This included exploring the language we use, the failures of societal structures and what we are watching. The talk concluded by helping students to understand the ways in which rape culture is all around them and how they can begin to tackle it.

Bios Lecture Series



“Ellie was such an engaging and knowledgeable speaker; she made her examples and explanations identifiable to us and remained inclusive on the issue throughout.”

— T Spencer-Jacobs, Sixth

“Ellie was a really good speaker; it felt really personal and related to everyone in the room, no matter what they knew before.”

— C Willmott, Sixth

Sexual Violence: The talk on sexual violence equipped students with the knowledge to recognise and label sexual violence. The pupils understood the trauma associated with sexual violence and how the reporting process works and where to find support for victims of sexual violence.

The Big Leap Forward: Our final talk of term was provided by the RAP Project and tied together a lot of what the students had learned about, from an angle of attending university.

Students leaving school face a dramatic, if exciting, transition when arriving at university, taking a GAP Year or starting work. These first tastes

of real independence can be daunting. The Rap Project gave practical guidance, sharing studies and advice on how to make this adjustment from a more informed perspective. Sharing quotes and anecdotes from first year students, they spoke frankly about Freshers Weeks, drinking and drug culture, sexual freedom, and the roller coaster of emotions these may all inspire. They also discussed the rise of “LAD-itude” and misogyny on campus.

In between a number of these talks, pupils built on the material and were afforded a safe space to openly discuss the content, their own ideas as well as listen to one another. This Bios series offered a broad yet specific education on some very challenging and complex issues. At the heart of it all was a sense of mutual respect and mutual consent.

— Contributions by A. Hurst

Bios Projects



This year saw the launch of the inaugural Bios Project – an academic research project undertaken by all Transitus students in their first half term. Based on a topic of their choosing, from within one of their selected A Level subjects or cross-curricular, the Bios Project was an opportunity to pursue an idea in depth and get to grips with academic research. It was also a collaborative piece of work, which was carried out in pairs, and aimed to encourage the students to leave behind the limits of GCSE and embrace the scope of A Level.

The pupils chose their own title and spent Bios lessons researching and exploring the topic, then putting together a short essay in response. The final piece of work was marked as a pass, distinction or

– for exceptional submissions – honours. There was a dazzling range of topics investigated. From titles such as ‘Colonising the Cosmos’ to ‘The Politics of Numbers’, and themes including the pay disparity in sport, genetic modification, mushrooms and the value of art. The resulting body of work was hugely impressive, creative and illuminating. The very best of these did attain honours; and these students will have the chance to celebrate this achievement, and present their ideas, in the new year.

— Contributions by R. Baxter

Pupil Academia



The Oxford German Classics Competition

*Having entered a competition offered by the Oxford German Network in 2021 and received a high commendation, I assumed I had already pushed my luck. However, when Dr Laurenson recommended the Oxford German Classics Competition to me in May this year, I was elated about the name of this year's chosen novella, *Die Judenbuche* (meaning 'The Jew's Beech'). This tied into my existing fascination with German-Jewish literature.*

Despite missing the deadline to sign up for a study pack and an attendant set of lectures at Oxford tailored to help entrants with the competition (whoops!), I still decided to enter. Knowing nothing about the 19th-century author and poet Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, I was interested to hear that she was indeed not of any Jewish origin, despite the title of her book. Once I read the piece, however, the complexity of her plot – leaping from one anecdote to another around multiple unsolved murders (only one involving a Jew) – intrigued me. This plot, combined with her skilful use of imagery, made me intent on finding the relevance of Jews in the Westphalian setting of the novella. This inspired my choice of one of the four questions to write my 1,500 words on: "What is the role of the 'Judenbuche' and the

course in the development of the narrative?". I sifted through many articles on the book and wrote my essay, interpreting the author's imagery as a medium to promote antisemitic tropes typical of the time the novella was written.

Despite the "very high" quality essays submitted to this competition every year, I was pleasantly surprised when I received an email informing me of my "High Commendation". I'm delighted, therefore, to have been invited to a prize-giving ceremony at Oxford University in June 2023.

I would highly recommend this competition to anybody – providing they are in Years 12–13. If anything, it's a fascinating dive into foreign literature to an extent you do not experience in the A Level course.

— Contributions by J. Abrahams

Pupil Academia



The Robson History Prize

Over the course of the past academic year, I participated in Trinity College, Cambridge's Robson History Prize. This prize is one of the biggest for Year 12 pupils studying History, with hundreds of applicants from around the world, and significant monetary prizes for the top two candidates.

What instantly grabbed my attention was the expansive list of questions: 100 in total covering both historical topics from across the globe and historiography. I picked the question "Why was the Qing

dynasty able to survive the Taiping Rebellion but not the events of 1911?"; it is rare that my personal interest in East Asia is covered, so it was refreshing to see the breadth of topics.

The first task lay in accumulating sources and researching the topic. I primarily used sites like JSTOR and Archive.org, in addition to physical books. This involved significant challenges to my preconceptions and exploration of novel interpretations. I spent around a month just reading and taking notes. What I found to be the greatest challenge was actually writing the piece. Bringing

together disparate research tangents took time, and I had to rewrite the 4,000 word essay from top to bottom. Formulating an argument was enjoyable and intellectually stimulating, but the deadline weighed heavily nevertheless; in the end, I simply submitted without any expectations.

To my surprise, after many months of waiting, my essay was awarded "Highly Commended" and I was invited to tour Trinity College. It was illuminating to meet the five applicants who made it through the process, as well as the professor who ran the competition. The former was probably my favourite experience because I had some fascinating conversations; everyone was passionate and knowledgeable about their subject area.

I would highly recommend the competition and others like it to anyone hoping to expand their academic knowledge and skills. It definitely prepared me for my EPQ and PI in the Upper Sixth. There are also corresponding prizes for English Literature, Politics, Law, Philosophy and Linguistics.

— Contributions by J. Tan-Khoo

Journal Club



One of the best parts of working at UCS is its focus on academic research. Being a teacher in a community that values robust, consistent and reliable knowledge to shape its pedagogical provision, is a privilege few teachers have. We are often caught between our well-established (and often successful) practices and the newest pedagogical development taking education by storm. We want our students to succeed academically, but we also worry that the chase after academic excellence will compromise pupils' well-being. Teachers want to give students autonomy over the development of their learning, without ever forgetting that teenagers sometimes need close support to become the independent learners universities desire.

With these and many other questions in mind, we launched the first Journal Club of this academic year, exploring the topic 'metacognition.' This was the first session I had the pleasure to lead, after we had said our farewells to Emma Taylor who so brilliantly led this work as Head of Research for the past five years. The session was attended by many colleagues across the UCS Foundation and it was a great opportunity to exchange ideas with teachers from various subjects, year groups and professional experiences.

The following week saw the launch of the Metacognition Toolkit produced by Patrick Milton, Head of Learning Support and Director of Teaching and Learning, which provided teachers and pupils with concrete examples of how to use the principles of cognitive theories in the classroom. A great example of how we connect academic research with classroom practices.

The next two terms are promising on the research front. Apart from continuing our work around how cognitive theories can boost learning, we also plan to develop research-informed approaches to homework, creativity and effective revision. We will see the second edition of the UCS Research Review published with a collection of high-quality articles by various staff members.

I could not finish this report without thanking all staff who have supported any of the research initiatives across this term and beyond. Such work would not exist without your contributions.

— Contributions by A. Martini

Learning Values Week



Pupils across UCS study a range of academic subjects but a number of threads are common to all lessons throughout the Senior School. Inside and outside the classroom, pupils develop the 4Rs – resilience, resourcefulness, relationships and responsibility – and these are all championed in every year group. It doesn't matter whether it's a History lesson in Room 23 or a Games lesson at the sports fields, teachers will refer to these essential values.

As part of their induction into the Senior School, pupils joining the Entry spend the second week of the Autumn Term examining what each 'R' means and looking at how they can be developed across different aspects of schooling. The week commenced with a Team Building Morning at the fields. Each form group was split in half and the

pupils took part in a variety of activities run by external company Outer Limits. The challenges really tested the communication (and cooperation!) skills of our joiners. The pupils approached these activities exactly the right way, however: being keen to succeed but keener still to ensure that everyone was involved. New friendships were forged and everyone, Form Tutors included, had an enjoyable morning. The blind, silent sheepdog trial was a personal highlight although the video footage of Year 7s wandering around the fields blindfolded has sadly been deleted!

— Contributions by E. Roberts

Classics: The British Library



This term, students of Greek in the Lower Remove ventured to the British Library's exhibition 'Alexander the Great: The Making of a Myth'. What felt like something of an adventure to us – an afternoon out of school and a chance to strike into central London – soon paled in comparison with the journeys of Alexander.

The scale of Alexander's travels was fittingly paralleled by the scope of the evidence in the exhibition. Taking us first through the life of the Macedonian conqueror, from his portentous birth, the founding of cities that bear his name, to his untimely death at Babylon in 323 BC, it then moved into the long afterlife that he has lived in the literature of late antiquity, the Middle Ages, and beyond.

Perhaps most interesting of all the evidence, and located roughly in the middle of these two chronological extremes, were copies of the Alexander Romance. This text, both recalling and reimagining the exploits of the legendary leader, made its way into circulation some 600 years after his death.

Equal parts history and mythology, the copies on display had been translated from the original Greek into German, French, Hebrew and even Slavonic languages through the ages. Curiously, though not unexpectedly, subsequent translations often constituted stark new adaptations; and we saw how each edition was changed or partly reinvented to service different political agendas.

In whatever ways the figure of Alexander has been appropriated, and to whatever ends, the exhibition brought them to life using tasteful video aids, visual effects and interactive moments, which made for a very engaging experience. A truly fantastic exhibition and well worth the trip.

— Contributions by S. Pritam

Politics: Parliament



The Transitus excursion to Parliament offered A Level Politics students an insightful tour of many awe-inspiring areas of the buildings that comprise the Palace of Westminster. We learnt about the rich history of the palace, visiting the Robing Room and Royal Gallery, admiring the outstanding artwork that is on display. Statues of 'War Kings and Queens' surrounded us; portraits of monarchs from Georgian times to the present day lined the walls. Two immense paintings by Daniel Maclise depicted, with the finest detail, moments of significance in the Napoleonic Wars, further embedding the history that the building represents. The Members' Lobby, the ante-room before you enter the Commons Chamber, also resonated with interesting political and historical traditions. There is an antiquated message board for each member of the Commons Chamber, where anyone can leave messages or send in letters to

be viewed by MPs, exemplifying the close connection that any citizen of the UK can have with those in Parliament. The room itself was rebuilt after the Second World War, at Winston Churchill's request, in a more simplistic style. Also, the archway that then leads into the House of Commons is flanked by statues of two major war-time Prime Ministers: David Lloyd George and Churchill himself (whose right foot is touched by MPs for luck as they enter the Chamber).

After an insightful discussion about the Members' Lobby, we had the opportunity to stop by both chambers within the Houses of Parliament. First we entered the Lords Chamber, which had the grandest interior because this is where the three elements of Parliament (Sovereign, Lords and Commons) come together. The furnishings in the chamber are

Politics: Parliament

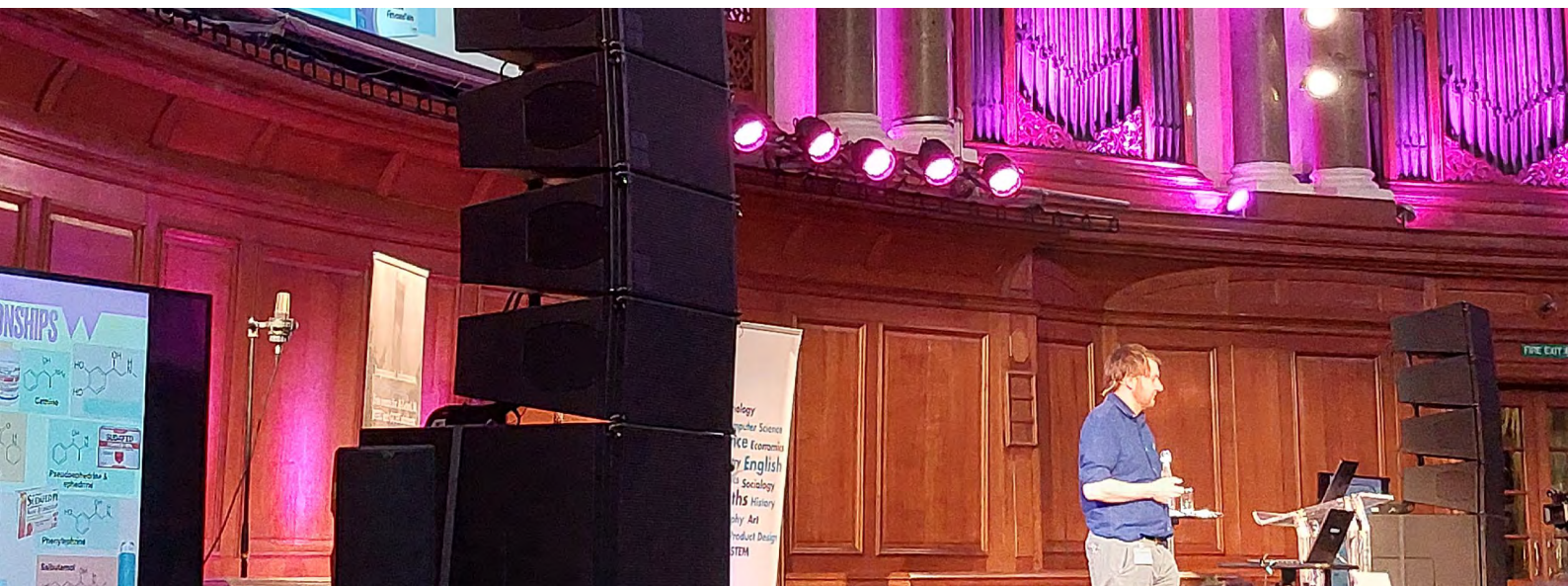


predominantly decorated red, which we discovered represented the nobility. At the far end of the Lords Chamber sits the Royal Throne, which is intended for the Lord Speaker to occupy whenever controlling the debate in the room. An interesting fact about both chambers is that no one can sit down on any of the benches, because they are solely reserved for Members of the Chambers. Once we had moved out of the Lords Chamber, we visited the Commons Chamber where the furniture is predominantly green and much less regal, due to the Commons' lower position within Parliament. Just as there is a neutral position in the House of Lords, the Speaker of the House of Commons also has a neutral position in the room and occupies the speaker's chair to control the tense debates inside the chamber.

*Overall, the excursion was incredibly eye-opening and helped the *Transitus* Politics students to engage more deeply with the A Level course relatively early on. Now we can all look forward to what we will learn about Parliament and government in the future – and to how we will apply our 'in-house' experience to these studies.*

— Contributions by N. Diamond & S. Gershinson

Chemistry in Action Trip Review



On Wednesday the 8th of December, the Transitus Chemistry A level students went to listen to a variety of chemistry talks at the Emmanuel Centre. The talks covered many current Chemistry subjects of interest: the effect of simple chemical changes in drugs and medicine and how they can change the world, chemistry in warfare, chiral materials and forensic science as well as lanthanides and actinides.

All these talks were fascinating but the first one was especially interesting. It covered how small chemical changes can impact the world. Alex Baker talked about the devastating effect of drugs and how simple changes in the chemical structure of everyday medicine can be used to create harmful and addictive drugs such as heroin. He also spoke about what makes a drug so addictive: pharmacokinetics (the study of the movement of drugs within the body).

Another talk we found interesting was the talk on chemical warfare. Kit Chapman spoke about past events in warfare which took advantage of chemistry

to create weapons and strategies to win wars. For example, Operation Mincemeat was a successful British deception operation of the Second World War where they took a man's body, who was already dead, and dressed him up as an officer of the Royal Marines to trick the Germans into believing fake information. His body was placed in the canister, which was filled with dry ice and sealed up. When the dry ice sublimated, it filled the canister with carbon dioxide and drove out any oxygen, preserving the body without refrigeration.

Overall, these talks were an enlightening and unique experience that gave us the opportunity to learn about chemistry beyond the curriculum.

— Contributions by N. Bouhnik & A. Romero Sevilla

Maths: Maths in Action



On 2nd December, Upper Remove students had the pleasure of participating in a Maths in Action trip offered by Education in Action, a company founded by teachers passionate about providing an inspirational, motivational experience not possible within the confines of the classroom.

The day was filled with fascinating talks from a range of Mathematicians, including Sophie Maclean with her lifelong passion for prime numbers, Matt Pritchard and his Magical Maths, and Alison Kiddle presenting ‘The Maths of Luck’; a session on probability.

Sophie talked about prime numbers, their history and their future (who can find the next biggest prime number?). She also demonstrated some coding to allow us to determine whether a given number is prime or not. Matt then exhibited a sequence of great magic tricks, all of which were rooted in Mathematics, and explained how he did them and the Maths behind them. Alison spoke about the probability of winning the lottery versus getting struck by lightning, and the birthday paradox.

Also on the Maths in Action agenda was an

examination session hosted by Nicole Cozens, who explained where marks are gained and lost on questions, and how examiners issue marks. This session ended with an interactive slot where students had to predict the number of marks each example answer would be awarded.

The day finished on a high with Harry Baker, Mathematician and poet, treating us to several rap-style poems featuring Maths, but also some more personal work involving his past experiences in Germany with falafel spoons!

The pupils came away with better knowledge of how examiners mark papers and they will be able to apply this understanding to their own answers in the upcoming mocks as well as next summer. Furthermore, it will only benefit them to have seen Maths as not merely a school subject but something applicable to everyday, real-life scenarios.

— Contributions by K. Chiu

Mandarin: Chinatown and the British Museum



It felt like we had been duped when Ms Wu said we were going on a trip to “China ... town”. You could feel the room go from something like elation to that feeling you get when it’s cold and you haven’t slept enough. But when we took the Tube on Tuesday 8th November, there was excitement in the group nevertheless.

We got to the British Museum, that great Greek temple, those vast white columns, and met our tour guide: a lovely Chinese lady, fully prepared to educate us about the history of jade, the dynasties of Ancient China, traditional Chinese house and temple design, and anything else that she could fit into the hour-long session; she was also equipped with headsets, so afterwards our right ears rung with all things China.

The China Collection was a wonder: there were hallways of tiny ornate green teapots made by small hands more intricate than a machine. There were walls covered with bronze swords that must have chopped many a head in their time. There was even a room kept dark to protect an ancient scroll holding the secret to everlasting life ... well, not really, but it was still unbelievable to think that someone had drawn that bear, that mountain, that facial

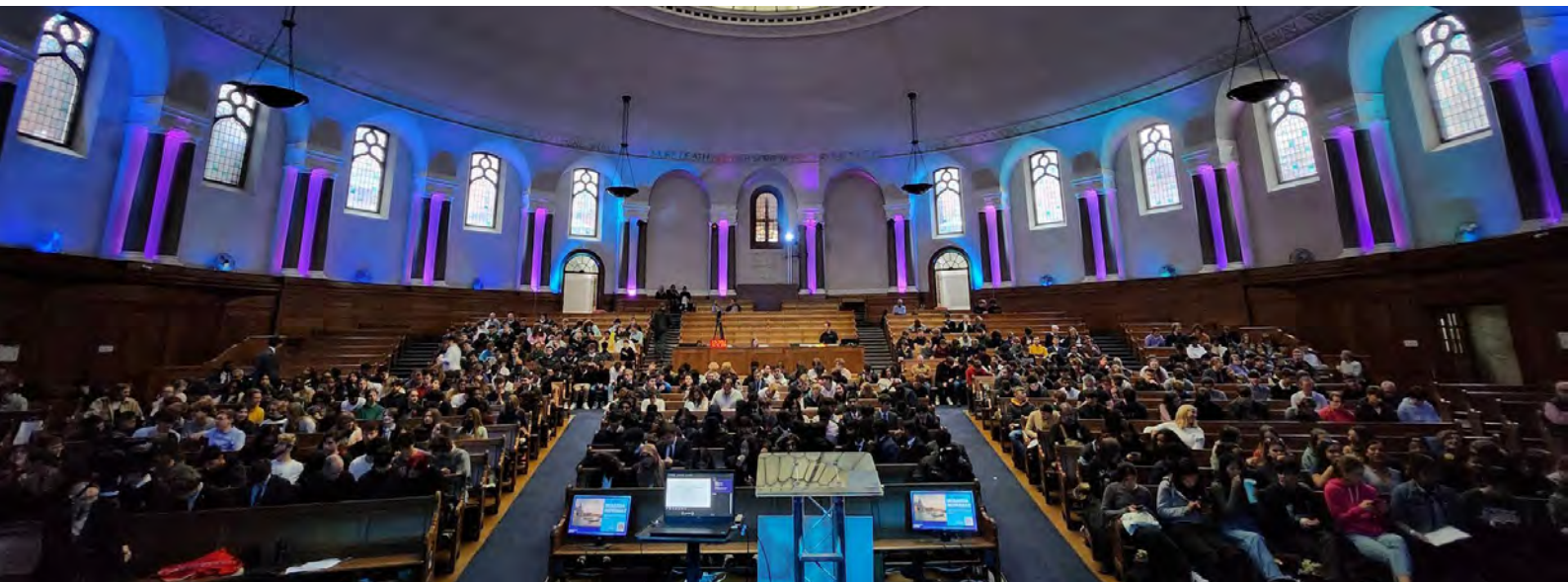
expression, so clearly, so humorously; how?

Too soon we had bid farewell to our tour guide, and we eventually made our way to a small restaurant in Chinatown – Imperial China – that had a shopfront like some sort of smelly British pub, complete with neon sign. But as soon as we stepped through there were statues of lions guarding the door, red everywhere, a bridge over a stream with a coy pond – great orange fish beneath our feet – and then a huge carpeted room with round tables and lots of people talking quietly. We ordered dim sum and ate everything we could. And was it delicious! If you go, be sure to get the pork dumplings with soup in them. They are very hot; you have been warned!

To top it all off, we got bubble tea from the best place I’ve ever tried. There was even a contraption to tell your fortune; mine was “bad things are in store for your future” so maybe that lowers its prestige a little. Altogether though a fabulous trip, organised by Ms Wu and Miss Maggioni, that combined culture with delicious food and a great time.

— Contributions by F. Kjaergaard

Computer Science: Conference



On Thursday 10th November, the A Level Computer Science students in Transitus and Sixth participated in an Enrichment Day consisting of a series of talks about the application of Computer Science.

We first attended a talk on driverless cars by Dr Yee Mun Lee from the University of Leeds, which offered an interesting insight into how the technology works and how society should adapt. Questions answered ranged from ethics around decision-making to psychology and communication. After a short break, we had a talk from James Arthur of the University of Oxford on type theory and functional programming.

Dr Miranda Mowbray from the University of Bristol held a talk drawing parallels between algorithms used in 13th-century Venice to elect their ruler and algorithms used in AI. She explored the relationship between History and Computer Science, and how despite being seemingly opposite subjects, they have much in common.

We were then treated to a fascinating talk on smart cities by Professor Matthew Leeke of the University

of Birmingham. He discussed the research of a PhD student of his, who used machine learning to predict people's locations accurately, explaining his own personal experience as (sometimes unknowingly!) part of the experiment.

The day closed with a final talk by Professor Mark Jago on logic and the fundamentals of computers. This talk explained the Turing machine and how it can serve to investigate the extent and limitations of what can be computed, as well as how Alan Turing set foundations for computation that still hold true today.

— Contributions by L. Verpoest

History of Art: Galleries



UCS Art Historians took to the streets this term as part of Friday afternoon Enrichment. Galleries and art objects were this year's topic chosen by the students, all of whom researched, wrote and delivered a 'Tour Guide' talk in front of a painting, image or sculpture of their choice.

Holland Park was a great place to begin, with its proud heritage of Victorian studio-houses. We admired the Palazzo-inspired brickwork before touring Leighton's Winter Studio en route to viewing 'Orpheus and Eurydice' at Leighton House Museum – see the most recent edition of our inter-departmental journal *Bocca* for a more detailed reflection on this painting and on Old Gower Frederic Leighton's passions. Syrian tiles and Venetian mosaics in the Arab Hall provoked discussion around the water feature as Narcissus looked on. For Victorian ornateness and Victoria sponge, this gallery comes highly recommended!

The Roca London Gallery at Imperial Wharf offered a very different perspective: the Duna chandelier for Lasvit, inspired by dune formations,

prompted some detailed discussion, and the group enjoyed Zaha Hadid's water-inspired architectural lines, this element acting "as transformer... carving the interior and flowing through the main gallery".

Saatchi Gallery is always a favourite of UCS art historians – you will often find us paying homage down the King's Road. This time we took in the superb 'The New Black Vanguard', curated by Antwaun Sargent, a showcase of 15 of the most influential black fashion photographers which makes pointed reflections about art and representation. We left with fresh eyes, and this is what looking at art in situ is all about. Catch the exhibition before it ends on 22nd January.

— Contributions by A. Mee

German: The Goethe Institute and the BFI



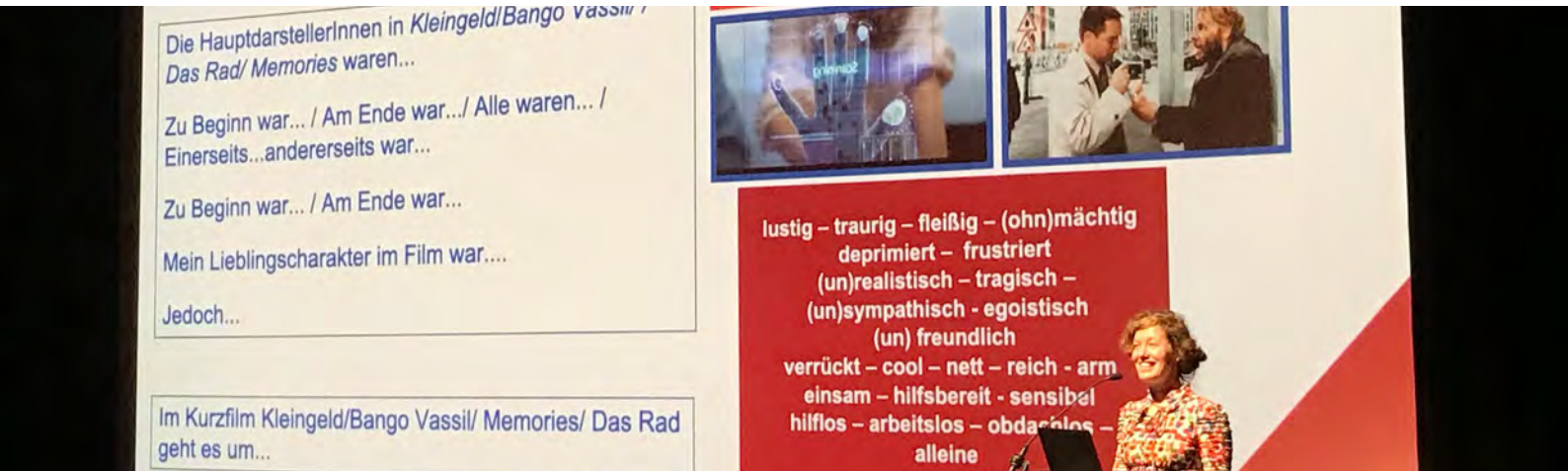
On Thursday 10th November, Sixth Form German students visited the British Film Institute for the KS5 German film study day which explored 'The legacy of East Germany in film'. The itinerary of the day involved analysing a range of scenes from enriching cultural German films such as Ballon ('Balloon') and Das Leben der Anderen ('The Lives of Others'). Excitingly, we were able to watch these in a large cinema hall on the big screen.

We thought up elaborate concepts and ideas to analyse not only film storylines, but also film techniques: from the soundtracks used to the lighting and shots, all in German of course. This enabled us to utilise our German in a dynamic, exciting way, adapting it from the classroom to the outside world.

Along the way it taught us a vast range of tools and analytical thinking skills in German, which we are now able to use in our A Level film study of Lola Rennt ('Run Lola Run').

After lunch we enjoyed a viewing of Good Bye, Lenin!. This culturally relevant comedy is set around the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and therefore delved deeper into the fascinating divides and differences between East and West Germany. The protagonist Alex's mother falls into a coma during the final days of the DDR and wakes up only after the Berlin Wall has fallen. He does his best to preserve, for her sake, the DDR his mother knows and loves, so that she doesn't get shocked into another coma; sometimes going to great comedic lengths to achieve

German: The Goethe Institute and the BFI



this. This endearing, emotive and often humorous film was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us German students.

On behalf of those pupils in attendance: a big thank you to Mrs Hess for organising the trip, and to Mr Underwood and Miss Schönhagen for taking us.

— Contributions by N. Wiedebach

On Thursday 5th May, Remove German students visited the British Film Institute which was hosting a German film study day. Its aim was to showcase German film and real use of the German language outside the classroom, as well as to stimulate conversation.

First, we watched and discussed (in German) numerous short films with students from other schools, picking up new vocabulary and getting a taste of German film. Above all, simply speaking and expressing thoughts in German proved so very useful, a practice which is often overlooked. The award-winning films explored a broad range of themes within both German culture and wider culture.

Then, we watched Berlin 36. Based on a true story, it is set in 1936 Berlin as Germany is holding its first Olympic Games. The film tells the story of the world's best high jumper, Gretel Bergmann (Karoline Herfurth), and her struggle in the team as a Jew, which eventually leads her to being

replaced by Marie Ketteler (Sebastian Urzendowsky), who turns out to be a man. This drama tackles the issue of extreme discrimination but also identity and is superbly made, evoking 1930s Germany and even including real footage from the '36 Games to add to the historical value.

Everyone enjoyed the day and thought it was a great experience exploring German through film. Our understanding of German film culture was improved greatly as a result and our language skills were also heightened.

Many thanks to Mrs Hess for organising and taking us to such an interesting and stimulating event.

— Contributions by B. Levene & J. Kouyoumjian

German: The Goethe Institute and the BFI



For Modern Languages Enrichment Week, the Remove and Upper Remove German students went to the Goethe-Institut in South Kensington. After a quick vocab session, we had the privilege of being the first people to see the Institute's new exhibition which had been flown in from Germany following a tour of Europe. It was about where society has come from, and where we are heading in the future, discussing important topics such as climate change and artificial intelligence. The exhibition really helped with our German, being almost entirely in German, and the content itself was very interesting. It was also very interactive, featuring a quiz to complete along the way and an AI robot! There were different lampshades that played music and had text inside for you to read about the emotions your brain experiences when you listen to that genre of music; and also information about which parts of your brain are responsible for these differing emotions.

After lunch we went into the auditorium and watched a film called Der ganz große Traum

(‘Lessons of A Dream’). Based on historical events, the movie tells of how Konrad Koch, a Braunschweig school master during the second half of the 1800s, brought football to Germany to inspire his pupils’ interest in the English culture and language. It wasn’t all plain sailing for Koch, unfortunately, as he faced opposition to his progressive ideas and teaching methods. Despite it being in German, we were able to fully understand the film, using our existing German knowledge and with the help of the subtitles. As with the exhibition, the film at once expanded our vocabulary and was an enjoyable experience in itself.

Thank you to Mrs Hess for organising a really fun trip!

— Contributions by B. Kotok Nicholls & R. Gangola

Spanish: Frida Kahlo Exhibition



This September, Transitus and Sixth Spanish students attended the Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera immersive experience at Surrey Quays, London. Walking through the first section of this 360° digital art exhibition, my peers and I were given a fascinating insight into Frida's famous husband, Diego, who was well known in the art scene before meeting his wife. It also helped us that their paintings were brought to life with detailed information everywhere, as well as historical items from Mexican culture and Diego's life such as a gramophone. The second room was the centrepiece of the exhibition. This room lit up as Frida's art flowed around the walls, and voices assumed the roles of Frida and Diego to explore excerpts from Frida's diary. We found this particularly interesting: the re-creations really immersed us more deeply into the experience and offered further insight into the background of

the so-called 'Mexican Geniuses'. As we continued through the gallery we found even more to enjoy, such as a photo stand of Frida or Diego. However, the highlight had to be the colouring wall where boxes of whiteboard markers sat ready for everyone to get involved. This made for an undeniably fun ending to a fascinating perspective of Mexican life, culture and art. My peers and I really liked our time at Surrey Quays and will be encouraging more of the school community to experience 'Mexican Geniuses: A Frida & Diego Immersive Experience' for themselves.

— Contributions by S. Gillbanks

Drama Theatre Trips



Come From Away

Our trip to the Phoenix Theatre to see the musical Come from Away was an incredibly enjoyable experience that heavily influenced the staging of my own GCSE Drama performance. The play itself was wonderful: an evocation of human kindness that restores faith in humanity, rendered through a masterful execution of verbatim, which enhanced the feeling of hope in its absolute and spoken truth. The actors used accents and slight alterations in costume to clearly differentiate characterisation of both the air travellers left stranded in Newfoundland as a result of the 9/11 plane diversions, and the residents of small-town Gander who without hesitation opened their homes to a disproportionate number of guests (approximately 7,000 passengers!). The music was wondrous and uplifting where appropriate; choreographed movements and lighting helped not only convey every scenario and issue, but also reflect the mood and tone of each scene. For me, though, the most perfectly executed theatrical technique was the actors' use of chorus. This not only emphasised key beliefs and the premise of the play, but also built on the sense of unity created by the warmly

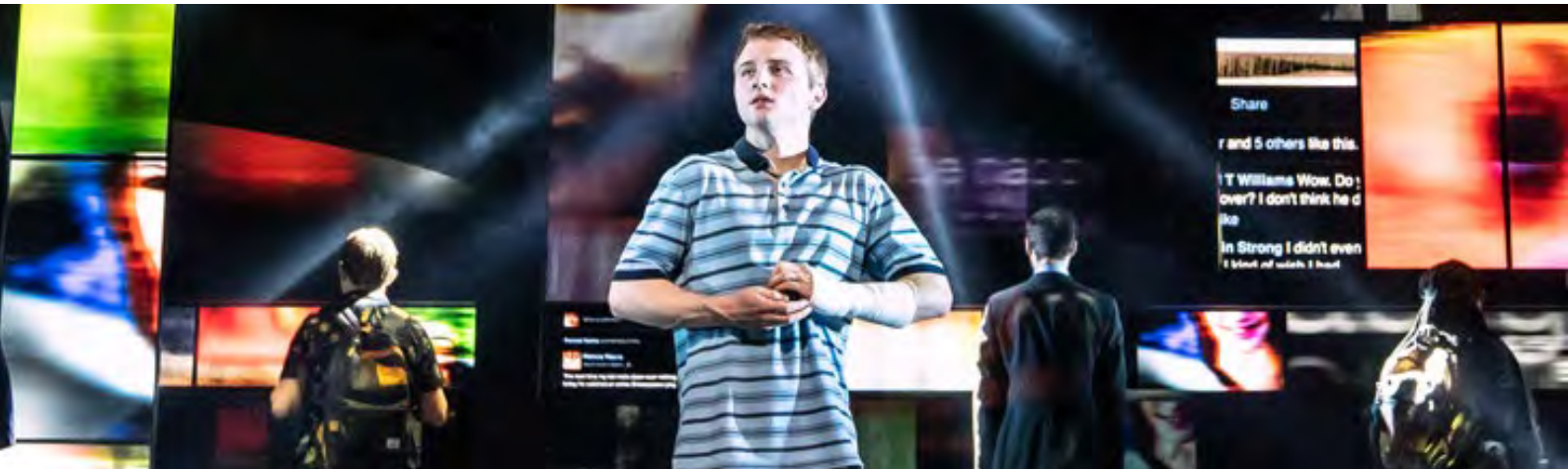
welcoming Newfoundlanders. A narrator was also cleverly integrated in the guise of a reporter, allowing a continuous flow of scenes without a narrator's explicit intervention. As such, the reporter could converse with other characters and explain the premise without disrupting the storytelling. Freeze frames served to keep the audience engaged through dynamic staging while also functionally highlighting key characters; what's more, profile spots made the location of characters clear. Overall, the trip was incredible. It enabled us, as Drama students, to expand our staging possibilities within the style of verbatim, and improve our characterisation within our own pieces. An incredibly well-performed musical telling of a story relevant to our own stimulus.

— Contributions by M. Goldberg

Dear Evan Hansen

On Wednesday 21st September, Transitus Drama pupils went to see Dear Evan Hansen at the Noël Coward Theatre. We were taken not only to enrich our Drama studies, but also because we will be using an extract from the critically acclaimed musical

Drama Theatre Trips



to devise a piece of theatre ourselves for our first practical exam in June. As we settled into our seats, we were engulfed by the pre-show sound effects of phone notifications, a way of introducing us to one of the core themes of the show: social media, which plays a large part in the plot. Although the show started five minutes late in typical West End fashion, the audience was immediately transported into the world of Dear Evan Hansen. Without revealing the entire plot, Evan writes letters to himself as an assignment from his therapist. Another boy at school gets hold of one of these letters, and the story starts to spiral from there. The show deals with frank discussions about mental health struggles as well as themes of adolescence and fitting in.

There were some incredible acting performances: Sam Tutty as Evan Hansen was truly brilliant, and Rebecca McKinnis gave an honest and gritty interpretation of his mother. The musical numbers from the Olivier Award-winning score were also fantastic, with my favourites being 'Sincerely, Me' for its humour and 'Waving Through a Window' and 'You Will Be Found' for their sheer musical impact. I thoroughly enjoyed the show, and not just because I'm a massive musicals fan! The phenomenal acting, moving songs, message of hope and experience of

watching the show for the first time with my peers made the piece both memorable and incredibly entertaining, despite its dark themes.

— Contributions by T. Sykes

The Clinic

On 29th September, I saw a gripping performance of The Clinic at the Almeida Theatre. The Clinic unfolds in a family's kitchen, as they celebrate the 60th birthday of the father of the house, Segun. His wife is a volunteer at a women's shelter and their children are a policeman, Bayo, and a doctor, Ore. At the arrival of a woman in need, Wunmi, they jump at the opportunity of helping her. When Wunmi comes to stay at the house for a week, however, the already fragile family begins to fall apart. The play follows the next months of Wunmi's life, filled with supernatural elements, addictive tea and symbolism of fire and electricity. After leaving the theatre, I wanted to know more, since the ending was almost unsatisfactory. I asked more questions leaving than I did when entering the Almeida, and conversations were sparked as my friends and I headed home. However, the performances given by the six actors were entirely believable. After seeing this production, I have a better understanding of what a naturalistic performance entails, which will definitely help me in

Drama Theatre Trips



my current Drama studies as we are reading Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, a naturalistic play that also centres on a family and their issues. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed the trip because I was able to observe a type of theatre I would not have seen otherwise.

— Contributions by T. Grossbard

ZooNation : Mixtape

On the evening of Wednesday 5th October, I went on a Dance-related school trip to watch ZooNation: Mixtape at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience; this sold-out show was jaw-droppingly good.

When the show started, the atmosphere was unforgettable, pumped by the DJ's music. All the dancers had awe-inspiring choreographed routines, and all their dance moves were in sync and energetic, leaving everyone spellbound. The performance contained high-intensity front flips, back flips and mesmeric breakdancing routines, which had the crowd, including all UCS pupils, on the edge of their seats clapping continuously. One of my favourite parts was when two dancers had a dance battle - a see-saw contest of one upmanship, played out to loud and lively background music. My second favourite sequence was when the Dormouse (from Alice and

Wonderland) sang a song while surrounded by dancers on stage. Oh, and the music was sung live by four incredibly talented singers.

I would recommend this fabulous show to people of all ages and those who appreciate dance, music, art and theatre, as well as to families, since everyone can get involved and join the fun. Be aware, though: if you attend the theatre, be ready to cheer as loud as you possibly can and inevitably lose your voice! The world-class dancers and the entire show really inspired me and will help with my upcoming Dance lessons. Now I understand how I can be more enthusiastic and how my dance moves can become freer and looser. I can try to incorporate aspects from the show into my routine and will hopefully improve it.

I would like to thank Ms Tran and all the other teachers for taking the time and effort to arrange this amazing trip. I had a wonderful time and I am sure everybody else did too.

— Contributions by R. Ali Khan

The Boy With Two Hearts

In October, Transitus Drama pupils went to see The Boy With Two Hearts at the National Theatre. This

Drama Theatre Trips



book by brothers Hamed and Hessam Amiri was adapted for stage by Phil Porter. The resulting play follows a family in Afghanistan who, when their mother's life is threatened, run away in the hope of finding refuge in England. They travel through Russia, Ukraine, France and other countries in boats, trucks and trains all while the eldest of three sons suffers from a life-threatening heart condition. The play takes a close look at the lives of immigrant families and how they struggle to find refuge anywhere. Even when they feel safe, it is only temporary. For over 18 months, the play's main characters, the Amiri family, were constantly on the move.

There is also a deeper focus on the bonds between family and particularly between brothers. Despite the pain and hardship the family are forced to endure, the three brothers retain a positive attitude, possibly because they do not understand the full gravity of the situation. The acting helped to achieve the depth of emotion. The cast of five actors used multi-role to become the numerous characters the family encountered during their journey. This kept the play fluid and was cleverly done, maintaining the focus on the five-strong family unit. The additional use of projections kept the tone lighthearted and bouncy, almost like something out of a children's book. This

was because the play was from the perspective of the middle son, still a young boy at the time of these real-life events. Overall, I really enjoyed The Boy With Two Hearts and would recommend it to anyone.

— Contributions by J. Davis

Marvellous

When I entered the theatre-in-the-round auditorium at the brand-new Soho Place Theatre, I was amazed to see the placement of the audience on all four sides, surrounding the stage. I had never seen such an arrangement of a stage or audience before. The actors' interactions with the audience really helped break the fourth wall, and the altogether smaller scale helped me to immerse myself in the drama and become more invested in the characters. There were also many non-naturalistic theatre techniques used, such as physical theatre, tableaux and exaggerated gestures. The message of the play was clear to me as a member of the audience: disabilities shouldn't be a disability but rather a different ability. This was emphasised by the recurrent use of the word 'marvellous', which represented optimism and positivity throughout the performance. Overall, it was an entirely new experience to me, theatre-wise, and a great play to expand my appreciation of theatre.

— Contributions by C. Von Der Tann

Drama Theatre Trips



It was a really interesting experience to watch the show Marvellous at the brand-new Soho Place Theatre in London with the Remove Drama students. It was an immersive experience and quite different from most traditional theatre experiences in the West End. The staging was very unusual, with the audience facing the stage from every direction rather than just from the front. This is called 'theatre in the round' which I thought was a really engaging way to perform a show because it made me feel like I was in the scene. The acting wasn't naturalistic but very exaggerated and high energy – very similar to the Berkovian style we are studying in Drama. The play was based on a true story, being centred on the famous clown Neil Baldwin, who suffered from a learning disability. It focused on many of the challenges that Neil faced and on how he overcame them, with the main themes being optimism, acceptance and making the most of life. It was a lovely surprise when the real, 76-year-old Neil Baldwin came onto the stage at the end and signed programmes – it was very moving to see!

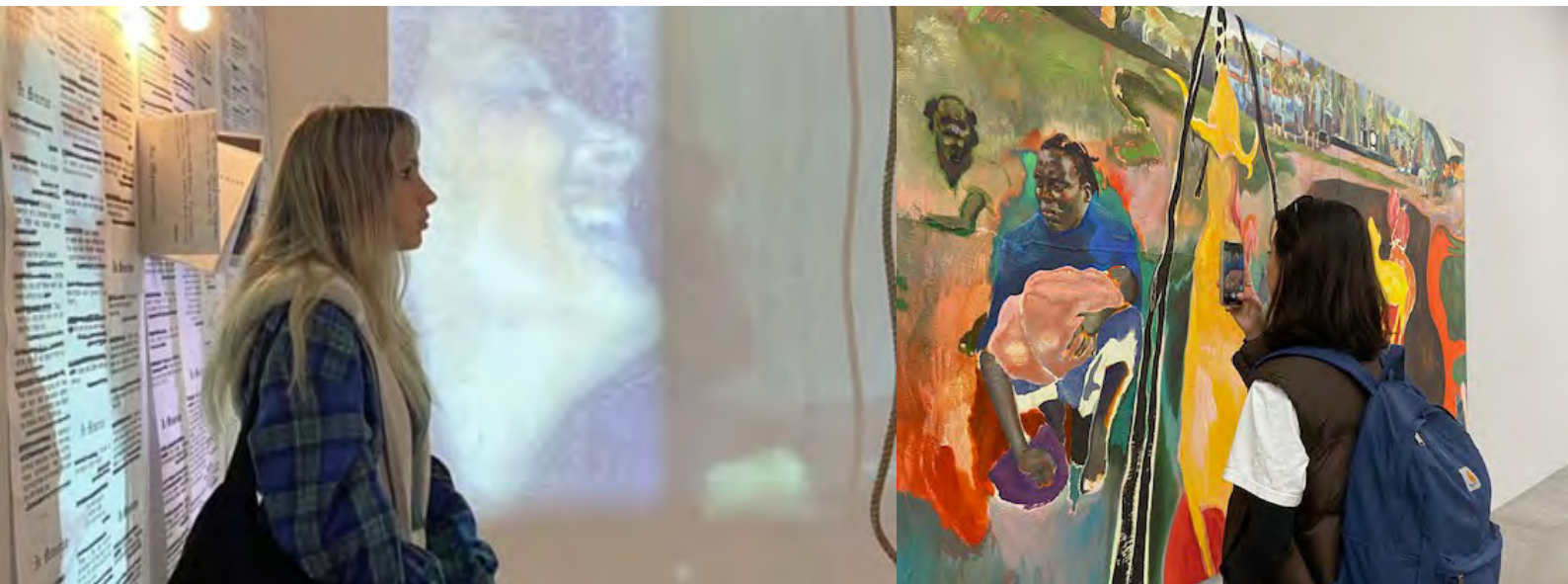
— Contributions by A. Sen

Outlier and The Doctor

We had the privilege of seeing Outlier at the Old Vic and The Doctor at Bath Theatre Royal. Outlier explored the effects of isolation, drug abuse and addiction on teenage lives, all woven into a fourth-wall breaking, spoken word story underscored by a live band. In terms of theatre experiences, this was unlike any other for me as it mixed elements of a music gig, stand-up comedy and spoken word performance into one coherent, theatrical experience. The Doctor was a challenging and thought-provoking study of identity politics through the story of a pragmatic doctor thrust into a PR nightmare after she makes a controversial decision. The performances were all highly detailed, the script was smart and cutting, and the pacing was slick despite the long run-time. Bristol's cultural features have inherent dramatic potential, and fittingly we also took part in a Drama workshop with The Wardrobe Ensemble theatre company. This was a chance to practically explore highly useful devising techniques to incorporate into the making of our pieces, such as free-writing and finding interesting conflicts of opinion through the discussion of a topic.

— Contributions by S. Wolffe

Art: The Barbican and White Cube



On 12th October, Transitus and Sixth Art pupils embarked on a trip to the Barbican to see the Carolee Schneemann exhibition, followed by a visit to the superb Michael Armitage show at White Cube, Bermondsey. Taliah Spencer-Jacobs in the Sixth has reviewed the following parts of each exhibition:

“Carolee Schneemann’s piece ‘Three Kitchens’ depicts her then husband in their bed surrounded by repeated imagery of their cat named Fitch. The nude figure resembles the intimacy of the relationship, and the privacy of the painting as a whole. Practically every colour in the rainbow is used in the painting which gives it a vibrant energy, representing the exciting emotional connection between the subject, Schneemann’s partner James Tenney, and Schneemann as the painter. The brushwork is distinct, the technique of impasto giving it an eye-catching texture, and overall accentuates the bright colours.

“Michael Armitage’s piece ‘Cave’ portrays the communication between people, specifically

through African music and the memories that inevitably connotes. The sound waves between the two subjects are painted in vibrant colours to convey the beauty of the music, while the whirlpool that the brushstrokes form eventually reveal subtle facial features. To an observer the meaning is not clear, which preserves the privacy behind the meaning for African citizens or Armitage himself.”

— *Contributions by L. Farago*

Psychology: Lectures



On 29th November, the Year 13 Psychology cohort left UCS on an enriching trip to Westfield Stratford, accompanied by Ms Martini, Mrs Hawes and Mr Milton. The aim of the trip was to improve exam technique in a revision workshop which would hopefully set us all on a path to A grades.*

Having arrived at our destination at the Vue cinema, there was much deliberation over whether to go for sweet or salty popcorn. Eventually, equipped with Issy's hot dog and Josh's ice cream roll, we entered screen 9 to hear our first lecture of the day.

We began by reinforcing our knowledge of the course content, everything from key terms to procedures of important research. UCS then took the cinema by storm, with Dean answering the first question, earning himself a prize for his incredible research methods, and Minnat winning applause for her superb insight into Albert Bandura's research. It was a proud moment to be a UCS student, and this laid the foundation for more to come.

With the false promise of doughnuts if we all answered a question correctly, we were eager to impress. After a lunch that saw Skyla tuck into her egg mayo sandwich, while others chose Nando's,

we returned to hear our final lecture on research methods. UCS were able to rack up more prizes by answering a bonus question which required us to work together to find the correct statistical test using Mrs Hawes' acronym. Much to her delight, our stash of prizes included a beanie for Minnat, chocolate bars and mini Chupa Chups. This was not only a test of our Psychology knowledge, but an exercise in teamwork that led to a triumphant Ms Martini fist pump.

The day ended with top tips for answering exam-style questions. We all left feeling it had been a worthwhile experience which will hopefully help us on our path to success as we head towards A Level exams. Highlights included the excellent advice on structuring evaluation paragraphs, and guidance on making answers specific to the question in research methods. However, we also came away with one question unanswered: whatever happened to the Krispy Kremes, Mrs Hawes?

— Contributions by T. Crawcour

Friday Afternoon Volunteering



A mainstay of our partnerships provision is the term of weekly volunteering that our Sixth Formers undertake. The Autumn Term is the turn of the Transitus to head out into our local community to take on placements in schools, charities and community organisations and do their best to positively and proactively make an impact.

Many members of the Transitus are placed in schools in the borough of Camden. This affords them the opportunity to develop ever-important soft skills like patience and empathy as well as honing their communication skills by working with younger children. Placements vary in terms of what the pupils are asked to do but include 1:1 reading with young children (some of whom don't speak English as a first language), art and creative lessons and helping out more generally in lessons. One placement that has been especially successful are the French sessions delivered at New End Primary by our Transitus. Their Headteacher said: "The French on Fridays is going so well and your pupils have been amazing. Our children love them coming and the sound of French being spoken around the room is a joy."

Attendance has been really impressive among the Transitus and it has been brilliant to receive such glowing feedback from their placement schools. Rhyl Primary School fed back: "It has been a pleasure to have your students. They are so polite and have been so helpful towards our children." Sixth Formers also have the opportunity to source their own placements so that they reflect their interests and passions. These have been as varied and interesting as ever and have included a local aircraft museum, community libraries, charity shops, sports coaching and more!

We are really proud of the impact that our Sixth Formers make in the community and firmly believe that they stand to gain as much as they give through this endeavour. Next term will be the turn of the Sixth!

— Contributions by S. Bennett & C. Rancon

North Paddington Foodbank Collection



As is long-standing tradition, we held our annual collection for North Paddington Foodbank this October on the final day of the first half of the Autumn Term. This is a moment when the entire UCS family – Senior School, Junior Branch and Pre-Prep – comes together to raise awareness of, and collect donations for, a singular organisation in our local community.

Tradition stipulates that the collection for North Paddington Foodbank should be pupil run, and its organisers for the past couple of years, Sixth Formers Xavi Mesquita and Dylan Ireland, led a team of volunteers on the school playground and at the school gates from early in the morning.

The Headmaster was proud to witness the Foundation-wide effort, saying: “The annual collection is an opportunity to be part of something that actively benefits people who are less fortunate as well as a chance to reflect outwards, to the wider community, the generosity and kindness that really are integral to the school ethos.”

Pupils brought in items pre-designated to their respective year groups, including pasta and rice (Entry), cereals (Shell), tea bags and instant coffee (Lower Remove), tinned fish (Remove), tinned tomatoes and pasta sauce (Upper Remove), sunflower and olive oil (Transitus), sanitary products (Sixth), and baby formula and nappies (staff).

In order to rally the Senior School to give as generously as possible, Dylan and Xavi wrote and delivered a stirring assembly on how pressing the issue of food poverty is in the local community. Their words also dispelled some myths and misconceptions about the type of people who may need to use a foodbank from time to time. By reaching out to North Paddington Foodbank to prepare the assembly, they could share with pupils and staff the reality of the situation.

The pair spoke about factors that have increased foodbank use over recent years including the wait for Universal Credit (income support),

North Paddington Foodbank Collection



zero-hour contracts which can make households vulnerable to poverty, and the application process for disability benefits. They explained that while North Paddington Foodbank has no ‘typical’ customer, there are groups that they support more than others. More than 65% of their customers are women, 45% have more than one child, and 35% are single mothers. Furthermore, 61% of customers are ethnic minority households, despite making up just 15% of the UK population.

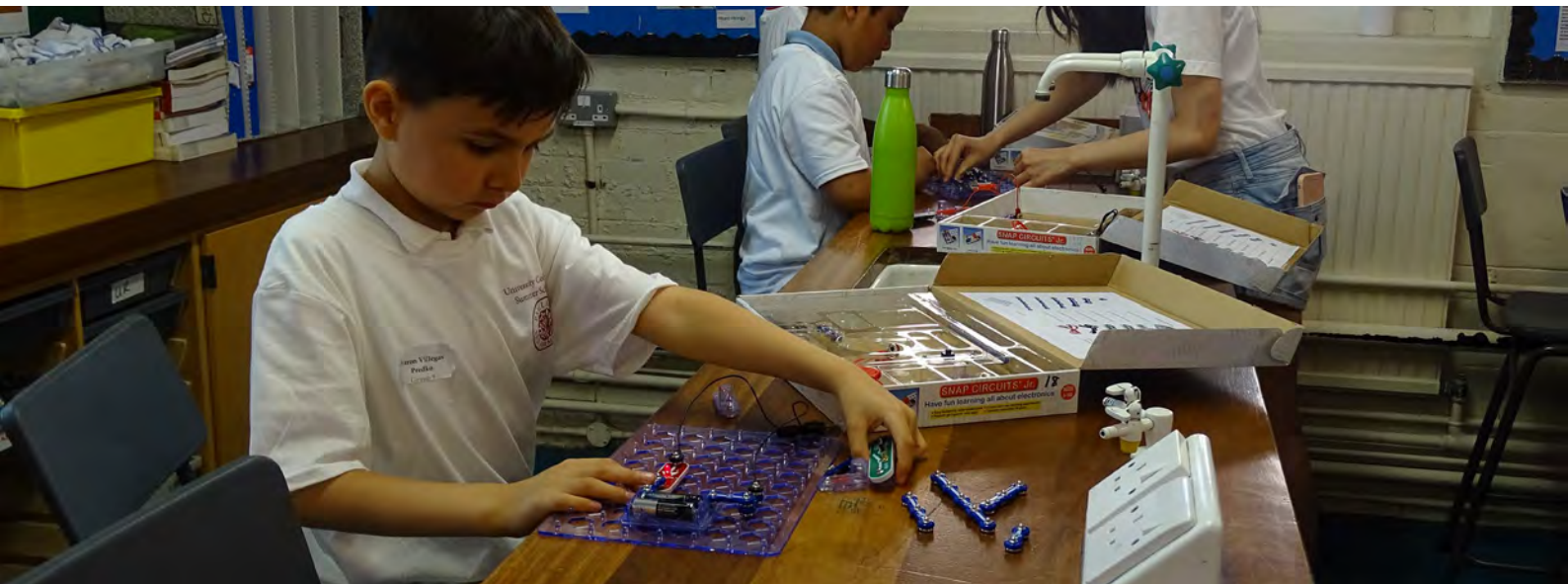
As always, we were proud and humbled to support such an important organisation in our community and we look forward to working with them again.

“We have been really proud to support North Paddington Foodbank over the last few years. It may be difficult to comprehend but food poverty happens in this country.”

— Contributions by Dylan Ireland, Sixth

— Contributions by S. Bennett

Summer School



One event that just missed the cut for last term's Frogna! and that we just had to feature in this term's is the UCS Summer School! Back with a bang for the first time since 2019 and spanning the first four days of the Senior School's summer holidays, this flagship partnership event was a huge success.

The plethora of activities, sporting and academic, were tailored specifically for Year 4 and 5 children from local primary schools. A total of 130 pupils attended, all selected by their schools for their academic attainment.

Over the first two days in the academic summer school, a team of UCS teachers planned and ran activities designed to stretch the talented Year 4 pupils. They were superbly assisted by UCS Transitus pupils who, in supporting the younger children, developed their own confidence and leadership abilities. The sessions covered topics as diverse as Modern Languages, Psychology, Politics, English, Drama, Science and Computer Science. The DT sessions involved kite building; meanwhile, electronics and Engineering invited pupils to build working circuits.

The visiting Year 5 pupils were involved in the sports summer school and were based at the New Pavilion and playing fields where we linked up with Active Day Camps to put on sporting sessions imparting the skills of rugby, tennis, rounders and football.

Communication and teamwork were promoted, with the action culminating in dodgeball and a Nerf session!

The response was overwhelmingly positive, with one partner school, Richard Cobden Primary, writing: "Our Year 4 children enjoyed two great days at the academic summer school and the Year 5 took part in a variety of sporting activities coached by Active Day Camps. Many thanks to UCS for providing this wonderful experience for our children."

— Contributions by C. Rancon & S. Bennett

Nobel Laureate Lecture Series and Humanities Talks



We staged our second Nobel Laureate Lecture Series in September and this time the event shone the spotlight on the Humanities and Social Sciences. It was an exciting evening to be hosting this flagship lecture programme in the company of our keynote speaker, Alexandra Heal, and our partnership schools. Students from UCS, LAE Stratford, UCL Academy and Westminster Academy listened to each other's presentations, discussed university applications, and had the opportunity to get to know one another on a night that celebrated all things humanities.

We heard impressive talks spanning 20th-century history, contemporary economic structures and the philosophy of maths. It's fair to say we were blown away by the levels of sophistication, academic knowledge and confidence within these presentations. We also listened attentively to our special guest, Alexandra Heal, from the Financial Times storytelling team. Alexandra gripped us with her presentation on visual journalism, research and how she began her professional career. Alexandra's

closing Q&A really helped students think about a future in investigative journalism and gave them plenty to muse over.

It was a truly enriching event, and a real joy to see our pupils and partnership students talking about their subjects, university choices and next steps, both academically and socially. With the Great Hall abuzz, it was also a really positive forum for teachers from across our network to develop stronger professional relationships.

I thoroughly enjoyed sharing my research and answering the audience's questions – and was pleased to find that they found my topic just as interesting as I did! I also learnt so much from hearing from other presenters equally passionate about Social Sciences as myself.

— Contributions by LAE student

The next month we were lucky enough to listen to Atul Singh talk to PPE students as part of an external Morris Lecture. Atul is the founder, CEO

Nobel Laureate Lecture Series and Humanities Talks



and editor-in-chief of Fair Observer. He has taught Political Economy at the University of California, Berkeley, and has been a visiting professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institutes of Technology. Atul also served as an officer in India's volatile border areas where he had a few near-death experiences! We were left spellbound by his talk to our Sixth Form about life as a political journalist, about how you do not need to have all the answers and about the importance of getting dirt under your nails. Atul's passion for political diplomacy, real storytelling and political philosophy captured his audience's attention. He gripped students with his real-life stories and even encouraged them to apply to write for his media organisation in years to come. With such a compelling address, Atul definitely inspired our budding PPE students!

— Contributions by J. Jenkinson

LAE Visit



This October, we were delighted to welcome the pupils of London Academy of Excellence (LAE), Stratford's UCS House to UCS. As has become tradition, UCS Transitus and LAE's Year 12 were brought together to engage in academically enriching activities and to think beyond their A Level studies. The programme put together by Ms Baxter and I sought to draw links, perhaps unexpected ones, between their subjects. The theme of Life, Growth and Death (Ms Baxter's genius idea – I can't take an ounce of credit!) tied together three stunning lectures by pupils in our Sixth year group:

Life *'Is de extinction possible?'* – I. Spooner

Growth *'Why is the teaching of Evolution in American public schools still such a widely-debated issue?'* – R. Kapoor

Death *'Is Yiddish Dead?'* – J. Abrahams

As one would expect, all three lectures were challenging, well-informed and left the audience utterly inspired for their next task. Having been confronted by such a range of perspectives on the theme so far, pupils were put into mixed UCS/LAE groups and asked to produce their own responses to the theme. These included:

The Brain Versus the Mind – a thorough analysis of the concept of neural plasticity which sought to determine if the nervous system can change its activity in response to intrinsic or extrinsic stimuli. It concluded that the link between having a growth mindset and increased neuroplasticity is that personal growth and progress are possible.

Social Media and the Death of Democracy – using Cambridge Analytica as a starting point, this piece examined various social media platforms and their algorithms to determine whether social media poses a real threat to democratic systems, concluding ultimately that “the divisive efforts of authoritarian governments to manipulate social media to buttress their regimes are not necessarily destroying democracy but acting as a fatal hindrance to it”.

We are truly grateful to LAE for its continued partnership with UCS which enables such academic endeavour to thrive and we look forward to the reciprocal visit in June!

— Contributions by S. Bennett

WrapUp London Collection



On the seasonably chilly morning of Friday 25th November, we (and by ‘we’, I mean Sam Downs and Alfie Heslam in the Shell) hosted the school’s very first collection of winter coats for the charity HandsUp London’s annual WrapUp London collection.

Alfie and Sam had stumbled upon the collection when they were thinking with Mr Roberts about ways they could help benefit the school’s wider community.

Their excellent poster design, organisation of our wonderful Maintenance Team and rallying of the school community really paid off and I suspect that the level of donations and generosity took them both by surprise. The donations of coats, all ages, designs and gender, flooded in from 8am and the boys lost count! We estimate that around 200 coats were donated in total.

— Contributions by S. Bennett

I am delighted by how Alfie and Sam have led this initiative. They came up with the idea a month ago and they really captured the imagination of the school community. Within the Lower School, we frequently discuss compassion, empathy and

the need to help other people. We also look at leadership development and how to build successful teams. Alfie and Sam have certainly embraced all these qualities and I look forward to seeing them lead future charitable initiatives here at UCS and beyond.

— Contributions by E. Roberts

I thoroughly enjoyed the coat collection because it made me feel like I was helping the community. When I saw how many coats we got, it made me feel happy because I knew they would all go to people in need. I really think we should make the coat collection an annual fixture at UCS because it influences us to donate what we don’t need to someone who does need it and that’s important.

— Contributions by A. Heslam

STEM Oxbridge and Medics Interview Evenings



During November, UCS hosted two interview evenings supporting students in their university applications. These events welcomed both UCS pupils and our partner schools spread across London. The first event was a panel interview for prospective medics and the second a practice interview for those applying for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects at either Oxford or Cambridge.

Some 78 pupils from UCS, the London Academy of Excellence (LAE) Stratford, Michaela Community School, UCL Academy and Westminster Academy were hosted for the medics interview evening. They each received a 30-minute interview from two expert professionals on topics ranging from their desires to pursue a career in Medicine, to questions on patient care, via tackling some of the NHS hot topics. A few weeks later, the STEM Oxbridge evening welcomed 59 students from the same schools. In this evening, each pupil was offered a similar half-hour interview, but focusing on their chosen subject. From Geology to Maths and Computer Science, students were afforded an experience of meeting their interviewer there and

then, simulating that real-life experience, and were given feedback to help set them up for the real thing.

These events could not happen without the panels of expert volunteers willing to interview, and we had over 75 in total! We would like to pass on our thanks to the many parents and Old Gowers involved, as well as colleagues and teachers from UCS and our partner schools.

— Contributions by M. Baron

Being interviewed by someone I had just met really helped give me the feeling like the real thing. I was also asked questions I thought would not come up, so it highlighted the range of knowledge needed.

— Contributions by A. Christensen

Primary School Maths & English Mentoring



After a successful first year in 2021–22, we resumed our Maths and English mentoring programme with Richard Cobden Primary School this Autumn Term.

With the aid of a Zoom link, our dedicated team of Middle School pupils supported their mentees in key areas of literacy such as identifying and pronouncing unfamiliar words, thinking about synonyms and antonyms, and reading a text with the correct expression and tone.

On Friday mornings, our mentors have been supporting a range of pupils with Maths. They have helped Year 4 with numbers and rounding, and Year 5 with fractions. As the sessions have gone on, there have also been an increasing number

of mentors looking to stretch their mentees, using challenging questions typically pitched at secondary school students. It has been a pleasure to see them working together, and with some well-scaffolded support, tackle tricky problems.

This partnership project has worked so well because both sets of pupils have got a lot out of it. While the UCS contingent have developed their communication and interpersonal skills, our primary school partner pupils have gained greater confidence in the all-important areas of Maths and English literacy.

With a fresh group of Lower Remove volunteers coming on board, we hope this programme will continue well into 2023, and beyond.

Primary School Maths & English Mentoring



Pupil feedback:

“It was a great experience, as it’s been really rewarding and enriching to help the younger students. It’s helped our communication skills and problem-solving – exploring different ways to explain a difficult question is challenging and definitely developed our Maths too.”

“I really enjoy reading with young people because it reminds me of when I was younger and had a similar experience and that really made a difference for me.”

“I often find myself learning new things along the way too.”

“It has been incredibly rewarding and insightful to enhance and improve their literacy. I have truly enjoyed spending my mornings with them.”

“Mentoring not only gives the opportunity to help other children, it also teaches you so much about yourself!”

“It’s very rewarding to help people learn through mentoring and it greatly improves your public speaking and communication skills too. I did not expect to be attempting to explain climate change to a primary school pupil!”

— Contributions by B. Timpson & M. Baron

The Lund Gallery: Breaking Character



This exhibition displayed artwork produced by the newly formed Lund Gallery Committee, formed of pupils in the Transitus and Sixth at UCS, in partnership with students from the London Academy of Excellence (LAE), Stratford.

The group took part in a series of drawing workshops with Miss McVicker, Teacher of Art here at UCS. The resulting exhibition was the first of its kind at the Senior School. The Lund Gallery Committee collaborated with the cast of *Oliver!* to make a series of works that were presented alongside the musical. The works shown in the gallery were for audiences to view before, during and after the production. They explored subtexts of the story and encouraged the audience to question scenes, look more closely at characters or challenge their understanding of the narrative.

When first glancing the exhibition, you could see three large-scale drawings of the actors during rehearsals. These wrapped the walls of the gallery to envelope the viewer in a panoramic bind. Snippets of audio gave an insight into the chaos of pre-production practice, yet the fades and cuts

sliced away any familiarity or fluency of time. The 'X marks the spot' invited you to stand and have your gaze directed towards a passage of text. You could read aloud and suddenly be in the shoes of an unfamiliar character. The broken spoons and holey bowls suggested rhythmic mundanity. Tactile yet alarmingly void of their function.

We hope the experience of exploring the exhibition prompted further lines of inquiry, beyond the gallery per se. The passages of text, questions and conversations were intended as conduits for deeper consideration away from the theatre.

At a time when information is free flowing yet unreliable, these may be habits we need to navigate our ever-changing world. What sources are we gleaning our news from? Who are we listening to? What roles do we play? What narratives do we live our lives by and what happens when we change the lens by which we view the world?

— *Contributions by V. Trinder*

The Lund Gallery: Breaking Character



At the start of the Autumn Term, members of the Transitus and Sixth partnered with LAE students to create a series of ambitious charcoal drawings that celebrated the Performing Arts and tapped into ideas of narrative.

The pupils attended four sessions about the art of 'chiaroscuro' – the use and treatment of light and shade. They learnt traditional charcoal methods that build up tone, and discovered different types of artistic composition. The course involved some photography, compositional collage, drawing techniques and research into the art of Caravaggio. There are three important works of his on display at the National Gallery, each from a distinct point in the artist's career, showcasing dramatic lighting, expression, gesture and narrative.

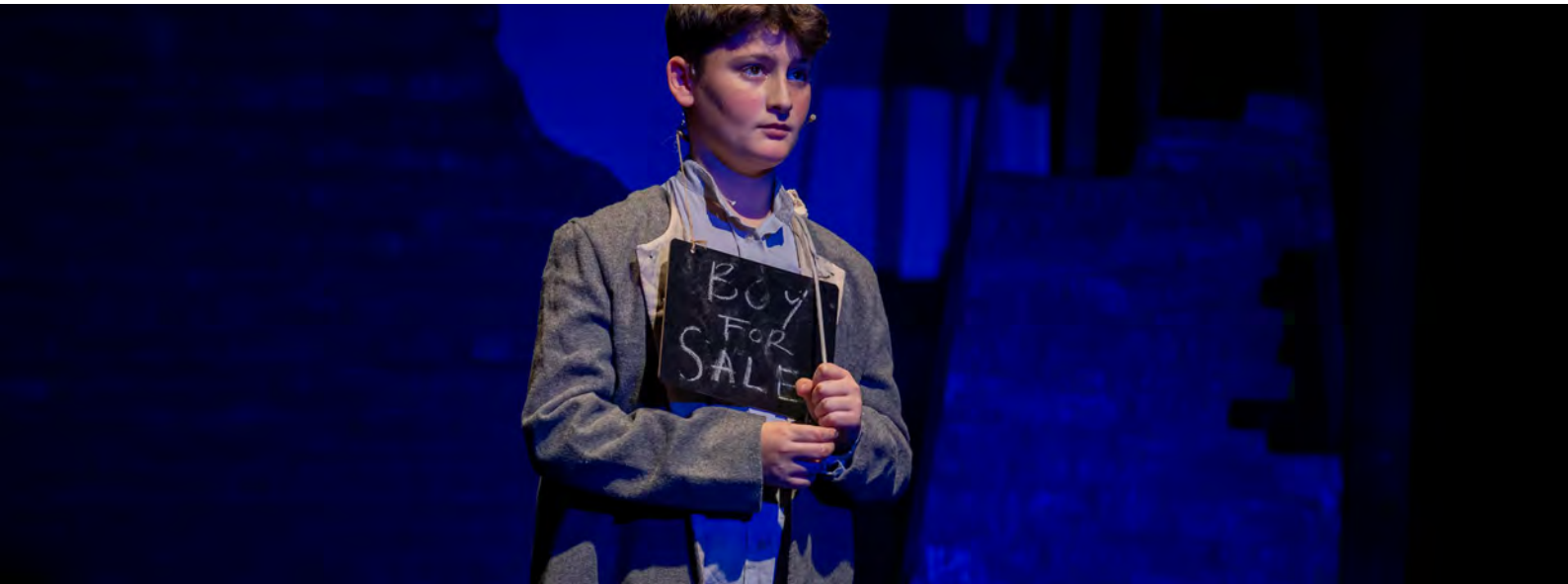
The theme of the workshops came from live rehearsals of *Oliver!* but the pupils also added their own autobiographical elements and takes on the well-known novel and musical. For example, at the top right of one of the compositions, one student included an element from her own musical compositions.

Some pupils made smaller drawings they were able to take home, others were excited to work on larger scales (some drawings measured up to two metres), and they were all surprised at how quickly they could build up tone and develop their compositions.

The pupils involved were absolutely fantastic: ambitious, creative, resilient and responsible. It was such a pleasure and a privilege to work with them, and a huge thanks to all who took part in the programme. The workshops were also designed around them and their interests after they had chosen to work with traditional materials at the end of the last academic year.

— Contributions by A. McVicker

Oliver!



After a three-year hiatus, we were delighted to present the highly anticipated return of the UCS musical with this production of *Oliver!*. When we announced that this musical would be our first whole-school production, the reaction was staggering – over a hundred pupils auditioned for a role in the show. The audition process lasted three months, just so we could meet demand from pupils across the school, including those who were joining us in September. *Oliver!* features a cast and crew of more than 50 pupils, the largest we have ever assembled in the Lund Theatre.

The Drama and Music Departments also welcomed a new collaboration with the Art Department, who worked with pupils from UCS and LAE Stratford to create *Breaking Character*. This exhibition, which was on display in the Lund Gallery during the show's run, was inspired by the rehearsal process of *Oliver!*. It is clear that despite the three-year interlude, the UCS musical continues to grow as a school-wide, inclusive and leading co-curricular event.

Musicals at UCS have a tradition of reinventing classics. From the spinning casino-wheel stage of our 2015 version of *Guys and Dolls*, to the blood-weeping walls of 2019's *Sweeney Todd*, our pupils enjoy working with staff to redefine and refresh the musical canon. *Oliver!* was no exception. Carys Bedford, our set designer, created a stunning backdrop of a moon-drenched Victorian London, somewhere between being torn apart and rebuilt by industrial revolution. The unveiling of the set model in our first rehearsal was met with a chorus of "woahs" from the cast. Martin Hutchings and the UCS Stage Crew worked tirelessly behind the scenes to deliver the most technically ambitious production we have ever attempted.

Of course, the sheer scale and ambition of this production presented the cast and crew with numerous logistical and creative complications. Such challenges were overcome by the pupils' talent, resilience and good humour – even when they missed England's first World Cup match for the dress rehearsal.

Oliver!



At its core, *Oliver!* is about a young boy in search of belonging. So, perhaps rather fittingly, the defining aspect of this production for me, as its director, will be the sense of belonging that it nurtured. From the first rehearsals in September until the final curtain in November, pupils from every year group gathered after school to dance in unison, sing together and act side by side, with younger pupils raising their game to meet the example set by their older peers. This show was crafted by pupils who, regardless of age, Deme or year group, shared a restless dedication to the Performing Arts.

It was a genuine privilege to oversee this project, and to witness pupils of all ages unite to experience the joy of creating something very special – together.

— Contributions by C. Abbott

Oliver! was my seventh and final show at UCS. My previous role was certainly quite different – Queen Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare In Love* earlier this year, which was another challenging but wonderful role to play. Participating in shows with UCS Drama has definitely shaped my time at UCS. I am currently doing Drama A Level and will most likely study Drama at university and possibly even apply to

conservatoires too. It has been a fundamental part of my school life which has shaped the person I am today.

— Contributions by E. Lifton

I have learnt that in a whole-school production, there are so many different people. And these people all bring something different. There are different singing voices, ages and ideas. I have learnt that even though there are big age differences, everyone's voice is heard.

— Contributions by M. Kester

As a Transitus pupil, I've been working with quite a lot of pupils in younger years and they've been nothing short of outstanding. They're an incredible group. I've been truly impressed by how well they've managed to chat and fit in with the older pupils in the musical.

— Contributions by A. Hill

As I joined the school in September, being in the play has allowed me to talk to new people in my year. It has given me something to be excited for and I have become a lot closer to people because of it.

— Contributions by T. Grossbard

LAE Oliver! Reviews



On Tuesday 22nd November, four excited students from the London Academy of Excellence (LAE), Stratford arrived at the Lund for the first night of Oliver!. Ticket sales were so strong that their names were pulled out of a hat, since over 20 pupils had asked if they could attend. One student said that it was the first time she had ever seen a play. Judging by the following reviews, it will not be the last! They were all full of praise after such a high-class production and left humming the tunes under a clear night sky as they made their way back across London.

— Contributions by D. Swanson

Oliver! at UCS was better than I expected. The use of costumes and lights conveyed very effectively what the characters were feeling. For example, the lack of shoes during the orphanage scene highlighted their poverty while the light beaming from their bowls showed food was the only comfort in their lives. The live band added further excellence. The child playing Oliver had a strong and distinct voice which amazed me and the rest of the LAE students, seeing as he is so young. Moreover, the dynamic between the older and younger years was ecstatic, and the director definitely

used this to their advantage by playing with height and vocal differences to show the power contrast.

I cannot wait to see what else UCS has to offer!

— Contributions by L. Nygaroh

My first musical experience was one adorned with such talented actors! I watched in awe as brilliant performers of various ages belted out their melodies and captured the audience's attention within seconds. Some moments I was on the edge of my seat in suspense; at others I was doubled over in laughter watching the hilarious portrayal of the great Fagin. Confidence oozed from every melody sung – evincing a sense of passion and zeal. It was so admirable. I would gladly watch these wonderful performers again if given the chance and I can only applaud them, hoping they pursue similar endeavours in the future.

— Contributions by T. Chowdhry

The energy of the show was vibrant, enthusiastic and contagious. Not only this, but the vocals were incredible, especially given the young age of so many of the actors. Overall it was a great experience – the Drama Department at UCS is incredible!

— Contributions by L. Ahmed

Autumn Concert



For many, the Autumn Concert is a – if not ‘the’ – highlight of this term’s calendar. I can honestly say that this event is always one that I very much look forward to, and it certainly didn’t disappoint.

The beautifully curated programme had us, the audience, enthralled by musical talent right across the age range as the four UCS musical giants of Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra, Senior Jazz and Symphony Orchestra took to the stage.

Conducted by Mr Walton, Concert Band’s performance of Holst’s *A Moorside Suite* kicked off proceedings and the programme notes referring to the piece’s “modal jaunty character” proved accurate. The final movement’s moments of fanfare also lifted the audience on a bitter December evening.

Concert Band’s rendition of *Catch Me If You Can*,

of course from the fabulous Spielberg film of the same name starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tom Hanks, allowed the band’s full span of instruments (and an extended percussion section!) to be shown off.

The smaller group of pupils in Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Mr Gibson, performed a Vivaldi concerto; one of 12 published under the title ‘L’Estro armonico’. This was a harmonic joy and it was especially wonderful to hear the three soloists play during this concerto. Finn Kjaergaard and Oliver Schultz, both violin, and Ananya Radhakrishnan on the cello really did impress. For Oliver and Ananya, this marked a fitting Autumn Concert swansong as both will graduate from UCS in summer 2023. Hopefully they can return as Old Gowers to hear the future musical stylings of UCS pupils!

Autumn Concert



The development of Senior Jazz under the stewardship of Mr Da Silva remains a thing to behold. Their two numbers, *Shining Star* by Maurice White, Larry Dunn and Philip Bailey (arranged by Mark Taylor) and *Mario Kart 8 Theme* by Atsuko Asahi, were such fabulous fun. Daisy Ellis-Thomson and Sophie Andreae's vocals and solos from Oliver Schultz and Charlie Cash stood out along with the rhythm section featuring Aidan Pick, Edward Choi and Joseph Kouyoumjian. The choice of *Mario Kart 8* was brilliant and inspired. It brought out the sheer mastery and talent of Senior Jazz, who did absolute justice to this video game soundtrack – soundtrack, no less, to the best-selling Wii U game ever!

Symphony Orchestra completed the evening's music making, conducted first by Mr Gibson and then by Mr Dawe. *The Land of The Mountain and*

The Flood by Hamish MacCunn, as Mr Gibson noted, very much evoked the spirit of Scotland and brought to mind Scottish lakes and Highlands. Such dramatic and impressive scenery was matched, however, by the peak performances of all pupils, spanning the entire Senior School age range, in Symphony Orchestra. Finally, Max Bruch's *Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 26* and Rachmaninoff's *Symphony No. 2, Op. 27* revealed Symphony Orchestra at their very best: punchy, bold, sensitive and utterly talented.

Thank you so much to our wonderful Music Department for such a fantastic evening!

— Contributions by S. Bennett

Remove and Upper Remove Performance Platform



Thursday 10th November saw the Remove and Upper Remove Performance Platform, an opportunity for 17 leading Middle School musicians to perform solo and ensemble items in the magnificent setting of the Great Hall. The programme contained items across a wide range of genres and instruments and the standard was exceptionally high, reflecting the depth of musical talent in the two year groups.

The concert featured impressive string playing. Joshua Martinovic-Lemalu (violin) opened proceedings with Brahms's formidable 'Allegro' from the *F-A-E Sonata*; Alex Haines (cello) confidently exploited advanced performing techniques in Mark Summer's folk-inspired *Julie-O*; William Travis (cello) contributed an elegant performance of Mendelssohn's *Song Without Words*; and Finn Kjaergaard (violin) dazzled in Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson's *Louisiana Blues Strut*.

The clarinet was represented by Louis Davis, who brought out the contrasting characters of Lutoslawski's *Dance Preludes 1 and 2*, and Louis Woof McColl, stylishly mellifluous in the

first movement of Mozart's *Clarinet Quintet*.

The evening saw the debut of Jeremy Jeffes and Benjamin Kotok-Nicholls as a piano duet and they brought fine ensemble skills and a sensitive touch to Debussy's *En Bateau*. Finally, the newly formed Jazz Quartet of Finn Kjaergaard (violin), Joseph Kouyoumjian (piano), Ayan Hull-Jurkovic (double bass) and Tyler Bennett (drum kit) treated us to a toe-tapping rendition of Gershwin's *But Not For Me*. Warm congratulations are due to the boys on their excellent performances, as well as thanks to the evening's piano accompanists: Miss Czapor, Miss Ube, Mr Dawe, Mr Gibson and Mr Walton.

— Contributions by C. Dawe

Rugby



The 2022 rugby season has been exceptionally busy and successful. This term has seen UCS field more sides and play more fixtures than ever, and it is pleasing to witness so many pupils benefit from playing this wonderful game.

The outstanding side have been the U15B team who remain unbeaten. Expertly coached by Mr Hughes, this side illustrate the superb strength-in-depth of the Remove, which augurs well for the future. The standout players have been Eugenio Coppola, Alfred Bureau and Tom Harris who demonstrate much potential.

The U12 age group are highly promising and play an open and exciting brand of rugby. Highlights include derby wins over Belmont and Queen Elizabeth's, Barnet, with Tristan Turner, Julian Wickham and Alexander Macadam the leading lights.

The U13 squad have built upon excellent foundations laid in their Entry year. The A team have been superbly led by Max Gentzel, with Mikail Hameed, Ollie Ezro and Ayal Schwartz all making notable contributions. A special mention

to Antonis Pishiris who is a contender for the most improved player having made the transition from B to A team.

The U14Bs have recorded a host of excellent results. Seb Reneby has proved an inspirational captain and there are a number of players who will be competing for A team shirts next year. The As' performance of the season was undoubtedly the narrow win over Colfe's, with Tomoya Hartley, Conall Cawley and George Skrypec all showing their potential for the future.

The U15A team are led by skipper Adam Faidi, with Monty Jones, Benjamin Krol, Victor Rancon and Rafi Bartfeld making valuable contributions on both sides of the ball. Their standout display was the 19-10 victory over a very good team from St George's, Harpenden.

The U16s are arguably the most improved side in the school. Tom Akle has proved an excellent finisher, with Ori Pickford and Charlie Wheeler carrying the ball well. Tom McQuaid has been an ever-present threat from scrum-half.

Rugby



The 2nd XV have endured a number of narrow and frustrating losses. Ianni Melikian has been an excellent skipper, well supported by Zac Robinson, Sam Frank, Daniel Narunsky and Hector Nouailhetas. It was delightful to see the players finally rewarded with a well- deserved victory over Latymer Upper towards the end of the season.

A full 1st XV report can be found below, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank departing players Sho Ishizuka-Wright, Shunta Goto, Alexander Christensen, Jacob Bor, Yuji Ishizuka-Wright, Alexander Benson and Hugo Kinder for their special contribution to UCS rugby over the years. 1st XV captain Jasper McNally-Drew has been both a superb player and leader. He is a fine role model for any aspiring UCS rugby player.

— Contributions by D. Brown

Rugby Tour of Northern Italy



Saturday morning, 3am at Gatwick. Everyone got off the bus together, and handshakes and greetings were exchanged. Even at this time, no one was tired; we all just wanted to get there as quickly as possible. A relatively straightforward passage through security, though all but two of our backpacks were stopped. A meal deal or a Pret breakfast before boarding. Then, one smooth flight later, we had arrived.

On the coach to the hotel we were buzzing to find our homes for the next few days. We were handed keys and there was a rush to locate the apartment we would be staying in. No time to waste, though, because we were off to Verona for a few hours of cultural appreciation and shopping. Later, a quick dinner and then bed.

The next day it was time to go to training. Stepping off the coach we could see the landscape and the mountains of Northern Italy. Hard work in the sun and preparation for the matches ahead. In the afternoon we had a short walk to Gardaland, an amazing theme park comparable to those you may visit in the UK. Splitting into groups, we had an adrenaline-filled afternoon on the rides and many pupils came back with massive stuffed animals won in games.

Come Monday, however, we were all thinking about our evening matches. We trained again in the morning and then put on our tour polos to wear to the games. When we – the Under-14s – stepped out onto the pitch, the U15s were there cheering from the stands, giving us a boost. Both games were competitive, with great rugby played and friendships made. After the matches, we ate with the opposition and some players even swapped social media usernames.

On Tuesday we trained and played again. This time the U14s and U15s were in different places. We faced a difficult opponent but the effort was consistent throughout the side. We put in a good team performance and many players who were not in their preferred positions stepped up.

Finally, on Wednesday, it was time to head home. We were all tired and the energy in the airport was the polar opposite to the first flight. However, this trip was one we would remember for a long time and many great memories were made.

— Contributions by T. Hartley

Netball



The UCS netball teams had a fine start to the season. With excellent preparation from Mrs Hawes, Ms Tyson, Miss Harris and Mr Peck, the team enjoyed a really impressive first few matches.

The new Transitus girls were keen to get involved in Monday-evening netball training, and the team underwent specific strength and conditioning training with Mr Peck while also improving their already eye-catching skill sets. Wednesday training sessions focused on game play, especially on set plays from centre pass, working with Issy Spooner and Ruby Milward to ensure a safe ball to goal.

The 1st and 2nd teams' debut matches were against South Hampstead. The former might have been left feeling deflated after losing vice captain Cara Willmott to injury within the first minute; however, they worked extremely hard to fill the positional gaps, with incredible help from Issy Dixon and Carys Nicholas interchanging at WD and WA. The final score was 17-19, an unfortunate loss, with Skyla Madhvani the MVP.

The next matches were against Highgate, a usually strong opponent. The 1st team had an excellent game, with a very marginal 13-16 loss. The third quarter proved particularly exciting, with Aimee Benjamin and Thalia Kermisch putting up five

under extreme pressure, compared with Highgate only scoring two due to strong defence from Bea Harker and Carys Nicholas. Everyone kept up the hard work to the very last second; MVP was Issy Spooner.

The 2nds also had a thrilling game, although they also lost despite an amazing effort from every player involved. The teamwork was fantastic considering this early phase in their collective development, and regardless of the losing scoreline everyone's energy levels remained high. MVP honours went to Beatrice de Souza-Girao.

The Latymer away match provided a test of grit, but even with an adverse scoreline the team did not give up for one second of the game, leaving Mrs Hawes really proud of the side's sporting conduct, adaptability and maturity.

Both teams had rematches with Highgate on Wednesday 30th November, with morale firmly intact, followed by a St Benedict's fixture at the end of term. Netball continues next term alongside football, with return matches and Mill Hill in the calendar – so lots more to look forward to!

— Contributions by S. Madhvani & C. Hawes

Football



The football season has begun with plenty of action and excitement across various age groups. Our Under-13s, Under-15s, Boys 1st XI and Girls 1st XI have entered the ISFA National Cup competitions and all age groups have been offered extra-curricular training during the Autumn Term.

The U12 players have all been invited to attend after-school training in order to best prepare for the football season starting in January 2023. We have been hugely impressed by the commitment and talent on show during these sessions, with special mention to Tristan Turner, Freddie Littner and Eli Babich, who have been involved in the U13 ISFA Cup and Trophy fixtures.

Our U13A team had a very positive start to the campaign and enjoyed taking part in two cup competitions simultaneously. They narrowly lost to Repton School in the third round of the national event but should be very proud of their achievement – the best performance by a Shell cohort at this level in the last ten years. A particular credit to Harry Bayfield who has captained the side with excellence so far.

The U15 squad have also taken part in extra-curricular training, with more than 25 players hoping to make the squad to play in the national

competition. This is an exciting group of footballers and I am confident some individuals will soon make appearances in the year above and at Senior level as a result of their progress.

Some of our U16 students deserve a special mention after being invited to train and subsequently play with our Senior team in the national competitions. Joseph Spitz made three appearances in the cup fixtures and was chosen as hardest-working player on two occasions, while Daniel Brunas and Ronen Fishman also featured in the second round of the Middlesex FA Cup. An exciting season ahead for this age group who will also represent our Boys 3rd XI.

Our Boys 1st XI began the campaign well, with a number of national cup games played and great commitment shown in their extra-curricular training. The team are currently defending the Middlesex Schools FA Tye Cup and recently made it to the third round, featuring some exciting young talent from Years 11 and 12. The squad have shown admirable dedication to the programme so far and we hope to build on the success from previous years.

— Contributions by R. Sousa

Football



The girls' football team have had an incredibly strong start to the season with a vast number of Transitus girls turning up to trials and training sessions. The combination of a passionate group from last year's Transitus and a fresh new wave of girls to help form a bigger squad has marked a welcome beginning to the campaign. Training sessions have provided the opportunity for the Transitus and Sixth to bond as a team and learn to play fluidly together, which has been important for matches. The level of commitment to training has been fantastic and has allowed us to grow together as a team and gain a level of structure positionally and tactically, which can be seen by the squad's success this term. We have been lucky enough to enter a girls' schools' cup and league and have had many more organised friendly matches this year, which has been great for the abundance of game time and also to fuel some team competitiveness. So far the team have taken their matches by storm, winning at home and away with all three matches producing wins; 8-3, 2-0 and 6-0. The girls have shown great spirit and it has been great to watch the team grow and improve together, with the help of committed coaching and encouragement from Mr Jones and Ms Yovichich. Hopefully this run of positive results continues in the new year.

— Contributions by I. Dixon

The U13A team have started this season with a bang, unluckily losing to Repton in round three of the ISFA Cup, which is UCS's best national cup achievement in the history of this age group. To begin the campaign, we competed in the St Anthony's tournament – winning all our games and not conceding to finish victorious, triumphing 2-0 in the final. In our second fixture, we travelled to Cambridgeshire to face Kimbolton School, winning 5-1 in the first round of the ISFA Cup. In the second round, we drew Highgate School away. Considering we conceded the first goal, we bounced back, scored and took the game to extra time. Then we scored two more and won 3-1 to progress to play Repton in round three. In between Highgate and Repton, we had our opening ISFA Trophy game facing Somerhill. We won that one convincingly, 8-0, and progressed to the second round against Trinity School. We did not advance any further in the Trophy, though, losing to Trinity. The last game we played was a trip to Derbyshire, where sadly we lost 2-1 to Repton. The end of our ISFA Cup run; however, we are proud to have made it to the third round for the first time. Overall, it has been incredibly enjoyable playing 11-a-side and having more freedom on the ball. Roll on Spring Term!

— Contributions by H. Bayfield

Basketball



The basketball season runs across all three terms at UCS.

This is a rebuild season for the Ringers, with a young squad largely consisting of Year 11 and Year 10 players competing in the U18 LSBA North London Conference. The campaign began after half-term with a loss to a decent Forest side, who were blessed with an all-star point guard. The game was even at half-time, but UCS lost momentum after an unfortunate accident during the interval when one of our starters – and key three-point shooter – broke his arm! The second match was more in line with team aspirations, a thumping 72-36 victory over Berkhamsted. This was a great result for our young players against an older team, and bodes well for the rest of the season, and indeed for seasons to come.

The U15 squad, the Tropics, have a later start to the season and being largely composed of senior team players, e.g. Theo Sawtell, Josh Martinovic-Lemalu and Gulliver Lewis, also look set to play some good basketball. The U13 side, the Roosters, were unbeaten last year and their new generation of players, led by the towering Avi Schliesser at centre, will begin their fixtures in the Spring Term.

— Contributions by T. Hardy

Hockey



The 2022–23 hockey season has begun with a fruitful set of Autumn Term pre-season matches, versus Haberdashers’ Boys, Westminster School and Hitchin Boys.

We have fielded A and B teams from Under-12s through to the 1st XI, as well as seeing fixtures in the Junior Branch for both the U10s and U11s.

The U12 age group has shown much promise, both in training and in fixtures, with a number of strong club hockey players joining the Senior School in September. A notable performance was their comfortable win against Haberdashers’, in what is normally a tight affair.

The U13s have continued to build on their impressive displays from last season, with a win at Habs and a very entertaining game at Hitchin, albeit in a losing cause. Several players from this

age group have represented the U14A and B sides, which shows the strength of talent in this year group.

At U14 level, we see the pupils exposed to 11-a-side hockey for the first time, which presents a huge challenge for the players. However, they have taken to it very well, which gives good reason for excitement for this cohort entering the Spring Term.

The autumn stat-line for the U15s reads: eleven goals scored, none conceded. A 4-0 victory over Westminster was backed up by an emphatic win at Hitchin, with Milo Sharland scoring five goals in that match, in one of the most dominant performances by a player that I have witnessed at UCS. Much like the U13s, many of this age group have represented the U16s and are pushing

Hockey



for places in the senior 1st squad, which is a tremendous effort by these players.

Many of the U16 team have already made 1st XI debuts this term, all of them contributing excellently at that level. The U16 side itself has only had one fixture, losing 2-0 at Hitchin in a high-quality contest that would not have looked out of place at 1st XI level. Luca Knorr, a mainstay of the 1st XI midfield for over a year, pulls the strings in the engine room for the U16s as well, leading by example with technical quality and physical endeavour.

Meanwhile, UCS 1st XI hockey is as strong as ever, proven by an outstanding showing by every player in a gutting 2-1 loss to Hitchin. Viraj Mehra in goal transmits tremendous confidence with his shot-stopping ability and communication skills. Zain

Ali has been a rock in defence, regularly starting counter-attacks after dispossessing the opposition. Luca Knorr is as influential at 1st XI level as he is for the U16s, linking well with Calum Papworth in

deep midfield positions. Further forward, Toby Crawcour is an extremely effective link between defence and attack, able to supply Dylan Ireland who leads the front line expertly.

I look forward to the busy Spring Term of hockey fixtures with great anticipation, as this current crop of hockey players play in an exciting way, marrying technical and tactical quality with unwavering effort, always giving their best for their team-mates.

— *Contributions by J. Hilliyer*

The Frognal Flyers: Velodrome Cycling



Wednesday... It's that time of the week again. The Frognal Flyers pack onto the 13:16 Thameslink direct to Herne Hill, and among the chatter lie discussions of what our session might entail. Perhaps half lap changes, Australian pursuits, fixed gear crit or the infamously repeated pairs on the blue. All of these activities involve not only top-notch stamina, but also stellar communication in the Velodrome.

The skills obtained from team-wide drills contribute to – what I like to call – “velodrome intellect”. For example, it is smart to keep a mere sub-10cm gap between your front wheel and your predecessor’s back, ensuring maximum speed with minimum energy. Being able to manoeuvre yourself properly within the Velodrome is also a skill within itself, with many activities centred around exiting the front of the procession every 200 metres, slotting yourself back at the end. This familiarises us with adjusting speed appropriately and eases tricky manoeuvres, especially on the angled banks.

While roaming the 130-year-old grounds, it is necessary to pay respect to those who roamed Herne Hill Velodrome long before us, long before the modern age. The Velodrome was erected in 1890,

built on the site of a former dairy farm, with its construction pioneered by race promoter George Lacy Hillier and financed by local Brixton-based building company the Peacock Family. The first race at HHV in 1891 purportedly marked an acceleration of competitive cycling’s popularity. During the 1890s and 1900s, paced cycle racers were considered the fastest people on earth, achieving speeds of up to 55mph on the track.

Just over a decade after its opening, the Velodrome oversaw the first annual season-opening Good Friday meeting, attracting a field of international champions in the same year as the first ever Tour de France. Perhaps Herne Hill Velodrome’s survival from the late 19th century onwards is testament to the brilliance of single-speed cycling as a sport.

Herne Hill: where the Olympic dream never fades.

— Contributions by K. Partridge

25 Year Reunion



After 25 years away from UCS, members of the Class of 1997 returned to Frognaal for their reunion on 23rd November. The event saw them reunited not only with each other but also with former and even current staff. One of their old teachers had travelled all the way from Ireland to attend the gathering. The Old Gowers clearly enjoyed chatting to the present-day Headmaster, Mr Beard, who assured them that while time has passed and new buildings have arrived on the site, the ethos of the school remains very much the same – and so they would most certainly recognise a school day in full swing.

— Contributions by E. Malmvarn

Act of Remembrance



The Act of Remembrance is probably one of the most special and moving events in the school's calendar – and it is further enhanced by incorporating members of the Old Gower community into the proceedings.

We were delighted, therefore, to welcome nearly 30 Old Gowers and guests back to school as UCS observed a respectful period of silence in remembrance of the fallen on Friday 11th November. The ceremonial aspect of the occasion was followed by a brunch hosted by the Headmaster in the Gower Room.

Each year, there is an open invitation to all Old Gowers to participate as the UCS Foundation remembers those who gave their lives so that we could be free. It is poignant to see the names of fallen Old Gowers on the school's memorials from the Boer War, World War One and World War Two.

We always seem to get lucky with the weather on Armistice Day, and this latest event was no different. Since the pandemic the livestream of the Act of Remembrance has become a permanent feature. This has been very much appreciated and meant that more Old Gowers could take part, from London, the UK and further afield. This year we had Old Gowers signing in from Southern

California and Mauritius, to name just a few locations.

— *Contributions by E. Malmvarn*

I felt privileged to be present at UCS on Armistice Day for the Act of Remembrance, led by the Headmaster and movingly accompanied by a piper and one of the pupils who played the Last Post and Reveille beautifully.

— *Contributions by C. Gregory, Old Gower, 1964–74*

Thank you, UCS. My wife – who I dated while I attended UCS, having met her on the Metropolitan Line – and I attended via YouTube even though it was 3am here in Southern California.

— *Contributions by P. Murnane, Old Gower, 1949–54*

Attending the Act of Remembrance served to renew my personal 'act of gratitude' for the privilege of a UCS education. In conversation with school Monitors and Captains I was reminded about the balance this fine school has maintained between intellectual attainments, sporting activities and cultural pursuits.

— *Contributions by E. Bilimoria, Old Gower, 1961–66*

