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Byron College

THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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Stety Katherisan
CLASS OF 2020

MESSAGES FROM THE KEY
STAGE 5 YOUNG LEADERS

ONE THING YOU
WOULD LIKE TO TELL
YOUR TEACHERS THIS
Christmas...



*Merry Christmas from
me and the giant!
And... take it easy
with the wocks.*

TIA GABRIEL (13), HEAD GIRL



*We all know that this has
been incredibly difficult on
you too, and you have still
always been by our side no
matter what; I don't know
where we would be without
your continual support which
we'll always be grateful for,
as you're helping us shape
our futures.*

FOTIS GIANNOUSAS (13), HEAD BOY



*I would like to wish all of my
teachers a very Merry
Christmas and I hope that
over the break you have the
time to relax and enjoy your
time with your loved ones.*

ELENA VRONTORINAKI (13),
STUDENT AMBASSADOR

*Thank you for all your efforts
this year in helping us to
apply to the right universities!
Santa will give gifts to
everyone, no matter if you are
an adult or a kid – so long as
you were a 'good child'
throughout the year. HO HO
HO – MERRY CHRISTMAS!*

MINA REN (13), DEPUTY HEAD GIRL



Be reasonable.

ALEXCY JAYASUNDARA (13),
DEPUTY HEAD BOY



Ho Ho Ho! Santa recognises your patience when marking our tests and invites you over for a Christmas feast! There will be lots of egnog!

SUFIA MOSTOFA (12B),
STUDENT AMBASSADOR 



Just because it's Christmas doesn't mean you stop being a teacher...

"Read the instructions carefully"
"The bell doesn't dismiss you, Santa does"
"There are no stupid questions about gift wrapping"
"Is there something you'd like to share with the elves?"

Merry Christmas :)

NIKITAS NIKOLAOU (12A), STUDENT AMBASSADOR



Dear Mr Dedousis and Mr Monemvassiotis,
I hope you both enjoy excellent and relieving Christmas holidays that really energise you for the next year-and-a-half of marking our tests (especially our mocks in January!)

SALEH ABDUL QADIR (12A), CLASS REPRESENTATIVE



I want to wish Merry Xmas to all the teachers who are helping me ace this school year.

ERMIS VRELIANAKIS (12B),
CLASS REPRESENTATIVE



I hope that all my teachers don't drown in assignments to mark this holiday and get to lie back and relax. (Hint: the fewer tests you give us, the less marking you have to do!)

BEESAN ABUSALAH (13), CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The other day, I was asked if Santa is real. I said, "Hold on, I need to ask my teacher." Thank you, and Merry Christmas!

JULIA LIN (12C),
CLASS REPRESENTATIVE





Wishing all my teachers a Merry Christmas. Hopefully it will be a relaxing holiday that does not involve any marking.

FADI MOAMAR (12C), THESEUS HOUSE CAPTAIN



Though Thanksgiving may be past us already, I would like to extend my appreciation to the staff and teachers for going multiple extra miles to assist in the academic state of students in any way possible and necessary. It is encouraging and great to know and understand the determination they have in ensuring the success of others.

NICK CHIONAS (13), THESEUS DEPUTY HOUSE CAPTAIN



Thank you for all your support and help through last year until now. I feel much more confident to continue my academic career after I graduate school due to your input. I hope your Christmas holidays and celebrations go amazingly.

Merry Christmas!

WILLIAM REPPAS (13), HERCULES HOUSE CAPTAIN



Many consider Christmas to be the highlight of the year, where we can enjoy the memories we have formed during the year. Our teachers certainly have played a huge role in creating many of them.

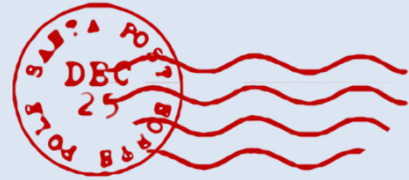
PS: Who taught the reindeer how to fly?

A teacher.

TAREK AQLI (12C), HERCULES DEPUTY HOUSE CAPTAIN



Student Council Dispatch.



GIVING TUESDAY



30 NOVEMBER 2021



In recent years companies have concocted a consumerist bonanza in the form of Black Friday, and even a follow-up in the form of Cyber Monday: fake commercial 'holidays' encouraging people to spend as much as possible.

'Giving Tuesday' has now been thought up as a necessary counterbalance to such consumerist excesses: a day in which we engage in meaningful charitable initiatives rather than think only about ourselves.

At Byron this year, the Student Council has decided to act on Giving Tuesday by providing refugee children in a community centre in the centre of Athens with a delightful surprise. Each form has collectively prepared two 'shoebbox presents', one for a girl and one for a boy, filled with important necessities as well as gifts. The presents will be delivered during the last week of term with the kind assistance of Mr and Mrs Gulley, parents of the School. As the holidays and cold weather approach, it's important that we include refugee children in our holiday festivities and remember those who are without their families and need as much support as possible.

Hopefully we can bring a beautiful smile to the faces of these children with these presents and let them know that they aren't forgotten.

Beesan Abusalah, Class Representative for Year 13

THE BYRON WILDFIRES FUND

Byron has always been a community-oriented school, and this is something we are proud of. Over the summer, Greece was ravaged by some of the worst wildfires the country has ever seen and the effects have been profound and wide-ranging. Our community of students, teachers and parents may seem small here at Byron, but this disaster has alerted us to the fact that in actuality we are part of the much larger community. This is why we feel like it is our duty to help in whatever way we can.



Above and right: students' photos taken four months after the wildfires devastated northern Evia, the second-largest island in Greece. The fires reached temperatures of 700 °C and burned a quarter of the entire island, stretching from the west coast facing the mainland all the way to the east coast on the Aegean Sea. Regeneration of the forests and the communities that depend on them will take decades, and the losses in environmental, emotional, and economic terms are incalculable.

The fires began on the 5th of August of this year, spreading outwards from the village of Mantoudi and overwhelming numerous villages in Evia, including Retsinolakkos, Mourtia, Kokkini, Agia Anna and as far as Spiada. The unprecedented scale and rapid escalation of the crisis were aggravated by factors such as the fact that a wildfire was simultaneously being tackled in Varimpompi on the outskirts of Athens; as such, only one aircraft was deployed to tackle the fire in Evia even while it was ravaging land and spreading rapidly. Additionally, fallen electricity poles made it very difficult for the firefighters' vehicles to reach the fires. Unimaginable damage was sustained on an ecological level with both flora and fauna affected. Additionally, the local inhabitants were similarly devastated as many lost their homes and livelihoods and are still suffering from the psychological impacts as a result.

On the 4th of December the Young Leaders and Student Ambassadors accompanied by Mr Williams, Ms Dodds, Ms Vekinis and Ms Efstathiou undertook a trip to the affected region to witness this devastation first-hand and learn how our community can help in the major regeneration drive needed for this once paradisaical region. One of the main purposes of this trip was to expose ourselves to the dreadful reality and consequences of wildfires, rather than experiencing it second-hand through media reportage; we were indeed able to observe the catastrophic impacts of these fires wherever we looked. We were also keen to talk to locals who had been affected directly – losing their livelihoods, homes, and the beauty of their homeland – in order to ascertain the specific needs of the region as part of the painstaking but vital process of reconstruction and regeneration. Broadly speaking, we often donate to charities without fully perceiving how our donation translates into real-life terms – how it affects lives on the ground, people just like us. This trip gave us that first-hand glimpse of what we will be fundraising for throughout the year, motivating us to surpass any limitations and to realise the urgency and value of this cause.

While there, we got the chance to talk to community leaders and experienced land workers who know better than anyone how the fires spread and what this has meant for the local communities. Mr

Fundraising Campaign for Post-Wildfire Regeneration in Northern Evia.

Beikas, the Municipal Counsellor who extended extremely generous hospitality in accompanying us throughout the day, and Mr Stamos informed us in stark terms of the severity of the damage: in just two weeks, 50,000 hectares were burned and the retsina (resin-based wine) industry of the area took a gigantic hit. If you consider that only trees of over 30 years old can be used for the production of retsina, it is evident that this pillar industry of the region is now decimated. As Mr Beikas himself said, "For the next thirty years, there are no jobs in this industry." A long-lived tradition and way of living has thus been obliterated. Nor indeed has this been the first such calamity: as Mr Beikas explained to us, this same region was ravaged by fires in 1977. Thirty-four years on, the time for full restoration had just elapsed until the recent fires destroyed the painstaking recovery that had occurred, simply adding more that needs healing.

Nor have the adverse impacts been limited to the local economy. Many people are facing psychological issues as a direct result of what has happened; it is impossible to quantify the emotional distress caused. Talking to a livestock farmer, he told us that upwards of twenty of his animals perished; what is more, many of the surviving animals experienced miscarriages as a result of the emotional and physical trauma they endured during the wildfires and the evacuation process.

By talking to the local community representatives and experts on the ground, we were able to ascertain ways in which we as a community can help in this region's long-term recovery. Participating in tree-planting events in the springtime seems to be the most useful way in which we can meaningfully contribute, while more specific needs such as helping local families in dire need or a local school may also be feasible. The School will remain in communication with the local community representatives to ensure that we can aid in the regeneration effort in the most meaningful way possible.

Fundraising for the Byron Wildfires Fund will continue throughout the year, as the regeneration of Evia is our collective responsibility and its betterment is for the greater good. Having seen the sheer devastation caused by the wildfires first-hand, it is hard to ignore or undermine the positive impacts of reforestation, a powerful key to helping Evia to return in the long term to the luscious paradise it once was. Change IS possible – but for this to occur, it requires the joint effort of each and every one of us. Donate, be informed, and let us work together for ecological healing in this most important cause. •



Fundraising activities for the Byron Wildfires Fund have already begun, with a bake sale and bring-and-buy sale at this year's Christmas Bazaar already having been dedicated to this cause.

Watch this space for regular fundraising activities that you can donate to throughout the school year, so that the Byron community can play a positive and substantive role in the regeneration of this beautiful region. •

Overleaf: Pine, plane, and fir forests in Northern Evia, before and after the fires.

*Fotis Giannousas, Tia Gabriel, Alexcy Jayasundara & Mina Ren
(Head Boy & Girl and Deputy Head Boy & Girl)*

"It was paradise."



Let us donate and raise our collective
voice to say *never again.*



Alumni

Letters.

Stefy Katherisan

Class of 2020



Stefy graduated from Byron in 2020. She studied Art, Sociology, and Spanish at A Level. She is currently in her second year studying for her BFA in Communication Design at UE Berlin. Her current aspirations for the future include editorial design.

Dear Byron Students,

They say university life brings a lot of change; they weren't wrong. I don't recognise the old me. This new person I've become is filled with curiosity, passion, and eagerness to learn new things. And that's change, everyone. I had to wave goodbye to my timid side and allow myself to be more social and present in the moment. University really taught me how everyone is... completely bonkers! You find all sorts: crazy people, funny people, quiet ones, and the comedians. Never did I imagine that it could be such a mixture of so many different kinds of people. That's not bad though; I feel grateful that with their rich variety of personalities, backgrounds, and talents, they have helped me to broaden my perspective and define my character. They've really allowed me to become my true self and that's something I'm grateful for.

It's been a very busy year so far, with things escalating and projects stacked one upon another. There's no break in the art world. Creativity runs and runs and chases you, and you're always left with that all-important question: "What next?" I ask myself this question a lot when I work on my projects: it might sound funny, but it's this question that has led me to go all out, jumping into every idea, question, curiosity, song and so on with maximum energy, which basically sums up my creative process. In the time since I've graduated from Byron I've embarked on several art projects, but my favourite happens to be the one on the right. This was created on the basis of the theme 'Self-discovery: the unknown parts'. I've also been pushing further with my creative work; for example, currently I'm working on publishing a sample magazine with its own branding. This is a work in progress and I'm chasing inspiration as I go along - which is how it always goes!

To all current students, please know that you're not alone, you're valued, and your teachers have much insight to gift you. Take it. Acknowledge it. You never know how useful it will be in the future. All the best! :)

Stefy



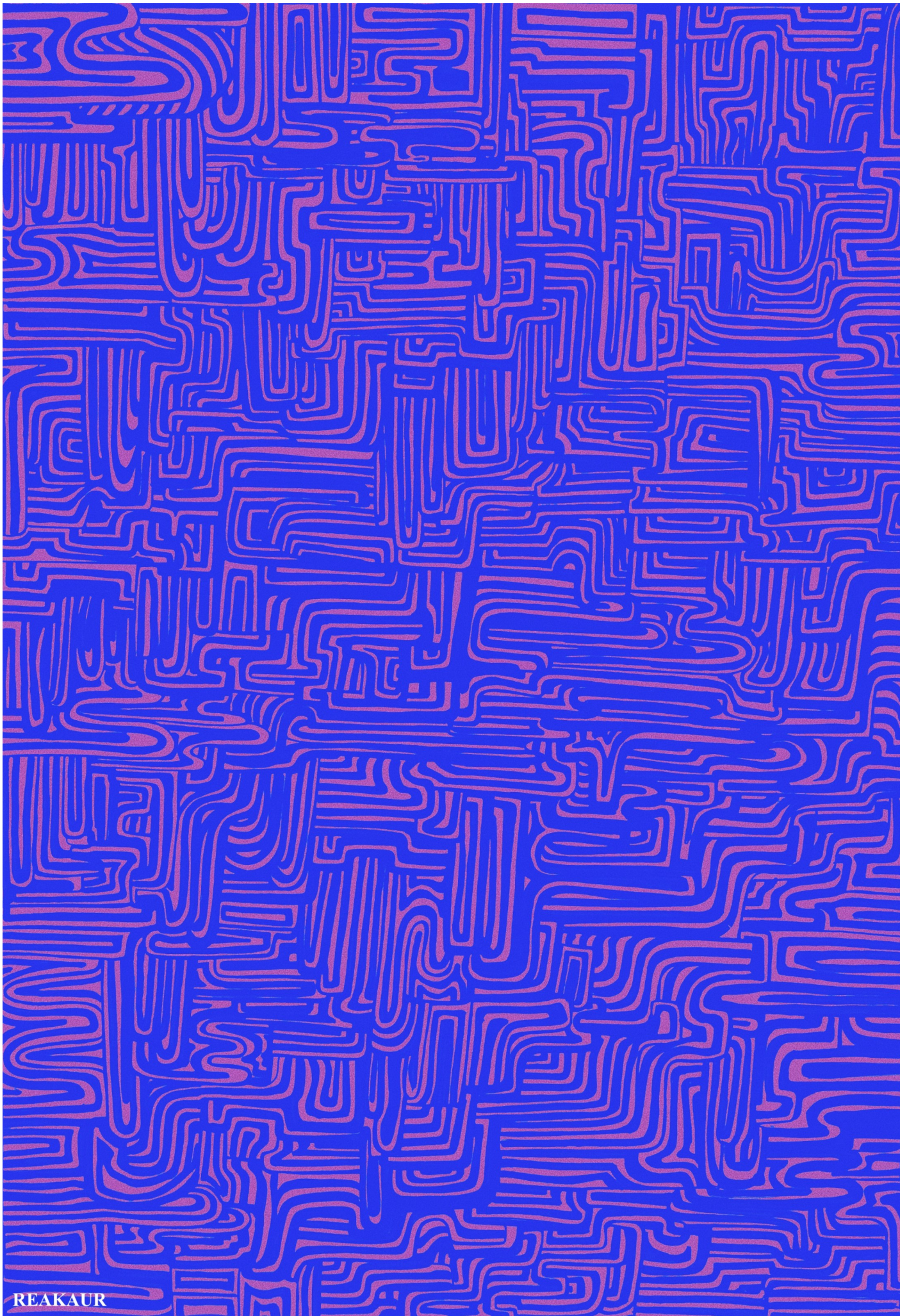
Title: **COLD IN MY VEINS**

Edition: 2021

The following piece is entitled 'Cold In My Veins'. The mind and body have a complex connection in which they often contradict one another, and they affect to a huge degree our mood, behaviour, and emotional processing. I was curious about how this negatively impacts on bodies and wanted to capture the stimulation of my own body and how I experienced it.

For this piece, I used cold colours such as blue and purple adhering together to express my anxiety. If you notice closely, both colours are nearly identical and create a camouflage effect, almost creating a single colour. The purpose of this was to show how my anxiety is in blocks, manifesting as racing thoughts, excessive worry, and irritability. When these occur together, my body experiences a cold tremor, generating a powerful feeling of absolute cold.

The lines that flow within one another mimic the stimulation that my body experiences during anxiety. This is to convey an impression of how this experience forms in my mind for a complex mind-body feeling that I encounter regularly.



REKAUR

Articles.



UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL:

THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Climate change does not only affect the life of individuals and the environment; it can even contribute to conflict between countries.

The 2021 United Nations Climate Conference was a two-week conference held in Glasgow. It marked the UN's 26th Climate Conference, preceded by one in Madrid in 2019.

The conference is noteworthy in many ways. One of these was its reference to the role of fossil fuels in the ongoing climate crisis, something that wasn't even addressed in the Paris Agreement which had attracted attention worldwide upon its signing as being a step towards a significant contribution to the resolution of the burgeoning climate crisis. Cracks starting forming on the image of the agreement after events such as the USA pulling out from this agreement during Trump's Presidency, although this has recently been reversed by the current US president.

Some controversy surrounds the success and effectiveness of the conference, most notably the absence of physical representation on the part of India and China, opting instead for online attendance; naturally this spurred speculation about how much importance is placed on the climate problems by these countries. The aforementioned countries also contributed to its ineffectiveness by calling for the "phase-out" of coal to be replaced by the "phase-down" of coal, thereby giving the green light to its continued use.

Global warming and its effects on the Arctic are opening disputes about new trading routes and resources and who controls them. As the ice in the

Arctic retreats, the region becomes more and more accessible, as do the resources located there. The large amount of oil and natural gas formations under the Arctic Ocean seafloor cause turmoil between powerful countries interested in it, such as Canada, Denmark, Russia, the United States, and others. This is changing their relationship as they all claim ownership of these newly accessible and highly lucrative resources. None of these countries have reached a consistent agreement about these claims; however, the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Seas has provided each country with an exclusive economic zone of approximately 200 miles from their shoreline and up to 350 miles under certain geological conditions. In addition to the ripe pickings for governments and corporations presented by the melting ice, there is increased accessibility to new Arctic ports and trans-Arctic shipping lanes as a result of the water in the Arctic becoming more navigable, and this is increasing both political and military interest in the region.

The new shipping routes, the Northern Sea Route (NSR) and the Northwest Passage (NWP), have both been the object of disputes between leading nations, such as the United States, Canada, Russia, and China, all of them claiming ownership of one of these new shipping lanes that had once been of no interest to them due to the large amounts of ice previously rendering passage impossible. As most of the world's trade relies on shipping, these newly accessible trade lanes present tremendous new opportunities for countries to develop their shipping industry, making their acquisition of vital importance in the international economic arena. All of this has led to increased traffic in the Arctic region which can prove to be extremely damaging, causing further warming and irreversible damage to the unique Arctic ecosystem; it is evident that a greater shipping burden on the seas causes carbon dioxide emissions to shoot up, which is highly detrimental to the environment and life system.

There is an urgent need for consideration and regulation regarding shipping through the Arctic routes and what impact this could have on global warming and the future of the Arctic. The lack of action taken by large powers shows a general disregard for the climate, arguably most manifest in the United States withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement in 2017. This needs to change immediately: otherwise, this blind race to plunder the depths of the Arctic will have detrimental effects on the future of the climate and all life on Earth.

The negligence of the leading powers has threatened the implementation of the powerful response needed to tackle climate change. The withdrawal of the USA from the 2015 Paris Climate Conference was a prominent example highlighting the attitudes of leading nations. The reason for similar actions on the part of other nations is due to the conflicting aims of economic development and mitigating climate change. One way to solve this is for the powerful nations to take up the mantle of leadership in helping developing countries to develop sustainably. Although India is the world's largest emitter, the country is still suffering from massive power shortages and blackouts with 300 million people without access to electricity – equivalent to the entire population of the USA. Therefore, India needs to solve the problem of limited access to electricity by making electricity cheap for everyone; unfortunately, coal has been the most available solution for this until now. Sustainable development is the main solution to climate change, but it is hard for many countries to change from the cheap source of coal to a more expensive source of energy, especially given that less developed countries already struggle with poverty – this is where aid from the leading powers is instrumental in ensuring that the response to climate change can be united and effective. That said, we still have a long way to go: the USA, for example, is investing less than China and India in green energy futures and sustainable development.

Climate change affects both the relations between countries and individuals. The only reason why countries have increasingly ignored this issue is because they – ostensibly – are not the victims of climate change. But what if one day, the citizens of developed countries become

climate refugees themselves? Haven't we already seen this happen in Canada with the fierce heatwaves, in California and southern Europe with the wildfires, in Germany with the flooding that devastated communities, just to name a few of the climate emergency hot-spots in which the alarms are now ringing that now is the time to act? When will we act as one global society to protect the planet that is our home? •



Jiayi Zhang, Fotis Giannousas, & Christina Vasileiadi, Year 13

"I like writing and the teamwork. We don't agree on everything of course, but there is love and solidarity." Kim



Greece's only five-language newspaper

Migratory Birds and Young Journalists:

A Voice for Refugees

M*igratory Birds* is a newspaper that was created by a team consisting of young migrants, refugees and Greeks called the Young Journalists. The idea for this project was created by a group of individuals living in refugee camps; they wanted to talk to journalists because they thought that their stories wouldn't be presented and portrayed with the reality and authenticity they deserve. A young Greek woman and fifteen Afghan teenage girls decided to become journalists to broadcast their experiences from their points of view, thus becoming voices for the refugee population. Over time the group has increased in size, with many new members from different backgrounds, nationalities, and languages.

The *Migratory Birds* newspaper is issued every two months for free and it is distributed as a supplement to the weekly Greek newspaper *EfSyn*, with the support of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and co-funding by the European Union and assistance of other supporters. A website for *Migratory Birds* has also been launched, as well as a podcast called *Radio Dandelion*.

The main aims of the newspaper are to encourage collective collaboration of adolescent and young refugees and to fight xenophobia. All articles and podcasts are created exclusively by teenage and young migrants, refugees, and Greeks, with the support of the Network for Children's Rights (NCR). Through this

programme, the NCR aims to express the beliefs, values, and attitudes of journalism, encourage multicultural dialogue, and help these children exercise their basic rights.

The Young Journalists team organises meetings with professional journalists who teach storytelling techniques and share their experiences with members. Every two weeks, the Young Journalists meet and discuss the next issue while also presenting their ideas and exchanging ideas on topics that have been suggested. Due to the pandemic, the meetings have been taking place mainly online.

“We all try to find interesting stories and produce a remarkable, new issue. I feel like we have become a family.”

The editorial team currently has fifteen members but they are always ready to welcome young and ambitious journalists. More than 250 young people have participated in this project and although many live in other countries, they keep in contact with *Migratory Birds* through the website. This crucial publication has gained readers from around the globe, including in the home countries of its refugee and migrant journalists. So next time you're scouting around for something to read, get your hands on a copy of *Migratory Journalists*: these are voices that need to be heard. •

THE NEW HEALERS



Florin is a four-year old Labrador that examines a carousel containing urine specimens from men with or without prostate cancer. She makes a cancer-positive verdict by standing and staring at the sample, and she's rewarded for a correct choice with a treat.



Sally the miniature horse works in therapy farms, like Mane in Heaven. She is taken to visit people who suffer from terminal illnesses, learning disabilities, and those suffering from trauma.

Animals play a vital role in our lives. They are our friends and serve as life-long companions for many people. However, we tend to forget how much potential they have in improving our lives not only on a psychological level but also from a medical point of view, whether that is by providing emotional support to psychiatric patients or by helping to cure more serious medical conditions.

Below are a few examples of animals that have used their impressive abilities to help improve the lives of patients suffering from serious illnesses.



Jeff is Adam's assistance dog and acts as a faithful companion to him. Adam is an 8-year-old boy who has type 1 diabetes. The labradoodle is specially trained to alert Adam to significant changes in his blood sugar levels, a measure which is potentially life-saving.

Kasey is Ned Sullivan's capuchin service monkey. One day Ned suffered a serious accident which left him strapped to a wheelchair with a broken neck and a bleak prognosis as a quadriplegic. He was then matched with Kasey, a monkey who was able to help him with everyday tasks such as flipping light switches, turning pages, and retrieving dropped objects.



All the examples above signify the importance of including animals in our lives. Call them honorary doctors with no degrees: they naturally have the instinct to protect and honour their bond with their owners. So next time you see the 'resident cat' we all pat during breaks, consider its potential other than just the obvious. •



Helena Fry is a thirteen-year old girl who was born with cerebral palsy, a neurological condition that limits her mobility. Her service dog, a goldendoodle named Wonder, has been trained to help her perform everyday activities such as balance herself, open and shut doors, turn on lights, retrieve items from the ground and many more. "I saw with my own eyes how Wonder helped my daughter grow more self-reliant and confident", says her mother, Stacy Fry.

Elena Vrontorinaki,
Alexey Jayasundara,
& Tia Gabriel, Year 13

"I saw with my own eyes how Wonder helped my daughter grow more self-reliant and confident."



CUTTING AND SPLICING THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF LIFE: GENE-EDITING THE FUTURE

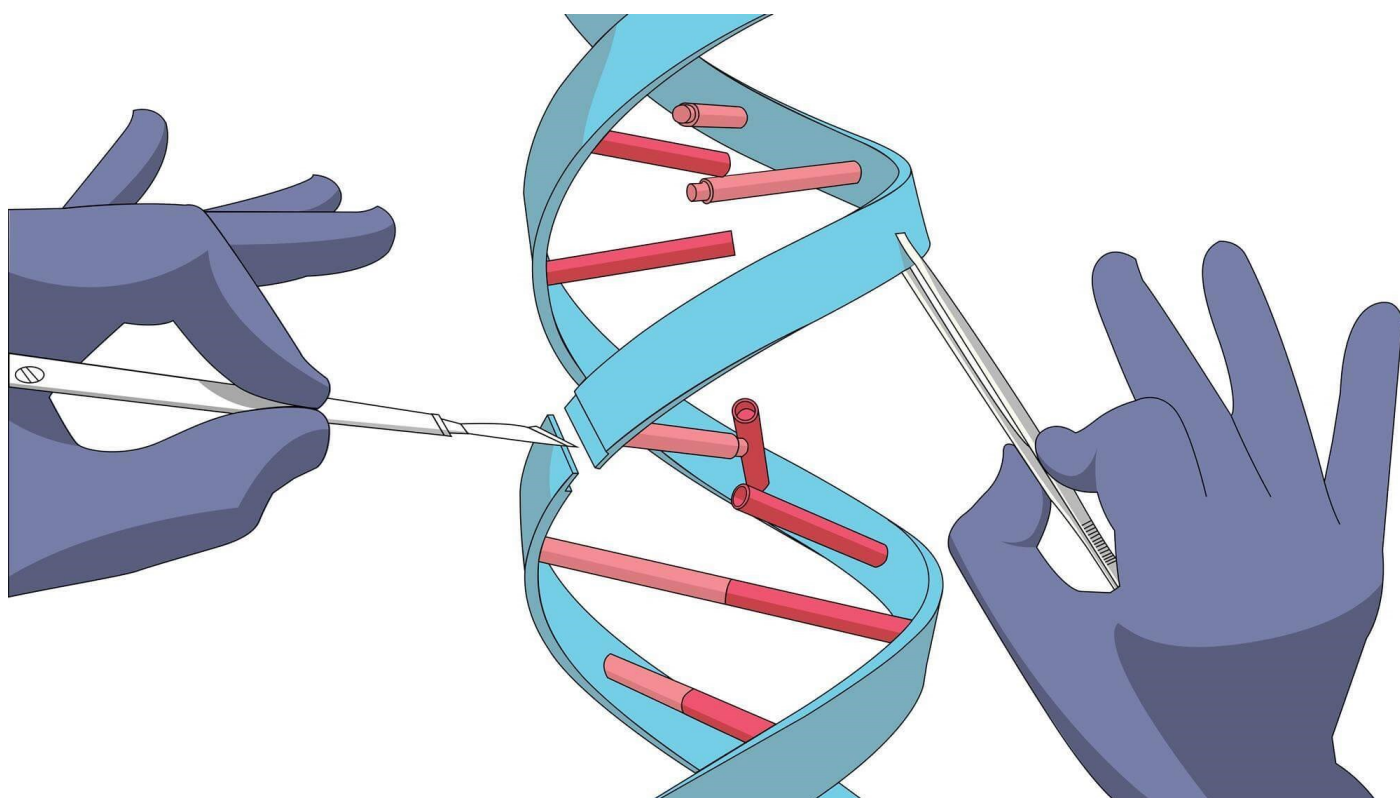
Gene editing – the ability to selectively control genetic expression by altering the genetic formation of an organism – is a scientific breakthrough that has the potential to change humanity forever. It is already prevalent in our everyday lives, as genetic engineering is heavily involved in current agricultural purposes. However, ethical concerns raised around the matter have halted its immediate development and prevented regular use on humans.

Genetic engineering has been possible in smaller organisms via various methods since the 1980s, mainly in prokaryotic cells such as unicellular bacteria. CRISPR-Cas9 editing is a more recent

and tremendous achievement in the field of biology, with Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier, the two professors and researchers central to its development and unveiling to the world in 2012, being awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 2020. CRISPR-Cas9 has the ability to add and remove genes and activate or suppress current genes present in the genome of an organism. Being a relatively cheap and easy-to-use process, thousands of scientists and researchers are now working with it around the world to achieve results that were previously unimaginable, for instance in the prevention of devastating genetic disorders such as sickle-cell anaemia and cystic fibrosis.

The history of genetic engineering has witnessed several breakthroughs. For instance, gene editing is widely used in agriculture to ensure crops have a greater yield, are more nutritious, and are more resistant to insects and herbicides. It is also vital for the production of insulin, where the insulin gene is inserted into bacteria which produce the hormone in large volume, a major leap forward enabling quality of life for diabetes sufferers. This timeline, however, has not been without its controversies. In 2018, a Chinese scientist, He Jiankui, became infamous for editing a gene in a pair of twins, Nana and Lulu, to engineer HIV resistance in the girls. Scientists were outraged at his lack of ethical consideration before proceeding with his experimentation. He has subsequently been charged and imprisoned for illegal medical practices. Jiankui's case highlighted widespread concern over the ability to genetically modify babies, the ethical

argument holding that parents should not be allowed to curate the physical characteristics of their child. Conversely, should there be a genetic disorder that could affect the quality of life of the child, it could be considered morally wrong *not* to alter the child's genome to ensure better health. Additionally, there is concern over the hidden harm that genetic engineering can result in that can only be observed in future generations, with Sweden's Karolinska Institutet discovering a link between CRISPR gene editing and mutated cancer cells. Further studies and development of this new and exciting field will lead to healthier and more beneficial gene editing. For now, however, experimentation should remain on plants and bacteria rather than make an ill-advised leap to humans beyond those interventions which have been proven safe: good things come to those who are prepared to wait for them. •



Salah Abdul Qadir, Year 12A

FROM DISCOVERY TO YOUR MEDICINE CABINET: THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS OF DRUG DEVELOPMENT

A drug is defined as a substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body. The provenance of drug use can be traced back to primordial times when our ancestors were still hunting with stone spears in the forest: they already knew that certain leaves could be pulverised and applied to wounds to reduce pain. As our population grew and technology became more advanced, investigating natural drugs was not enough: we needed something more specific, pure, and efficient, and that had very little chance of being found ready-made in nature. Therefore, we asked ourselves: instead of investing so much time in identifying drugs provided by nature, why not construct, or synthesise, our own?

The process of drug development is composed of three stages: discovery and development; preclinical research; and clinical research. In the early stages, researchers need to decide which disease they are targeting, thus narrow in on possible drug options in several ways – for example, tests on molecular compounds to find possible beneficial effects against the disease. The drugs identified are then further analysed with respect to their mechanisms and other properties, or how to further improve their beneficial characteristics. During preclinical research, potential dangers of the drugs used on organisms are identified, hence filtering out all those which are unsuitable. In addition, this information is collected by conducting experiments on living organisms such as rodents, which have relatively short

life cycles and fast reproduction rates. As a result, both time and cost of research can be reduced. Finally, clinical research is only carried out after the permission is granted by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration). Normally, clinical research takes several years and there are three phases in total, with each phase differing according to the size of the group being tested. The FDA only allows the drug to enter the next phase when the safety of its use on humans is confirmed. Importantly, by accounting for different factors and the use of different sample groups, such as differences in age or gender, more complete data on drugs can be collected and precautions on its use improved. Finally, when the drug passes successfully through all three phases and the approval of manufacturing the drug at a large scale is finally granted, we enter the stage of marketing.

How are drugs marketed? Firstly, a company that sells medicine needs to understand their target market and their needs. Is this medication intended for children, adults or the elderly? When they have established their target market, they need to establish a strong connection through social media and TV with their customers. Such marketing allows people to know the name of drug, its purpose and its use as well as its benefits and risks, therefore allowing people to become better informed about the variety of treatment options. Importantly, drugs that are advertised are those available over the counter to the general public – i.e. non-

prescription drugs. It is against medical ethics to encourage over-use of medication, and all medications should always be taken with the utmost caution.

During the long and expensive process of getting a new drug from its initial discovery and development to ultimate approval, the challenges are numerous. For example, there are parts of the body which are still poorly understood in spite of all of our scientific advances, such as the nervous system. This makes it harder to produce drugs which are truly effective. In addition, the sums spent on funding research and clinical trials are vast; yet for all that, many drugs go to waste as they do not produce the desired results or even have unacceptable toxic side-effects. It is a remarkable fact that only 32% of drugs make it past Phase II trials, and upwards of 58% of drugs fail to pass Phase III. Overall, only 9.6% of drugs that enter Phase I eventually reach the market – but it is that 9.6% that have contributed such undoubted benefits to our quality of life and longevity in modern society.

When one considers the degree of talent, hard work, perseverance, and funding needed to make the medicines that we take for granted in our kitchen cabinet a reality, one realises just how revolutionary the age of medicine and mass vaccination really is. The process of developing drugs from discovery through to your obtaining them over the counter is a remarkable testament to the power of scientific research in improving lives, and we should recognise this fact. •



Pre-discovery and drug discovery

5,000-10,000 drugs
Around 4-5 years

Pre-clinical tests

10-20 drugs Around 1 year

Clinical trials

Phase 1: 5-10 drugs
Phase 2: 2-5 drugs
Phase 3: 1-2 drugs
Around 6 years

Approval and funding

1 drug
Around 1-2 years

Mina Ren, Tzortzia Riga & Dionysis Sakellariou, Year 13

BINARY: THE SECRET

Binary is a numerical system where each digit can be either 0 or 1. A single digit is called a *bit*. 4 digits together are called a *nibble* and 8 digits together are called a *byte*. There are two options for each bit in the binary system. Binary is a *base-2* system.

Most people are familiar with the “Denary” system – a *base-10* system – so it would be useful to be able to convert between the two. Each bit represents a power of two. So, counting from the right, the first digit represents $2^0 = 1$, the second $2^1 = 2$, the third $2^2 = 4$, and so on...

To convert the binary into decimal, simply add the values represented by the bits whose value is 1:

Example:

Value represented	2^7	2^6	2^5	2^4	2^3	2^2	2^1	2^0
Bit	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1

Therefore, $00101101 = 2^0 + 2^2 + 2^3 + 2^5 = 1 + 4 + 8 + 32 = 45$.

Converting back to binary requires some more trial and error. Find the greatest power of 2 which is less than the value. Set the bit corresponding to that power of 2 to 1 and subtract it from the denary number. Repeat that process until the denary number is 0.

Let's start with 45. The greatest power of 2 which is less than 45 is $2^5 = 32$ (keep in mind that $2^6 = 64$).

Subtract 32 from 45: $45 - 32 = 13$.

$$13 - 2^3 = 5$$

$$5 - 2^2 = 1$$

$$1 - 2^0 = 0$$

Hence, the digits representing 2^5 , 2^3 , 2^2 , 2^0 should be set to 1.

The binary number is this: $00101101 = 45$

FUN FACT!

“BYRON COLLEGE” IS REPRESENTED BY THIS BINARY NUMBER:

010000100111100101110010011011110110111000100000010000
11011011110110110001101100011001010110011101100101

BLOODLINE OF COMPUTING

Binary is mainly used in computers, as they are essentially made of switches. They can only handle a numerical system where there are two possible states for each "switch". Binary must be used to represent data which is to be processed by a computer.

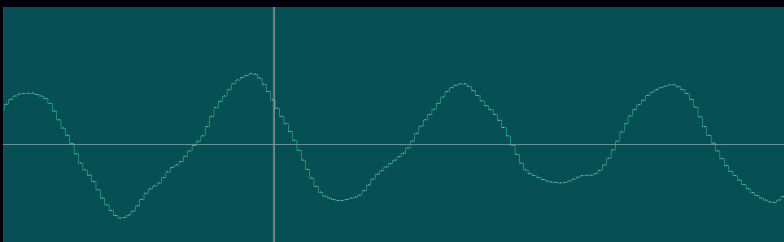
We can represent characters by assigning each to a unique number. Various coding schemes have been developed over the years, with a notable example being ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) and Unicode. In ASCII, each character, is represented by 8 bits. Text is simply a series of characters one placed after the other. Therefore, using the correct binary numbers, we can represent any text.

Binary is also used to represent images. The most common form is bit-map images, which are represented as a grid of very small pixels (picture elements). Each pixel has its own colour, which is also represented 3 bytes; one for red, one for green and one for blue. The number in each byte represents the intensity the colour it represents. Each colour has 255 different intensities, and all the possible combinations are more than 16.5 million.

Sound is a longitudinal wave. It contains compressions (areas of high pressure) and rarefactions (areas of low pressure). We can represent sound with binary by recording the levels of pressure at regular intervals and giving them a value. This is done by an Analogue to Digital Converter (ADC), which is connected to a microphone, which turns the waves into an analogue current in the first place. When playing back the sound a Digital to Analogue Converter (DAC) is used to convert the string of value back to analogue current which drives the speaker.

We can make binary digits to represent anything one can imagine. For example, we can have a digit which is set to 1 if the temperature of the room is above a certain limit and 0 if it is below. Such digits are named flags and can be used by monitoring and control systems to monitor and/or regulate the aspect of the system we are interested in. In the previous example we could have a computer system which will repeatedly check the bit and turn the heater on if the bit is set to 0 and turn off the heater when the bit becomes 1. •

BELOW: A HIGHLY ZOOMED-IN IMAGE OF A SOUND WAVE STORED ON THE COMPUTER. THE CURVE IS JAGGED, NOT PERFECT, AS THERE IS ALWAYS LOSS OF INFORMATION WHEN AN ANALOGUE SIGNAL IS CONVERTED TO A DIGITAL.



GEORGE ARVANITAKIS,
YEAR 13

111010111101001110101101000000111
10011111010111101001110101101000000111

BELOW: A SECTION OF ASCII
VALUES & SYMBOLS

Number (Decimal)	Character
32	<space>
33	!
34	"
35	#
36	\$
...	
48	0
49	1
50	2
...	
65	A
66	B
67	C
68	D

VIRTUAL

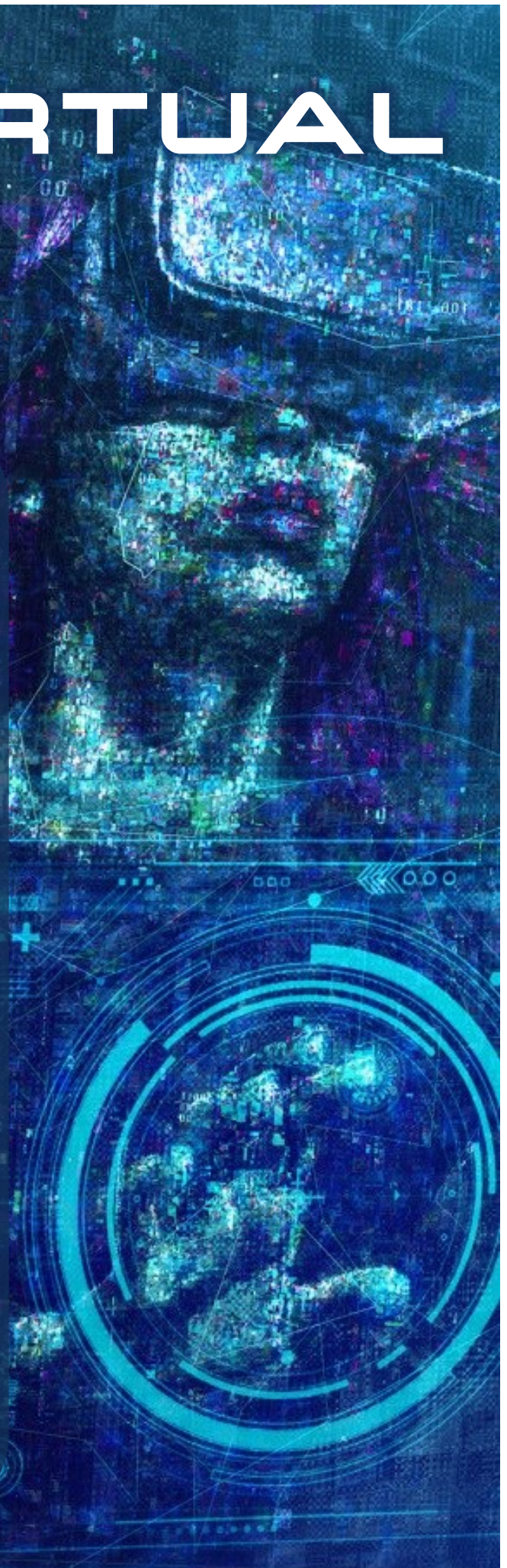
AN ONGOING EXPERIMENT

Virtual reality is a technology that exposes a user to a computer-generated reality that doesn't exist in the real world. This fabricated reality is brought to life through the use of a headset with the necessary materials to stimulate the user's senses. VR headsets are HMDs: head-mounted displays. A VR headset usually consists of either two feeds sent to one display, or two LCD displays as well as lenses between one's eyes and the display in order to create a stereoscopic 3D image. In the case of video game headsets, they use two controllers, one for each hand, sometimes with differing designs. Additionally, headphones are incorporated into the headset as they are vital to influencing one's sense of space. Head-tracking and motion-tracking also are of importance in generating a more enjoyable experience as it allows the system to respond to stimuli and commands from the user.

There have been several notable landmarks in VR history, including non-physical situations, such as the spectacles featured in Stanley Weinbaum's short story 'Pygmalion's Spectacles' as far back as 1935, which involves a pair of goggles that enables the wearer to experience a fictional world through all five senses. Ideas within the story find parallels today, even if present-day headsets are only capable of sight and sound experiences.

In terms of real-life headsets, one of the earliest ones was the Sword of Damocles in 1968, which was connected to a computer rather than a camera and could only show simple wireframe environments. In addition, it was heavy and uncomfortable for users to wear, as the headset was suspended from the ceiling.

Notably, back in 1995, Nintendo's Virtual Boy console was one of the first home video game consoles to use the idea of VR in its concept. However, instead of the headpiece being strapped to the user's head, it was placed on a short stand,



REALITY:

meaning the user often had to hunch over to see within the headset. The Virtual Boy was panned by critics for its high price (coming to roughly \$179.99, equivalent to around \$324 today), the red-only monochrome display, as well as potential health concerns. It is Nintendo's lowest-selling console to date with only around 770,000 units sold, and it was discontinued the following year.

VR has developed most significantly in the last decade. It has been used for tourism purposes, for people who are disabled or unable to travel, to allow them to experience a computer-generated version of tourist attractions from around the world, such as the Louvre in Paris. VR has also been used in the military, where soldiers train in fictional combat environments in order to learn how to react best in a given situation and improve themselves for real combat, as well as creating 3D models of objects such as molecules for scientific research purposes and medical purposes.

VR is, however, probably most famously known for its usage in video games. Back in 2010, the first prototype of the Oculus Rift was designed, which would be the headset to reignite interest in VR within industries such as video games. Years later, Google would launch Cardboard, which uses a small head mount within which a phone with Cardboard support is inserted, and Samsung would launch Gear VR in collaboration with Oculus. Sony would later introduce PlayStation VR for their PlayStation 4 consoles, and video game company Valve would collaborate with HTC to develop the HTC Vive, before releasing their own Valve Index. Valve's video game platform Steam also has a sizeable amount of VR-supported or even VR-exclusive games.

There are multiple advantages that come with VR technology, an obvious one being enhancing a user's experience when gaming. It could also be used to de-stress by immersing oneself in a peaceful environment or to watch videos and movies, as well as educating oneself through the tourism and

training services mentioned previously. However, there are some negative aspects to VR such as the tendency for a user to grow obsessed with it and neglect their own reality, leaving them quite isolated. Moreover, training with VR will differ in some situations in comparison to real training, since real life is much more unpredictable and complex than a fake version with limited variety. Furthermore, it is not available to the large majority of people due to its eye-watering price tag; that said, increased accessibility is to be expected in the future.

Additionally, the VR industry is not without controversy, especially with regard to future developments. As recently as October 2021, Meta Platforms Inc. – formerly Facebook Inc., who had bought Oculus in 2014 – announced plans for what they have dubbed the Metaverse, a virtual universe within which one can hang out with fellow users in simulated worlds, as well as allow for virtual workplaces, expanding on the remote-working situation experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Concerns have been raised about factors such as health, the dangers of addiction and obsession, as well as physical, social, and emotional isolation. Consider, for instance, users hooked up 24/7 to social media, and the dangers that this can pose for an individual's disconnection from the real world, experiences, and relationships conducted in real life. Last but not least, privacy concerns are extremely pertinent due to the Meta platforms' history of privacy violations on platforms such as Facebook which have yet to be addressed in any meaningful way by the tech 'kings' of Silicon Valley.

The false realities this technology provides are quite tempting due to the endless possible uses and one's ability to 'teleport' and immerse themselves in any reality of their choice. Nevertheless, at this moment in time, not many are willing to pay the hefty price – both monetary and mental. Would you invest in a VR headset? •

Nick Chionas & Beesan Abusalah, Year 13

MANIFESTATIONS OF FEMININITY:

25,000 YEARS OF CHANGING IDEALS OF FEMALE BEAUTY

The subjectivity of the concept of femininity has been prominent throughout human history. What was considered a feminine feature a hundred years ago is now buried deep in history and is thought of in relation to womanhood no more. Going back 25,000 years, the Venus of Willendorf was first made. The exploration of how femininity then was defined by fertility, with her body being the main focus of the sculpture and parts of the body linked to childbirth, such as her breasts, hips and belly, being more accentuated and further emphasised by the lack of features on her face.



The Venus of Willendorf statuette dates back 25,000 years and can be traced to the Upper Perigordian culture of the Upper Paleolithic period. It is therefore classed as a prehistoric piece of art, making it one of the most primarily recognised compositions in the figurative art movement. The sculpture depicts a nude woman with overemphasised genital features and what we would call today an 'unconventional' belly of considerable size. The said features are accentuated even further once one perceives that the figurine has not got any distinctive features on her face, rather what looks like a certain headdress of the time.

The precise meaning of the Venus of Willendorf remains veiled in enigma as elucidations involving it have also been clouded by the ever-evolving definitions of femininity over the years, as well as a fair amount of cultural projection. However, whether or not its interpretation is clouded, it does not fail to challenge present beauty standards of unrealistic and uniform thinness, as it wordlessly narrates the fact that having a slender body was not always desirable. The statuette can therefore raise questions and start conversations about not only what femininity is, but also about women's confidence in their sexuality during different stages of human history as well as today.

Many have argued over the years whether the figurine's over-exaggerated features are meant to be associated with childbearing and fertility or in fact a fertility fetish reflecting sexual mores. However, experts argue that "in some ways, the interpretations reflect the thinking of the period more than they do the thinking of the Stone Age people who first created them."

Therefore, discrediting ideas of sexual gratification regarding the figurine's function which may in fact reflect our own cultural preoccupations rather than the true circumstances of its creation, we may be reminded that, in fact, Paleolithic societies were egalitarian. This may lead us to embrace the notion that the statuette may have been worshipped as a fertility goddess, a far cry from the sexual, objectifying element that we may otherwise have ascribed to it, say, if it were carved by a man observing a woman for the gratification of the male gaze. Instead, we may approach the insight that such statuettes were most probably self-portraits of women: "given that mirrors hadn't been invented yet, a woman carving her own shape would be looking down at her own body, resulting in the perspective of exaggerated breasts and bellies and narrower lower legs."

The Venus of Willendorf, then, speaks to us from 25,000 years ago to remind us that womanhood, beauty, and female strength are constants that should not be defined by any one cultural moment or fleeting set of cultural ideals – still less constructed ideals that seek to limit and objectify the possibilities of womanhood. She is confident in her own femininity, and this alone is a silent gift across the chasm of time. •



Text & artwork by Charlotte Maurou, Year 13



“Better a witty fool than a foolish wit”:

the history of the

JESTER

Since the fifth century BC, drama has played a very important role in art. Although

the jester is not a character in drama, there is still a lot in common between the two. A jester is a person who is given to witticisms, jokes, and pranks: a professional fool or clown, especially at a medieval court. A jester, or a joker, uses very exaggerated movements and facial expressions to bring joy to people; at the same time, however, they wear a mask or put on disfiguring makeup which does not let people see if they are happy or not. They also often serve the function of criticising the establishment and, although appearing to be happy, they can often be marginalised or lonely figures.

The name given to the artwork shown is the ‘Fool’s Head World Map’: one of the greatest mysteries in the history of western cartography. There is no known artist for this work; approximations for the date of its creation place this between circa 1580 and 1590. The work measures around 14 by 19 inches and it is printed with a copper-plate engraving. The conceit of

the artwork is that it presents a world map in the shape of a jester's head. There are several elements representative of the jester: the hat with two different colours; the bells on his hat; and the performance prop on the right-hand side. In addition, there are several inscriptions in Latin, a partial translation of which reads as follows:

“This is the world, and this is the substance of our glory; this is its seat; here it is that we fill positions of power and covet wealth, and throw mankind into an uproar, and launch wars, even civil ones.”

The defining inscription beneath the world map conveys its main dictum:

“The number of fools is infinite”.

As an enduring mystery in the history of western cartography, many scholars have tried to investigate the background of the map and the reason for its creation. Some academics have provided the interpretation that because the fool is one of the people, he can criticise the monarchy freely and the map can be used to support political ends. According to Jacobs, “The uncomfortable truth told by this map is that the world is a sombre, irrational and dangerous place, and that life on it is nasty, brutish and short.”

Overall, the artwork explores intriguing notions, such as that the world is full of fools and that the world can be a dark, untrustworthy place. It raises the following questions: ‘What kind of person can be called a fool?; ‘Is it a person with a physical defect of some sort, or someone who is out of tune with the world?; or, ‘Why are fools the only figures who can criticise the government?’. The strongest characteristic of human beings is that they have strong emotions and unlimited creativity; at the same time, however, this can be their greatest weakness. We humans are easily affected by emotions as we are selfish creatures, and we are always attracted by merits. However, greed is in our nature and this cannot be changed. We also don't like people who are different in some way from us, especially when we perceive people to be apathetic to things we care about and we then characterise their stance as abnormal and even deviant from our own limited perspective. Another problem arises when the weaknesses of our human nature manipulate and control our thoughts and actions; thankfully, we can train ourselves not to fall victim to this entirely.

The role of the jester or fool allows us to ask precisely such questions and to shed light on these parts of human nature, as ‘fools’ are the lone voices in the margins of society: those people who are ignored, different, and labelled as wrong in some way by the majority. One may ask, then, whether one could adopt this questioning and criticising voice from the margins. After all, we as a society are in thrall to conformism, whether this be in the values we adopt, or our behaviours, or in how we form our own identity. Is being a ‘fool’ such a bad thing after all? •

*“Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb
like the sun, it shines everywhere.”*

Gaohao Xie, Year 13

Feste the Fool in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, III.1.37-8.

Nowadays, for most teenagers, self-esteem is a huge issue. Self-esteem is what you think about yourself, and a massive proportion of teenagers and even adults suffer from low self-esteem. Furthermore, it discourages and ruins the love one has for themselves. They think that they are not good enough and in some extreme cases, this can lead to depression.

Having low self-esteem is when you think negatively about yourself. For example, one might be thinking, 'Oh, I've put on weight. This means people won't like me', or, 'Oh, I'm not good at this', and so on. What's really upsetting is that these wonderful individuals limit themselves and as such do not live life to the fullest. In addition, having low self-esteem lowers your self-confidence and self-love.

Let's consider Einstein as an example. He achieved so much – yet in his time, he received substantial criticism. Do you think if he had let those negative comments get to his head, he could have accomplished what he did? Instead, he took the doubt and cynicism that others expressed towards him and used them to boost his confidence instead, and this gave him the strength to continue. One would have thought that criticism and the doubt of others would act as a brake on his creativity and ambition, but actually, it was quite the opposite: he persevered and, better yet, he worked harder. He wanted to show others that he could fulfil his goals and he didn't cave into pessimism; Einstein was well known for his light-hearted approach to life and strong self-belief.

Having an open mind can encourage you to do things that you never thought you could, and therefore achieve a lot more. If you lack self-confidence, know that there are many people in the world who have been in your shoes and come out of the other end of the tunnel, feeling a great sense of achievement and like they finally found themselves. Although this can take time, it's not impossible. One important way to increase your self-esteem is to stop worrying about what other people think. Focus instead on people who support you and are kind rather than people who aim to spread negativity and make you doubt yourself at every step. Another important way is to focus on your strengths: show people who you really are and the positive things you are capable of. No one can become someone else other than themselves. Most people forget that. You are who you are and you are the best version of yourself. Don't let others change that.

Love Yourself Like

My personal experience with tackling self-consciousness as a teenager has been austere, and to an extent it still is. I would always think about what others thought of me or what they would say about me if I did something they didn't approve of or thought was silly – and for that reason, I passed up so many wonderful opportunities. I made a habit of overthinking and self-doubting, eventually dragging myself down to the point where it affected my social life. I would put myself in sticky positions, constantly over-complicating things and second-guessing other people's motivations and assuming the worst - yet most of the time, it was all in my head!

The day when I realised what I was doing, it felt like I got hit by a bus. All along I had been sabotaging myself: my present self and my future self. I would work myself up in knots and spend so much emotional labour on what were often very small things, like my appearance on a particular day, or my studies, or the thought of being judged. While I had got into the habit of constantly tuning in to people's negative comments, I all but entirely dismissed the support that others in my life were generously offering. Finally, I learned to embrace myself. "It isn't always about what people say": that's the mantra I learnt to embed in my mind. I remind myself that it's okay to have flaws: everyone does. I may not seem the smartest in my class and I may not be perfect to some, but I know I try my hardest and I put my best self forward; I encourage you to do the same. I will be completely honest with you. It took time to reach this stage and to this day, I am still learning to accept who I am. I still have conflicts with the over-thinking side of me and the more reasonable, realistic, self-forgiving, and compassionate side of me. We've all been guilty of over-complicating life to an unnecessary degree, but in reality things are quite simple and we don't need to make things so difficult for ourselves.

A remedy, then, for the kind of struggle I have described is to increase your self-esteem. When you do raise your self-confidence, you will realise that you can do a lot more things than you never even imagined you could do. Having low self-confidence just pulls you down and limits your horizons. When something goes wrong? It was just a fall; it's time to get up, brush it off, and keep walking. Moreover, you should never feel like you won't belong somewhere if you are yourself. You are an incredible, amazing, and unique person. Therefore be proud of yourself and happy for yourself. Self-love isn't the same as selfishness. Loving ourselves is something we all need to do more. •

Sufia Mostofa, Year 12B

You Love Others!

VENOM: LET THERE BE...



6.25.21

FACEBOOK.COM/ESHWAR.SWAMINATHAN
HTTP://ESHWAR.WIXSITE.COM/ESHWAR
INSTAGRAM: nathanael
Tumblr: NathanaelE

Eshw

SOMETHING?



On 4 October 2018, the movie *Venom* was released in cinemas. Focusing on the intergalactic space monster *Venom*, fused with the character Eddie Brock played by celebrity Tom Hardy, the superhero offering became an instant hit in cinemas despite its many flaws. The cult following the antihero left many comics and movie fans to question whether a sequel would eventually be adapted for the big screen as well. This wish came true and in October 2021 the reveal trailer for the subsequent film was released. The trailer hyped up fans to a great extent, partly due to the addition of Woody Harrelson as *Venom*'s arch-nemesis *Carnage*, a similar alien with more unpredictable and destructive powers. However, delays in the film's production and the change in directors began to make fans anxious about the state of the final product.

When the movie was finally released one week ago reception was mixed, with some voices labelling it one of the best sequels in comic film history and others calling it boring or static.

The movie's premise follows Eddie Brock, the 'loser' reporter who has just broken up for a second time with his girlfriend and is now living a stale life, with his alien companion, *Venom* the symbiote. The movie's first half delivers a good look at how Tom Hardy's character views his life with the symbiote and how he feels about himself. A discernible problem however arises from the directorial decision to make Hardy's character challenge who he is as a person; while this accomplished during the first half of the film, this character arc is forgotten as the film progresses.

The introduction of Woody Harrelson's serial killer character, *Cletus Kasady*, was supposed to be one of the memorable parts of the film – and yet it felt distinctly underwhelming. Supposedly a triumph of the eerie in on-screen characterisation, this character doesn't succeed in evoking particular terror or dread. The character in the original *Marvel* comics was often highly unpredictable and anxiety-inducing in each confrontation with other characters. The villain's actions in the film are also not as grave as they were in the comics, with most of the destruction, violence and killing on his part being shown in aftermaths or behind the scenes. The only important moment found in *Cletus*'s character arc is the beautifully animated sequence where he explains his crimes to Brock. However, this is also arguably underwhelming as it relies on a more stale mode of narrative exposition rather than being shown through live-action cinematography.

The second half of the film sees *Venom* and Eddie trying to work together in order to overcome their supposed fear of *Carnage* the alien that has fused with *Cletus*. The actions of *Carnage*, while making it difficult for *Venom* to defeat it, doesn't add much to the film's entertainment appeal. The audience isn't really convinced of the threat posed by *Carnage* as a villain, even after its actions in the prison sequence and *Cletus*'s backstory. The introduction of *Cletus*'s villain girlfriend also doesn't add anything to the story except dull exposition and more fight sequences. Fights between *Venom* and *Carnage*, while showcasing improvements in the CGI of the two monsters, lack in imaginative and shock appeal.

Finally, one of the most critical flaws of the movie lies in the side characters, who are never neglected by directors with an eye for detail and complexity. Though important to the original story, these are criminally underused by the writers and provide no real impact in the film. A prominent example of this is the case of Brock's girlfriend: though she tries to help Eddie to balance his personality with *Venom* and to help Brock recover from their breakup, she spends the rest of the movie as another helpless damsel in distress, imprisoned in a box at the mercy of the villain while the hero comes to her rescue. Surely, given increasing cultural awareness of the need to avoid gender tokenism and stale, worn-out stereotyping in films, there should be more space in the *Marvel* movie-complex for more dynamic and interesting female characters that audiences can relate to?

Overall then, *Venom: Let There Be Carnage* ranks as underwhelming compared to its predecessor. The film's lack of meaningful action, underused characters, and unimaginative narrative construction all culminate in a CGI-fused disaster of a movie which nevertheless had great potential. Moreover, the lack of high stakes renders the movie less believable, especially in the case of *Cletus Kasady* who is nowhere near the terrible and terrifying force he was in the comics. All this notwithstanding, it should be acknowledged that some of the movie's flaws likely originate from the middle-of-the-road budget and PG rating the director had to work with – resulting in a rather muted '*Carnage*'. •

Theo Chalvantzis-Saridakis,
Year 12A



MESSAGES FROM THE KEY
STAGE 5 FORM TUTORS

THREE THINGS TO DO DURING THE *Christmas Break...*



So many things to do and so little time... The winter season is here, and everyone is excited about it! How will you use your time? What will you do first? Here are my suggestions for three things to do this Christmas break:

- 1 Reflect on how lucky you are and be grateful for all the good things in your life, then try to make a positive difference for someone less fortunate than you. You may donate some goods, send a positive message, but volunteering your time is the most valuable action you can take.
- 2 Pamper yourself! Do something that you WANT to do, instead of something that you NEED to do. Set yourself as a priority and enjoy quality time with yourself. Maybe this is a great opportunity to replace a bad habit with a good one.
- 3 Spend some time with friends! Working on our relationships is one of the most important things for all of us. Have a laugh with them, spend some time in nature, do something creative, build some memories and new inside jokes.

I wish you all a magical holiday season and I can't wait to hear all about it when you get back!

MS VOULPIOTI, YEAR 12A FORM TUTOR








- 1 Go for a dip in the sea
- 2 Do something for yourself
- 3 Provide something to someone in need



MS SCARLATOU, YEAR 12B FORM TUTOR



You all have mock exams after Christmas but there is plenty of time to revise and also do the following..

-  Exercise – A healthy body is a healthy mind
-  Read a book
-  Watch a Christmas movie :)

With love,

Ms Efsthathiou

MS EFSTATHIOU, YEAR 12C FORM TUTOR





- 1 Reward yourself for good work
- 2 Read a festive book to get into the holiday spirit
- 3 Be grateful for all the great people you have in your life

The time we have all been waiting is here! You and only you can make every moment of every season special and full of memories but if I could suggest 3 things to do during these Christmas holidays:



☞ Play non-stop uplifting Classic Christmas songs. Try this for guaranteed results!



☞ Cook traditional Greek kourampiedes for yourself and your loved ones. Cooking with company is even more enjoyable! Here is a recipe to try out. It is in English of course!

☞ Locate a very cold and snowed-under mountain in Greece and arrange a day trip at least (yes, this is possible!) to build your snowman and have snow-fights! Possible destinations: Parnassos, Kalavryta and Trikala Korinthias.

Enjoy whatever you choose to do! My warmest wishes for this holiday! Happy New Year!

MR PAPATOANNOU, YEAR 13 FORM TUTOR



DR FRAGKOULI, KEY STAGE 5 FORM LINK TUTOR



LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER



I am delighted to present to you this year's first edition of 'Byron Voice'. Again, I am particularly proud of this magazine as it is for our students and by our students and

this version has been put together by the talents of Key Stage 5. I wish to thank all of the contributors for getting this edition off the press and a big thank you to Ms Vekinis along with the English Department for overseeing the production.

So, 2021 draws to a close and this time last year we were looking forward to the prospect of a potentially exciting and normal year. Again, this has proved to be a particularly tough year amidst the circumstances we all continue to face. Despite the challenges I continue to be overwhelmed by the positive response that we see from our student body who in the face of adversity continue to rise and face the challenge head on.

As a new year approaches and we reflect on the events of the past year I do know that I stand firm in my view that I could not wish to be the Headteacher of any other school. In times like this, to work with such a wonderful group of people is an honour.

I wish to thank all of the Byron Staff who have continued to work against the odds and deliver an education to each and every one of our students. You are all truly inspiring. I particularly would like to thank the efforts of the Senior Leadership Team who have gone above and beyond in the most difficult of circumstances this term to ensure that Byron continues to go forward.

To conclude, I wish to thank you all for your support and for continuing to come together as a community despite the challenges we have faced. I particularly wish to thank you for the many small acts of kindness that you have shown, as it continues to improve our community for the better.

All that is left is to wish everyone in the Byron family a very happy festive season and a happy and memorable start to 2022! Continue to stay safe and take care.

With kind regards,

Matthew Williams
Headteacher



PAULO COELHO

*"Not all storms come to disrupt
your life;*

*some come to
clear your path."*





A word of thanks



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Well done to our student (and alumna!) contributors who have pulled together to produce a second Key Stage 5 issue full of creative and high-quality offerings.

Thank you to...

our Key Stage 5 Form Tutor Team - Ms Voulpioti, Ms Scarlatou, Ms Efstathiou, Mr Papaioannou and Dr Fragkouli - for your coordination efforts and proactive approach; the Arts Faculty — in particular Ms Georgoula for your positivity and generosity; colleagues in the English Faculty for your continued support; colleagues across the School and leadership for your support and encouragement; Mr Papaioannou as the main collaborator for this issue; and, last but not least, our readers!

 *Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

Editor's Note

Byron Voice is the magazine and creative writing showcase of Byron College, the British International School in Athens, Greece.

Three issues are published each year: the Key Stage 5 December Issue, just in time for Christmas; the Key Stage 4 April Issue; and the Key Stage 3 June Issue to welcome in the summer holidays.

It is written by our students for the Byron family and it is offered in a spirit of intellectual curiosity, creativity, generosity, and fun.

**Produced by the Faculty of English,
Byron College, Athens, Greece**



Featured artwork:

FRONT COVER: ERMIS VRELIANAKIS (YEAR 12B)
BACK COVER: YINGTONG ZHOU (YEAR 12B)
INNER FRONT & BACK COVERS: KYVELI PAPADOPOULOU (YEAR 13)

KYVELI'S ARTWORK
READS "HOW ARE YOU?"
IN SIGN LANGUAGE.



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