

HAMPSTEAD FINE ARTS COLLEGE

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2021





THE PRINCIPAL'S INTRODUCTION

Candida Cave

This has been an extraordinary but very successful year at Fine Arts. The presence of Covid 19 never seemed far away but whether students were attending College physically or virtually, they remained hardworking, committed and increasingly mature. It has been a tremendously successful year for academic applications with 66% of our students receiving offers from Russell Group universities. This year's popular destinations include UCL, King's College, LSE, the Courtauld Institute (all London), Bristol, Exeter, Durham, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Students have been accepted on diverse courses, including Philosophy, Psychology,

English, History, Art History, Politics, Physics, Music and Architecture. The creative applicants have also shone with offers from Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music, Chelsea College of Arts, Central St Martins and London College of Fashion and Parsons The New School in New York, amongst others. We managed to celebrate their success with three socially distanced Summer Exhibition Parties. We were able to showcase students' work in art, photography, film and graphics, alongside musical performances and a catwalk show of garments designed and made throughout the year.



A NOTE FROM THE HEAD

Emmy Schwieters

In a year in which we have all had to adjust once more to a combination of learning together remotely and then, again, back on site, I would like to say how immensely proud I am of our Fine Arts community: the incredibly hardworking staff who delivered FAC virtual so brilliantly and then prepared for the 'face to face' end of year, our families who worked with and supported their children so well at home, or the students themselves, for rising to and overcoming the academic challenges of lockdown with aplomb. We have seen high levels of resilience in terms

of students' wellbeing during and after lockdown which we continue to support through Personal Tutorial sessions, the external guest speakers, the establishment of an FAC Wellbeing Instagram account and the re-design of notice boards to include Pastoral notices, Pupil Voice and Safeguarding. A new Pupil Voice Letter Box has also been installed in the student common area. Our adaption of academic procedures has led to an even more robust and effective tracking of student progress, which will continue to be developed in the coming year.

LEAVERS EXHIBITION

The original meaning of original refers to the true source of an idea. The nature of the Fine Art A level is such that the theme of each student's coursework is personal to them and evolves from a period of research and experiment. The result is an inspiring range of methods and materials: from drawing a line around Chinatown to dancing in a puddle of paint. There is no 'house style' nor 'house content' but inevitably, in a year of shared anxiety and strangeness, there are communal concerns and atmospheres. There is sadness and decay in collections of tears and lurid rotting fruit. There is anger and protest especially in a series of videos that rail against the constraint of women and the abuse of the planet. There is the wish to liberate identity in clashing montages and grotesque figurines. Some students have taken refuge in their imaginations – idealised architecture or claustrophobic forests; or in colour – purple octopuses and blue oranges; or in outer space - a dress made of glowing galaxies. In a year of great difficulty, this cohort of young artists have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and creative strength.



AN EVENING OF DRAMA PERFORMANCES

There was a real sense of excitement as students, parents, tutors and friends took their seats for this year's GCSE and A Level Drama Showcase. Live theatre had been unavailable to us for many months, of course, so this much anticipated evening was bound to be a special treat. The highest of expectations were met and indeed surpassed by our talented actors, who tackled challenging material with insight and flair, under Jess Orloff's expert direction. Selecting powerful extracts from dramatists such as Polly Stenham, Shelagh Stephenson, April De Angelis, Caryl Churchill, Henrik Ibsen and Martin McDonagh, the performers took their audience on an emotional

journey that highlighted the many foibles and inconsistencies of human nature. High tension and moments of horror were intermingled with wonderful bursts of irreverence and humour. The collaborative group work was a triumph and the two monologues deserve a special mention: Hilary Sambou's heartrending depiction of a mother who has lost her child and Andrii Zamiatin's masterful embodiment of Ibsen's Helmer – arrogant, patriarchal, deluded, but strikingly vulnerable at the same time. The resilience and determination demonstrated by everyone involved, who had to rehearse under very unusual and challenging circumstances, was truly inspirational.



MUSIC

The college's music department recently spent a day working with postgraduate string students from the Royal College of Music. The string quartet spent the morning workshopping and premiering new works composed by our A-level music students in the main hall. This was followed by a recording session in the music studio where the ensemble worked with music technology students on string backings for their recorded pop songs. This was a great opportunity for our students to work with expert musicians in a real-life setting and previous sessions had covered important topics such as microphone placement, string voicing and notation for string quartet.



RENAISSANCE SCHOLARS SYMPOSIUM 2021

This June we hosted the third Dukes Renaissance Scholars Symposium at Fine Arts. Entitled 'Is creativity the key to personal fulfilment?', the talks and workshops focussed on the role of creativity in daily life. Over the last eighteen months we have been battling the

impact of an unprecedented global pandemic which has emphasised the importance of personal creativity for developing self-belief and maintaining peace of mind. Eight of our high-achieving students were joined by students from the other Dukes Colleges:

Cardiff, Earlscliffe, Rochester and St Andrews. It was a fantastic two-day event; both students and accompanying tutors felt greatly privileged to be part of the event.



RENAISSANCE SCHOLARS SPEAKERS



Madeleine Bunting is an award winning writer. She has published five works of non fiction and her most recent, *Labours of Love*, the *Crisis of Care*, has been shortlisted for the Orwell Prize 2021. Her second novel *Ceremony of Innocence* will be published in July by Granta. A former columnist and Associate Editor on *The Guardian*, she won several prizes for her journalism. She is a Visiting Professor at the London School of Economics.



Suzanne Holtom studied at Cardiff and The Slade School of Fine Art. Suzanne has exhibited widely in London. She was the recipient of a Woo Foundation Bursary and has been awarded Individual Artists Grants from the Arts Council England in 2003 and 2008. She has exhibited her work at Glasgow Science Centre and Manchester Museum. Paintings are held in permanent collections at Kings College, London and in the Birth Rites collection Salford.



Alfonso Cuarón is a Mexican film director, producer, screenwriter, cinematographer and editor. Cuarón is the first Mexico-born filmmaker to win the Academy Award for Best Director. He has been nominated for Academy Awards in six different categories, a record he shares with Walt Disney and George Clooney. His most recent film *Roma* won the Academy Award for best international feature film and Best Director and Best Cinematography in 2019.



Chris Kenny has been exhibiting since 1985 in Europe and America and is collected internationally. Chris works with humble, found materials: fragments excised from books or maps, discarded photographs or books, and fine twigs. Since March 2017, Chris has been making a daily sculpture of a saint and posting it on Instagram as @twigsaints. These frail little figures writhe in agony or ecstasy and come together as a portrait of humanity with energy and sensuality, hubris and delusion.



Peter Doig is a contemporary British artist, celebrated as one of the most important representational painters working today. His paintings are characterized by their equal focus on both landscapes and figures, melding art historical and personal references into painterly abstractions with distinctive compositions. His practice shares no central formula, and instead functions as part of a whole that provides insight into his personal history and political ethos.



Anton La Guardia is the Digital editor for *The Economist*. Prior to this role, he was the Deputy Foreign Editor and Middle East and Africa editor. He was formerly based in Brussels as European Union correspondent and author of the *Charlemagne* column (2010-14). Prior to this he was Defence and Security Correspondent. His books include the highly acclaimed *Holy Land, Unholy War*.



Jeremy Haneman is a conductor and musical director who specialises in choral and operatic repertoire. From 2011 to 2020 he was the Inaugural Community Chorus Director for the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He is the Co-Director of Together Productions, which produces ground-breaking work using music and the arts to inspire social change.



Andrew O'Hagan is a Scottish novelist and non-fiction author. He has three times been nominated for the Booker Prize and has won the Glenfiddich Writer of the Year Award, Lost Angeles Times Book Award, and E.M. Forster Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He is Editor-at-Large of the *London Review of Books*. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and a Visiting Professor of Creative Writing at King's College London.



Sean Holmes is currently Associate Artistic Director of Shakespeare's Globe. Prior to this he was the Artistic Director of the Lyric Hammersmith for nine years. At Shakespeare's Globe: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Henry VI* and *Richard III*. At the Lyric he directed many diverse productions including *The Seagull*, *Shopping and Fucking*, *Bugsy Malone*, *Hérons*, *Secret Theatre Shows 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7*, *Saved*, *Blasted* which won the Olivier Award 2011.



Mark Urban is the diplomatic and defence editor of *BBC Newsnight*. His major stories have included the 1990 invasion of Iraq and subsequent Desert Storm campaign, the collapse of the Soviet Union, 9/11 and its aftermath and the Arab Spring. Before joining the BBC Mark was defence correspondent for *The Independent* newspaper for four years. He is the author of several books on military matters, and served for a short time in the British Army.

VISITS

IN A YEAR WHEN WE HAVE HAD TO CANCEL STUDY TRIPS TO ITALY, MADRID AND PARIS, WE HAVE MANAGED A FEW DOMESTIC OUTINGS SINCE THE EASING OF LOCKDOWN IN MAY.

ART TRIP TO THE HENRY MOORE FOUNDATION

The rain did not prevent the Sixth Form art students enjoying their visit to the Henry Moore Foundation. Set in the beautiful countryside in Much Hadden, Henry Moore's former home, studios and sculpture gardens were an inspiration for the students who wandered the grounds, looked at the wonderful sculpture and even managed to draw while escaping the rain. The Henry Moore Foundation has been a place we have regularly visited since 1982. On those early visits, Henry Moore would show us around the studios himself, draw with the students and advise them on becoming artists themselves. Two of the photos are from our 1982 visit and one from this June. There seems little change in Fine Arts students, but can you guess who is the little girl in the 1982 photo?



YEAR II FILM TRIP

Judas and the Black Messiah

On Tuesday Year II Media students were lucky enough to go on a trip to the wonderful Everyman cinema in Baker Street to see *Judas and the Black Messiah* directed by Shaka King. I'd be lying if I said it didn't make a massive impression. The movie depicted the life of the charismatic and righteously determined civil-rights leader Fred Hampton, who was the chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party. Fred Hampton was brilliantly performed by Daniel Kaluuya who is one of the finest actors of his generation. Shaka King takes a crucial moment in history and gives us a smart, uncompromising tragedy about fear and power. The title perfectly speaks for the film as Judas' betrayal of Jesus reflects Bill and Fred Hampton's relationship. Fred Hampton is portrayed as the Black Messiah trying to save his people only to be betrayed by someone he thought was a fellow.

Review by Agnes Slater, Year 11



LOWER SIXTH ENGLISH TRIP

Imperial War Museum

In preparation for our coursework component on war literature, Year 12 visited the Imperial War Museum earlier this month. Our students spent a large proportion of their visit in the First World War galleries where they gathered contextual information that they will be able to apply to their study of the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon and *Regeneration* by Pat Barker. They were also given a chance to explore other IWM collections and they left the museum enriched and quite moved by some of the exhibits. The beautiful weather meant that we were able to have lunch outdoors in Borough market and we ended the day with ice cream by the river!



YEAR 9 & 10 TREETOP ADVENTURE

Go Ape at Alexandra Palace

Years 9 and 10 were fortunate to be treated to a trip to Go Ape. We had a great time there. We started the day by climbing the steps to our chosen activity on the Go Ape assault course, where we were able to demonstrate our resilience and courage as we challenged ourselves every step of the way. By the end of our time on the Go Ape structure, I can confidently say that I felt a sheer sense of achievement after pushing myself outside my comfort zone. These tasks tested us, making us use our communication skills with one another - at some points having to guide one of our peers as they were blindfolded. By the end of the day, I was left feeling positive, having valuable memories to take away with me.

Review by Helen Wood and Matilda Samuel, Year 9





AND FINALLY...

STUDENTS HAD A VERY SPECIAL PRIVATE TOUR OF THE DAMIEN HIRST EXHIBITION

In May, as part of the College's thriving enrichment programme, Damien Hirst talked to our students about his controversial art and extraordinary career. We followed this up by visiting his gallery in Kennington where a retrospective of his early work was in its final week. Newport Street Gallery is a minimalist block in an unprepossessing back street; we arrived an hour before it opened to the public and were given exclusive access to room after room of Hirst's sculptures and installations, some famous, some infamous. The works of the 1990s have not been shown in London in recent years and the students were not familiar with them. 'A Thousand Years' (1990) is a shocking, unmeditative meditation upon life and death - a large vitrine is divided into two halves, from one section hundreds of bluebottles emerge and are lured into the other section by a rotting cow's head. Their reward is short-lived as a large insectocutor is also present. Also on show are signature works from the Natural History and Pharmacy series: sharks in tanks, medicine cabinets, etc. The students were shocked and intrigued in equal measure. Although we attempt to realise our Fine Artists' creative plans wherever possible, this exhibition demonstrated that there are some artists that we may not wish students to emulate too closely.

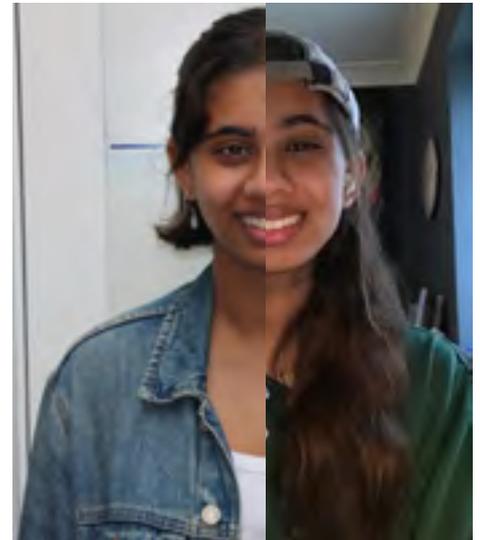
CHARITY FUNDRAISING

In December, we hosted a Christmas Jumper Day and raised a phenomenal £3,687 for Crisis at Christmas, thanks to the hard work and kind contributions of parents, students and staff. A very personal charity was organised by the Student Council. They organised hand-made Christmas cards for the elderly in Camden. They made 160 individual cards for elderly people who live alone in Camden. The personally signed cards were delivered with a hot dinner on Christmas Day.

We continue to support Camden Food bank and deliver weekly parcels of food donated by the student/parent body, and our younger years completed a 5-mile sponsored dog walk round Primrose Hill and Regents Park raising proceeds for Battersea Cats and Dogs home raising over £800.

Trisha, a Lower Sixth scholarship student, took the very personal step of donating her hair to raise money for Liberty's Legacy a charity that supports bone cancer research: "Liberty's Legacy, is a charity that was created in memory of Liberty Schurer who passed away from Ewings Sarcoma in 2016. Her one wish before her death was to help raise money and awareness for bone cancer research, and Liberty's Legacy was created. Her family as well as the community in Buckinghamshire have been integral in the development and success of the charity, and has already raised over £400,000. This charity is something that I hold close to my heart, and I hope that the Fine Arts community will take part in supporting this incredible cause."

Trisha Kumar



SUCCESS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE AND WEST END MT

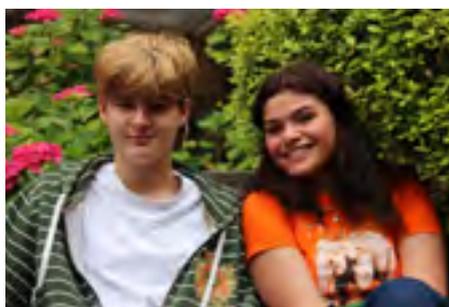
Every year around 5,000 students audition to be part of the prestigious National Youth Theatre and 500 are accepted. West End MT is the UK's leading professional weekend training programme for young musical theatre performers. Three Lower sixth students tell how they were successful in their applications.

Juliette Black: I have always known that I was creative, but it wasn't until recently that I started to use performance art and acting to express myself. I started my audition process by practising and developing my character through a monologue. The first audition was via a video link which I found quite challenging to communicate as I would in person. Nevertheless, it went successfully, and I was accepted for a recall. I was given the opportunity to join the interviewer on a zoom call and I think this was where I excelled. I was able to both develop my character and to talk about my ambitions. I discussed how I love the arts. I am very inspired by National Youth Theatre and believe being part of it will be extremely beneficial for my future career.

Maddie Martin: A couple of months ago I auditioned for the National Youth Theatre with the monologue 'Florence' from Jekyll and Hyde, adapted by Evan Placey. The programme is incredibly competitive, so I had fairly low expectations. To my surprise I was invited to do a live digital recall, when I had to join a zoom with other students undergoing the audition. We were put into separate calls with a member of staff from the theatre. The man who conducted my audition was very kind and helped me to feel less nervous. He asked me a few questions about myself and then asked me to perform my piece. It was nerve-racking but, overall, an amazing experience. I had to wait a few weeks to hear whether I had got in. Then, on the 12th of May, I received an email stating I had been accepted into the National Youth Theatre and I couldn't, and still cannot, believe it. This summer I will be attending a camp with the NYT. I am so excited; I can't wait to gain new tools for my acting and be inspired by the amazing teachers that work there. In addition, I am thrilled to be meeting so many new people with similar interests to me and to learn from them.



Trisha Kumar: West End MT is a musical theatre training school, located in Finsbury Park. It is run by industry professionals who have been in many musicals in the West End, well-known TV series and films and have been trained and teach at some of the most renowned drama schools in the UK. The audition process was a very enriching experience, as I got to perform in front of amazing professionals and, unlike most auditions where you either get a yes or a no, they gave me really informative constructive criticism that helped me improve my performance. Overall, the whole experience was really useful for someone who wants to go into the Musical Theatre industry, and it was an honour to even get to audition in front of such actors. And even more so, to be accepted.



METANOIA EXHIBITION

Charlotte Levy and Harry Thomson are hosting an art exhibition in Kensal Green in September. Entitled 'Metanoia' it will herald a return to normality after lockdown. The exhibition will include paintings, sculptures, drawings, fashion and photography.

AND BEYOND...

MUSIC NEWS: Fine Arts Alumni Oscar Lang is about to release his much-awaited debut album on the Dirty Hit record label. Oscar was signed while still studying at Fine Arts back in 2018 and he has since been incredibly successful with singles such as 'Moon Song', which has had more than 40 million plays on Spotify. Dirty Hit is home to popular bands such as The 1975 and Wolf Alice and it is great to see Oscar doing so well!

ART HISTORY NEWS: An email from Maddie: I hope you are well. I am emailing on behalf of myself and other former student Bache, to let you know that we have just received our degree results from Edinburgh university, and we have both received First class degrees in Art History (which we are very excited about). We just wanted to email so we could let the school know that we would not have been able to do it without the amazing and insightful teaching we were given at Fine Arts (particularly Emmy, Candy and Ben for Art History). We would both love to come back and visit soon, and hope we have made you all proud!!

