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JEAN PAUL
MONCHAU



‘THEN & NOW’ – ART AND DESIGN EXHIBITION



MARCH 2015

ELIZABETH MOIR SCHOOL

LEADERSHIP CAMPS



In January, 30 students from Form 5 and the Lower 6th attended a camp in Kitulgala. They took part in a range of extreme sports such as whitewater rafting, abseiling and canyoning, organised by the qualified staff of Borderlands. The focus of the camp was on building teamwork and leadership skills through these activities. It was notable that every single one of the students was brave enough to do the abseiling, despite many of them being very nervous, due to the encouragement and support they received from their peers. The Borderlands staff said this was extremely unusual and commended the spirit of our students. One Lower 6th student said that the trip ‘helped me overcome my fear of heights because I realised I could trust the people around me’.

In March, a further 40 students from Form 3 and 4 attended a similar camp in Belihuloya with Beyond Boundaries. They camped in tents and participated in outdoor activities such as cycling, canoeing, abseiling, and a high ropes course. Although the students faced many daunting challenges, they all learned how teamwork helped them to overcome their fears. Form 3 student Felix Deemer said, ‘The Leadership Camp showed me what I could do if I tried and that I was able to do things I didn’t think I could.’



FIRST A LEVEL MUSIC STUDENTS

This summer, Katie Renker will become our first ever student to take A Level Music. She will soon be joined by Naveen Kulasingha, who is taking AS Music this year. Both are being taught by our Choir teacher, Miss Sureka Amerasinghe.

Katie is already half way to a top grade, having done well in her AS exam last year, including scoring 100% for her performance. Her composition had its 'world premiere' in Assembly this term, when Miss Sureka brought a chamber group to perform the piece. Katie recently received Distinction in her Grade 8 flute examination, having also been awarded a Distinction and won the ABRSM award for the highest mark in Sri Lanka for all her earlier flute exams. She is currently 1st flute for the Junior Symphony Orchestra, having also played with the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka. She hopes to study Music at Oxford University.

Naveen recently received Distinction in both Grade 8 Violin and Grade 7 Piano, winning the award for the highest score in Sri Lanka for piano. He is now preparing for his ABRSM Diploma examination. He started playing for the Junior Symphony Orchestra when he was only 9 years old and is also the youngest member of the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka, which he has played with since he was 12. He also has the rare distinction of studying Eastern Music to the highest level as well. He became the youngest Visharadha in Sri Lanka when he was eleven, a level equivalent to a Bachelor of Music degree.



HOOD



The Russian Cultural Centre was, as ever, packed out for the Junior School Play, with both nights sold out well in advance. The audience was treated to a hilarious modern version of the story of Robin Hood and his Merry Men, including a host of unusual characters from Bill Gates to Teenage Ninja Mutant Turtles. Among many great jokes were the narrator's suggestion to Robin that his 'nom de plume' should be Atlas Chooty Gel Pen and the Bishop of Nottingham's palace looking suspiciously like Loxley Manor because the backstage crew could not be bothered to change the set. Leonid Mylvanagam led the cast with aplomb, his ease and

assurance in the title role putting all the other actors at ease. Uma Sandrasagra shone as the narrator, whose ongoing dialogue with the main characters provided much of the knowing humour. Tee Lei revelled in the role of the evil Sheriff of Nottingham while Arshana Welivita employed facial expressions to great effect to express her revulsion at Robin for his initial appearance, his cunning plan and his eventual abandonment of her. Eleanora Deemer was brilliant as the over-efficient 'PA to PJ', as was Kanza Dilshard as the desperate lady in waiting. Among the audience favourites were Tienn Kapilasena's creepy portrayal of Alan-a-Dale as a washed-out hippy and the Ninja Turtles - Ammaar Rishad, Damarius Sebastampillai, Jack Shearer and Avlok Wignaraja - whose slapstick antics enlivened every scene they were in.

GEOGRAPHY TRIPS

As ever, our Geography students have been travelling all over the island to visit locations relevant to what they are studying in class. At the start of term, our Lower 6th class visited Kelaniya to speak to people who have built illegally near the Kelani river and are exposed to flooding to find out about the impact of flooding and possible solutions to the problems. They later investigated the eviction of residents of dwellings in Narahenpita Road before interviewing people in a new government housing scheme in Dematagoda that houses some of the people evicted to discover their views about their relocation. Both Form 2 and Form 4 have been studying weather this term so went on a joint trip to the Meteorological Department where they examined the different instruments used and witnessed the launch of the weather balloon. Both

classes will go on further trips next term to conduct fieldwork: Form 2 on coasts and Form 4 on rivers. Form 2 will also study the impact of tourism while in Galle. As part of their study of industry, Form 1 visited the Kist factory in Katana this term to study its impact on the local area and on the environment. Form 3 students have studied natural hazards and their impact, international development and aid this year. They went to the Foundation of Goodness in Seenigama to research the impact of the tsunami and the effectiveness of development projects. Although we follow a British curriculum, we teach case studies from Sri Lanka and the surrounding area as far as possible, so that what our students learn seems relevant to their lives and they have the opportunity to visit and find out more about the beautiful island they live in.

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIP

With the International Schools Athletics Championship taking place at the end of February (close to the Junior School Play and Mock Exams), we are never able to send a large squad. The small team we sent this year, however, performed exceedingly well. Natasha Bakelmun finished 5th in both the 100m and 200m, and Manukith Sivaram 5th in 200m and 4th in 100m, narrowly missing out on a medal in the blue riband event of the meet. Yumna Hussein, Ramudi Samarasekera and Takaharu

Higuchi also reached the final in their events. Athletics Captain Urshella Hisham was the star performer overall, though, winning Bronze Medals in all three of her events - 200m, 400m and hurdles. Our Under 19 Boys brought the meet to a successful close by finishing 4th in both the 4 x 100m and 4 x 400m relays. Given that they were competing against the top athletes out of the 40,000 students who attend TISSL schools, our athletes can be very proud of their impressive results.



WHOSE LIFE IS IT ANYWAY?

A flurry of publicity in print media, on the radio and online meant this year's Senior School Play was hotly anticipated. Although the play is over thirty years old, its theme could not be more current, with euthanasia a very topical issue and legislation on assisted suicide having been passed or under discussion in many countries. Presenting these arguments on stage was no easy task for a young cast but they successfully portrayed both the play's humour and its deep engagement with serious issues. It forced all the audience to confront their own feelings about the subject and think about how they would act in a similar situation. The play was moving, funny, interesting and, in the end, very sad, proving to all our students that 'serious' plays can be entertaining. All the cast impressed with the maturity

of their performances and their clear diction. In his final performance in school, Senal Wijetunge was cast against type in the lead role, having to suppress his normal hyperactivity to play a quadriplegic. He demonstrated his versatility as an actor with another virtuoso performance. Having brought life, energy and laughter to countless productions over the years, he will be greatly missed next year. Rachel Hayward portrayed his antagonist's icy rationality and overbearing conviction beautifully, without losing focus on her commitment to her patients, while newcomer Nicole Haddon was scarily convincing as the domineering Sister Anderson and is clearly an actress to watch for the future. Akash Gnanam, meanwhile, was responsible for a lot of the comedy in the play as John and was highly entertaining.