

ARTS DAY



Elizabeth Moir School's 3rd Arts Day began with a panel discussion on sovereignty. The panelists were Dr. Harsha De Silva MP, Deputy Minister of Policy Planning, Economic Affairs, Child, Youth and Cultural Affairs; Ms. Nicole Chulick, acting Deputy Chief of Mission at the American Embassy in Colombo; and Dr. Asanga Gunawansa, who worked with the UN for several years and teaches at the National University of Singapore. The panelists were asked questions on a wide range of issues related to sovereignty, from whether multinational companies and organisations like the EU and UN can dictate terms to national governments, to whether the international community should intervene in Syria.

Dr. De Silva provided fascinating insights into the plans of the new Sri Lankan government, discussing current issues such as the future of Colombo Port City, the abandoned Crown Colombo Casino project and the prospect of Volkswagen opening a new factory in Sri Lanka. He also made a heartfelt plea for unity in Sri Lanka, arguing that it is more important to build bridges between communities than to build actual physical bridges.



Both Ms. Chulick and Dr. Gunawansa emphasised the need for greater co-operation between national governments to meet global problems, such as climate change, with Dr. Gunawansa also being able to share his expertise on water management. Ms. Chulick was challenged about the way the US has undermined international agreements and asked whether America might regret not building an international system strong enough to limit superpowers, if a new superpower emerges in the 21st century. All our students were absorbed by the stimulating debate and learned a lot from all the speakers.

The rest of Arts Day was based on interactive displays and presentations on stage of the best work done in Arts subjects over the year. Among the highlights were a recreation of a Sri Lankan village, where the students enjoyed playing traditional games such as *Kana Multiya* and *Kotta Pora*, and an exact replica of one of the new homes in a new government housing scheme in Dematagoda that our A Level Geography students visited earlier in the year to investigate the new residents' views on their relocation. Dr. De Silva was particularly interested in the displays done by the Lower 6th Economics class on development projects in Sri Lanka, comparing the failure of Mattala airport with the potential to improve education and infrastructure. Many parents and guests were especially impressed by the computer games and websites created by Form 2 and Form 3 students, showing the advances they have made in coding. They were also amazed to learn about the thought process and amount of research that goes into IGCSE and A Level Art portfolios.

It was, perhaps, the Moir Masterchef competition between French and Sri Lankan food that generated most excitement, though, and many satisfied customers, with Sri Lanka emerging as narrow victors!



JUNE 2015

ELIZABETH MOIR SCHOOL

MOIR STUDENTS OFFERED PLACES BY 7 OF TOP 10 US UNIVERSITIES



In a record year for admissions to top universities, our students have received offers from eight of the universities ranked in the top ten in the world in the various university rankings, and seventeen that are ranked in the top thirty. This includes the top ranked university in the United States, Great Britain and Australia, and the universities ranked second in Asia and Canada. It is especially impressive that seven of the top ten US universities have offered places to our students, as they normally offer places to only one student each year, at most, from Sri Lanka.

Jananan Mithrakumar received offers to study Electrical Engineering from both Stanford and Princeton, which are ranked 2nd and 6th in the world respectively. He has chosen to go to Stanford, which has been dubbed 'the Harvard of the 21st century' and is particularly prized for its location in Silicon Valley. Stanford graduates founded Google, Yahoo

and Hewlett-Packard while Apple, Google and Facebook all recruit more employees from Stanford than any other college.

Steffan Paul, our Captain of School, will study Biology at Harvard, the world's top rated university. Steffan will become our fifth student in just eight years to go there, which is an incredible achievement, and perhaps unprecedented for a Sri Lankan school. He will follow in the footsteps of eight US Presidents, including Franklin D Roosevelt, John F Kennedy and Barack Obama.

Head Prefect Sanush Nukshan has accepted an offer to study Engineering from another Ivy League college, Cornell, which is ranked 13th in the world. Like Jananan and Steffan, he will benefit from substantial financial aid – in Sanush's case a 95% scholarship (including tuition, accommodation, food and other expenses) worth over \$65,000 per year. *(continued)*

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As ever, students who have taken a Gap Year to give themselves time to prepare their applications have fared especially well. Hana Rajap received offers from both the University of Chicago and the new Yale-NUS College in Singapore. She has accepted Chicago, which is ranked 9th in the world, where she will join another recent graduate Lukshmee Saravanapavan. Madusha Perera will begin his long journey to become a doctor at the University of California, Berkeley, which is ranked 3rd in the world, where he will be our second recent student. Vinu Samarasekera has become the first ever Sri Lankan to be awarded the International Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship at the University of British Columbia in

Vancouver, Canada. As well as enabling her to attend a university ranked 30th in the world, this full scholarship means she will have a chance to live in a city that is regularly judged the best place to live in the world.

Ifadha Sifar has won a scholarship to New York University in Abu Dhabi, one of the most competitive universities in the world to gain admission to. She will become our 7th student there since it opened in 2010, all on full scholarships, which may be more than any school in the world. Last year, NYUAD moved into its new campus on Saadiyat Island, where new branches of the Louvre and Guggenheim Museum will also be located. Meanwhile, Safia Kariapper has been offered a scholarship at its new sister campus, NYU Shanghai, that opened in 2013, and Nathasha Bogoda at Hong Kong University, which is ranked 28th in the world.

3 STUDENTS WIN PLACES AT IMPERIAL

Congratulations to Afdhal Saheed, Sachin Shashidharan and Senitha Wanigasinghe who have all been offered places by Imperial College London, which is currently rated the 2nd best university in the world by the QS World University Rankings. Afdhal and Sachin will both read Mechanical Engineering while Senitha will study Medicinal Chemistry.

They are among ten members of the current Upper 6th with conditional offers from top British universities. Aadam Saheed has an offer to read Engineering from UCL, which is ranked 5th in the world. Mathanki Sreeskand has accepted an offer for Biomedical Science from King's College London, and Asma Reza to read Literature from Edinburgh; these

universities are ranked 16th and 17th in the world respectively. Sashini Jinasena is planning to read Politics and Economics at Manchester University, which is also ranked in the top 30 universities in the world.

Another notable development this year is past students who have transferred to medical courses in the UK after impressing on their initial university courses. Enya Stubbs will now study Medicine at Newcastle University and Dilroshini Karunaratne is in her first year at the University of Buckingham Medical School. It is especially encouraging to see our students not only gaining places at top universities but performing so well on their courses.

BORN TO BE WILD



The Junior School held its annual Art Exhibition at Barefoot Gallery in May. This was the first time that the Junior School had mounted an exhibition on their own, rather than jointly with the Senior School, and the beautiful surroundings of Barefoot were the perfect setting.

Chief Guest Dominic Sansoni said it was a joy to see the children's creativity and how their paintings expressed their ability to look at the world in a completely fresh and original way.



AVURUDU

Every two years, the Junior School celebrates Sinhala and Tamil New Year so that all the students can enjoy and learn about the traditions of this national festival. This year, the parents organised a wonderful Assembly, teaching the children about all the time-honoured customs, from the significance of the *koha* bird to lighting the oil-lamp, boiling a pot of milk (signifying prosperity) and cooking the first meal of the New Year. They emphasised the importance of the family, which has a direct bearing on peace and harmony between all communities. The mothers also performed some beautiful dances, while the fathers joined in a hilarious Avurudu 'Kumaraya' and 'Kumari' contest.

After the Assembly, the children played games such as *Gudu*, *Kana Muttiya* (smashing a pot with a stick blindfolded), *Kotta Pora* (pillow fighting), playing the *Rabana* (drum), climbing the pole, obstacle races and pin the eye on the elephant. They also enjoyed traditional Avurudu food such as *kokis* and *kevum*, which was set up in a *Kopi Kade*. All in all, it was a bright, happy, colourful, fun, educational and memorable day for everyone at the Junior School.

FUSION FASHION

For their main project of the year, the Lower 6th Prefects decided to organise a fashion show to raise money for the Foundation of Goodness. They aim to organise a series of workshops on design for some of the 30,000 rural Sri Lankans that the Foundation of Goodness works with, to give talented artists and designers from under-privileged areas the opportunity to make a living from their creative skills. The school has enjoyed a close relationship with the Foundation of Goodness for several years, with Form 3 visiting the foundation in Seenigama each year.

Fusion Fashion took place at Park Street Mews on Saturday 25th April. The name highlighted the blend of traditional and contemporary styles and the way the school's cultural diversity was reflected in the designs. The show featured four principal lines: *Acushla*, designed by Sonalie Dharmawardene, *Linen and Life* by Ramona Pulle, *Glitterati* by Latika Alok, and *Salvage*. It also provided a platform for eight student designers to display their own creations. The models were all Form 4 and Lower 6th students who had been trained by past Moir students, Natasha Jayasuriya and Stephanie Siriwardena, a former Miss Sri Lanka. Chief Guest Ajai Vir Singh, the creator of Colombo Fashion Week, spoke about how pleased he was to see careers in Design being promoted by the school, and student designers being given an opportunity to display their work. Other guests included Kushil Gunasekera, the founder of the Foundation of Goodness, and Yehali Sangakkara and her children, on behalf of her husband, a leading supporter of the charity. The show could, indeed, have graced Colombo Fashion Week, so professional was the slick presentation and production. This was all due to the hard work and commitment of the Prefects, who had come up with the idea, planned the entire show and led rehearsals.

