



High Arts

2019/2020





Welcome



We began this academic year shuffling along the bleachers as we packed into the Hall for assemblies, Open Events and the Awards Ceremony, and we celebrated the fact that a fifth of last year's leavers had gone on to study creative subjects at college, university or conservatoire. With courses including Nutrition, Music, Film make-up, Fashion and Animation, all areas of the creative arts were covered.

We ended this academic year in our own rooms or at a socially-distanced desk, with large gatherings and group celebrations but a distant memory. And yet nothing changed, as the creative thread that weaves through everything that we do at Northampton High School could not be broken. Indeed, lockdown only served to strengthen it.

When Einstein said that 'the monotony and solitude of a quiet life stimulates the creative mind', he may not necessarily have been talking of oil painting and needlepoint, but we have all found more time for our own thoughts and ideas in recent weeks, and these have certainly led to an outpouring of creativity.

Students have shown off their baking, staff have shared recipes and all have had the opportunity to join the 'sew-along'. We contributed to and enjoyed the GDST Song Contest, the Community Choir met via WhatsApp and key worker children from Nursery-Year 8 joined forces to make 'Doris the Dogasaurus', a spectacular cardboard box and paper mache model that now stands in Junior School reception. All of us have created a rainbow or two and there has been time for reading and the exploration of film.

This booklet is a celebration of the Arts, and of the year. In school, the evidence of creativity is everywhere, but the recent situation has demonstrated that we carry this with us regardless of geography, and the regular Creative Arts Spotlight in the newsletter and the ideas that we have shared online only serve to demonstrate this.

That so many of our students go on to study creative subjects is testament to their excellent teachers, and I would like to thank Mrs Beacroft and her team for inspiring us all, both in school and at home. I thank them, too, for putting together this booklet, which I am sure you will enjoy.

Mrs Petryszak
Headmistress



In recent times, we have witnessed globally that people have turned to the Arts and physical activity. The importance of being creative and staying active and healthy has come to the forefront of our minds. We know that whatever we choose as our creative outlet, it is unique to us. The style is entirely ours. Musical, dramatic and choreographed performances are highly personal and are extensions of ourselves in many ways.

In our own school community, we witness the uniqueness of creativity through the students' work. I have been delighted with how girls have shown us their style through lessons in school this academic year and through their guided creativity at home. I think of Ana's textures she achieved in the dress of her painted ballerina for her GCSE coursework; the outstanding detail in the hen drawing from Eva in L4; the enthusiasm and commitment from so many girls as they logged their sporting activities and dancing in Google Classroom for PE.

Creative writing has also resulted in imaginative prose and insightful journeys. Miss Lycett's 'Sew-along' after school was certainly a hit and drew in girls from Year 6 through to Upper Fifth. Upper Fifth and 6.1 Art students designed exceptional digital portfolios, using a range of platforms; we are looking forward to sharing these around school as we celebrate their excellent achievements. From my visits

to learning spaces, it has been clear that girls have practised many skills. In the Food department, students have been spinning sugar and refining their presentation and photography.

One of the many home learning experiences for our young chefs was to shape their Danish pastries. The group work in Drama always includes exciting collaboration and clever improvisation through confident performances. The Studio was certainly home to outstanding and highly original pieces from our A Level Art students. As I reflect on the year, I remember the music and the vocal performances from the Christmas Concert, certainly a highlight in the beautiful venue of All Saints' Church.

The Creative Arts Spotlight in High News and School News has continued to thrive and I hope that parents have been enjoying celebrating the work and performances from Art, Fashion & Textiles, Food, Music and Theatre.

On behalf of staff across the Arts, we hope you enjoy reflecting on the achievements of our students, who, every year, amaze us with their concepts, independence, practice and perseverance.

Mrs Beacroft
Head of Creative Arts Faculty

Art, Craft and Design

L5 GCSE Art students, following the initial starting point of 'Reflection', which allowed girls to explore a range of processes and subject matter, are now pursuing their independent journeys. They have shown great independence over the last few months, planning outside pieces that show links to personal sketchbook investigations, including links to Neo Expressionism, cultural architecture, portraiture and nature. The digital portfolios submitted by U6 and U5 have been a joy to look through and it is clear that these examination girls have committed themselves to Art throughout the duration of their courses. We feel that the quality of all this work reflects the commitment of each girl and her originality of approach. Analytical annotations, dexterous use of media and perseverance is clear. We are looking forward to celebrating this work through our forthcoming sister publication 'Portfolio' which will be available for Awards Evening.

Additionally, we congratulate 6.1 for their sheer determination and I would like to highlight their obvious commitment to refining their written responses to artists and designers, in preparation for their Personal Study next year, submitting work through Google Classroom, applying changes and attractively presenting this analysis in their extensive work journals.



U4 have impressed us with their ability to learn a great deal about portraiture and the importance of proportion. We covered exercises on how to render depth and tone in hair and the complexities of showing lines and tones in lips to show fullness. This was all taking place against a backdrop of Modern Art, as we used the Post Impressionists as a vehicle for learning about style, colour and atmosphere. The influence of Van Gogh proved to be a particularly successful link. The girls created expressive portraits of the artist using oil pastels. This work was followed up with colourful collages influenced by Gauguin.

L4 have had an exciting year working through Marine Life motifs, producing outstanding work in pastels, mixed media collage and pencils. The pastel jellyfish with their smooth, sheer layers against a black background and the girls' barnacle shading pencil drawings stand out for me, alongside creative and informative presentations on artists Kurt Jackson and Kate Malone. Glazed ceramic sculptures will form an exciting ocean floor installation.

U3 included plenty of detail in their Art illustrations, influenced by Jackie Morris. Subtle and sensitive use of



watercolours and gold leaf, coupled with delicate lines in pencil and pens added to their excellent sketchbook pages, with many students focusing on birds of prey, kingfishers, wild flowers and other British flora and fauna. Individual flower paintings on board were beautifully executed with outstanding brush control and the girls recorded detailed claws and talons as part of their British Wildlife unit.

We were delighted to host Year 4 girls in March for the annual Ceramics Workshop. The girls used various hand building tools and techniques to sculpt their cats and Mrs Bull, our resident expert in ceramics and glass, was on hand to help the girls with the claws, eyes, tails and ears. We all had great fun!

It was a great honour for me to attend the University of Northampton Schools and Colleges Art & Design Competition. This annual event recognises talent



across Northamptonshire and the East Midlands. The competition was fierce. Mia Woods won First Prize in the Fine Art category and collected her trophy, certificate and prize of £500. Mia and the Art Department also won 'The Most Outstanding Work in The Exhibition'. We feel pride at being recognised for the support we give our students. We will be spending our prize money on floor standing, solid wood studio easels for all girls to use. Our trophy is displayed in the Senior School Foyer. I would like to acknowledge all of our excellent A Level students whose work was exhibited at the new Waterside Campus.

I know that our students in all year groups are learning skills that will lead them towards many creative successes - I have no doubt that we have other 'winners in waiting' for future Art competitions.

Mrs Beacroft
Subject Leader Art and Head of Creative Arts Faculty



Art and Design (Junior School)

What a year this has been for the Arts in the Junior School! We have continued to focus on offering as broad a range of arts-based learning opportunities as possible, both in school and as part of our Guided Home Learning programme.

Some of the artists studied this year have included David Hockney, Pablo Picasso and Henri Rousseau, and the girls have created their own pieces of artwork inspired by these artists and so many more. We have looked closely at form, texture, colour, shading and hidden meaning as part of our studies and have found that there is so much to learn from studying the work of great artists.



We have created Lowry-inspired 'Seascapes,' outer-space collages and monochrome 'mood' landscapes, whilst inspirational assemblies led by visitors such as Mrs Beacroft have introduced us to artists such as Joseph Farquharson, and shown us how to analyse every hidden corner of a painting.



We have explored clay to create a fabulous 'learning tree' in Nursery, generated plasticine models for hi-tech Stop Motion films and conjured up 'Clayliens' from our imaginations who visited us from another world! Wonderful cushions have also been designed and made from scratch, inspired by our own individual interests, ready to be taken home to aid a well-earned rest!

We have seen wonderful dramatic performances including nativities, assemblies and 'House' poetry, as well as our amazing play-in-a-week, 'Scheherazade,' whilst Performing 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' at The Derngate with hundreds of other children in The Big Sing was an experience we will never forget. This year our girls have grown in confidence, met new friends and made many audiences very happy.



Our extracurricular provision has been wide and varied, with the girls getting involved in junk-modelling, sketching and making fabulous concertina sketchbooks! Add to this our drama and dance clubs, choirs, instrumental groups and construction clubs and you can see that creative learning in the Junior School extends well beyond the end of the school day.

So many trips this year have promoted the Arts to our girls, including an arts residential to Burwell House where the girls designed fabric bags and 'hammer and nail' art, an amazing choral performance at All Saints' Church and a once-in-a-lifetime trip to The Globe Theatre to participate in the Girls' Day School Trust Shakespeare Festival!



During the period of Guided Home Learning, we have continued to offer creative arts opportunities, with the girls generating art from the natural world, creating their own 'NHS Rainbows' and even making their own brushes.

We know that the girls in the Junior School have had a wonderful year engaging in such a variety of arts-inspired activities, and we can't wait to get involved in even more next year!

Mr Bailey
Head of Junior School



Theatre

The new academic year began with the Senior Drama Company in rehearsal for a devised piece. They produced a stunning performance entitled, *Seasons*, which was breathtakingly beautiful. It was an intimate evening of poetry, spoken word and dance pieces that demonstrated graceful skill and sensitive interpretation of moods and emotions, which were compared to moments throughout a year. Special mention to Jessica Greenough who collated the poetry, even writing many of her own pieces, as well as choreographing selected dances. We also produced an abridged version that was shared at our annual Awards Ceremony.



The House Story Telling Competition took place in November which gave the senior House Captains a chance to work with Year 7 on a well-known children's story, which was presented on the stage complete with lights, set, props and costumes. This was an excellent opportunity for the Year 7s to gain in confidence as they take the stage in their own right.

Both L5 and U5 GCSE Drama candidates performed their Component 1 Devised performances. The group performances were interpreted, researched and presented in many styles with themes inspired by the stimulus, 'Pay It Forward'.



All examined groups were taken to see *The Woman in Black* at the Royal Theatre in town. The play was an excellent example of how tension is created through storytelling, lighting and staging devices. There were certainly moments where we all jumped out of our seats! A theatrical review and presentation followed during class time to prepare notes for the written examination.



In December, Drama Prefects entertained senior citizens at Age UK. They also enjoyed meeting and socialising with the residents. December also saw the tradition of the House Play Competition. This year the theme was staged adaptations of Shakespeare plays. They were so dramatic and entertaining.

GCSE classes prepared for their Component 2 practical exam with key extracts which were moving, powerful and engaging interpretations of selected published plays.

Theatre Department prefects have continued to be ambassadors for the department, working with younger years and helping out with productions and clubs. LAMDA classes continue to be a popular extracurricular addition with many learners participating in these fantastic classes.

We would have been staging our production of Seussical this term and we were fortunate to have had the opportunity to showcase its progress during Open Evening - little did we know then, that that would be the final public offering of the academic year! The working rehearsal demonstrated all the hard work that was being done to bring it to life and I am so pleased that the cast managed to experience performing a small portion of it, to an audience, under the bright lights on the stage.

Mrs Care
Director of Theatre



Fashion and Textiles

This has been an enjoyable year of teaching and learning in Fashion and Textiles. Our creative girls of Northampton High have produced outstanding pieces.

As well as our regular lessons there have been a wealth of new initiatives going on within our subject. In October, we invited Year 5 girls to explore needle felting in a creative pumpkin making workshop. We welcomed in December our first visiting Textile Artist into school, Emily Notman, who specialises in contemporary stitched landscapes. Working alongside Emily, GCSE and A Level students immersed themselves in a full day of textile discovery, learning new techniques and being inspired.



In January, I made a pledge towards a sustainable fashion future and declared I would set myself a task not to purchase any new fashion items for one year – upcycling, making my own and buying preloved only. I am happy to say I am now five months into this challenge and I am still on track. In February, we made our annual pilgrimage to the V&A museum, this time to see the Mary Quant Exhibition.



In March, we held our annual Saturday sewing sessions, providing GCSE and A Level girls an opportunity to work on their projects with uninterrupted time. We went online in April, learning to demonstrate techniques through live video lessons. Our girls have impressed me with their enthusiasm for Textiles, whilst working from their homes. I regularly received emails requesting ideas for new creative stitched projects and many students have had a go at making fabric masks. Schemes of work have been rewritten with a focus on hand sewing and upcycling.

Textiles students are continuing to explore research skills, design skills and manufacture tasks, which they can create using resources found within the home.

Miss Lycett
Subject Leader Textiles

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Whilst this is not what we had planned for this year, one thing I have enjoyed seeing come out of all this is seeing the nation turn to cooking and baking for relaxation and a challenge. Our girls have been cooking up a storm in their own kitchens through Guided Home Learning, and I have been so impressed with their outcomes. From Lucie's profiteroles, to Yasmin's sushi, to Anna's eggs Benedict with a salmon rose; the creativity has been brilliant!



To kick off the first cooking competition of the school year, we held the Rotary Young Chef Competition in school, with the assistance of Richard from the Rotary Club. Aibhilin French in U4, Emma Saxton in U4 and Tilly Poole in L5 competed in the local heat by producing a three course meal in a two-hour time limit. I can confidently say that all the dishes were excellent and the two judges had a really difficult job to decide who would go through to the district finals. Aibhilin came out on top and went on the compete in the next round in February. Although she didn't get through to the regional finals, Aibhilin won 'dish of the day' with her ginger, kiwi and coconut tiramisu with marbled chocolate shards; a fantastic achievement, especially considering the judges taste tested around 48 dishes that day!

There was a big revamp of our annual GCSE Food trip, which saw us exploring Borough Market and taking part in a sourdough workshop with Bread Ahead, instead of attending the BBC Good Food Show. We all enjoyed seeing the amazing products and produce on offer, and being immersed in the hustle and bustle of a busy London food market. The sourdough workshop was informative and fun, and we had to choose a name for our starters to help remind us to feed it everyday! It was not until a few days after our trip that I realised our instructor was Julia Chernogorova who competed in the 2017 Great British Bake Off series!

My U5 GCSE Food class completed their cooking exam in March and worked so hard in the run-up to, and during the exam. This year's themes were high in fibre and gluten-free food, and an array of dishes were produced to fit them. This included: strawberry soufflé with homemade vanilla ice cream, fishcakes with homemade mayonnaise, and chicken Milanese with homemade mozzarella. I really loved seeing (and taste testing) their outcomes!



Although it is a real shame that lots of events cannot take place this year, especially our Arts Festival, I look forward to when we can reschedule and all get together safely to enjoy some home (school) made ice cream and appreciate our students' exceptional work!

Miss Knight
Subject Leader Food

Music

This has been an incredibly busy yet strange year for the Music department at Northampton High School.

The first half of the year featured many exciting events, beginning with the second of our Christmas concerts held at All Saints' Church. This included solos from Helena T, Avani N and a wonderful duet from Emma P and Rebecca J. We were joined by Jem Lowther, Director of Music at All Saints' on the organ. The venue is fantastic and we intend to return on an annual basis.

The second of our Masterclass series was held in January, run by renowned flautist, Rachel Smith. She performed many pieces, including the well-known 'Syrinx' by Debussy and set repertoire for students to learn for when she planned to return for the public Masterclass Showcase in June. The next Masterclass will be for pianists. Piano is extremely strong at Northampton High School and is ably led by Mr Derek Lau.

Amidst the public concert schedule, scholarship and music exhibition award interviews take place, recognising the ability and potential of both internal and external musicians.



Auditions for the performing arts' flagship event took place during the spring term, heralding the launch of our annual musical production; *Seussical*. Unfortunately, this will be postponed until the next academic year, but promises to be a wonderful and colourful show. The Northampton High School Orchestra will provide the entire soundtrack as in recent years.

School was closed just after our scheduled annual Composition Recital, which features audio playback of GCSE and A Level compositions, accompanied by visual scores on screen. This event also had to be postponed, but we look forward to hearing the wonderful music-exam creations.

Music-making has by no means stopped since schools were closed and students continue to learn and collaborate online very effectively. We have worked hard on an exciting submission of the students' work for the GDSTVision song contest and look forward to the competition.

Mr Nathan
Director of Music

Film Studies

Sixth Form Film Studies students experimented with Foley sound effects, explored Hollywood style lighting, had a go at filming long unedited takes, used framing choices to convey relationships in filmed conversations and created storyboards for the opening of The Iron Lady plot.

AS Film, like all subjects, was disrupted by the lockdown. Students demonstrated strong understanding of film theory and transferred their knowledge to produce their own original films. Lucy Ward's AS coursework film used the horror genre to present a disturbing sequence (girl alone in a house with frightening noises) leading to the investigation in a corridor of discovery.



GHL Enrichment is offered for all years in Film. For KS2 there is BFI short films with a range of enhancement activities. KS3 are exploring film genre and writing their own original scripts inspired by the movies Splash, Back to the Future, Jurassic Park and School of Rock. An introduction to Film Theory is examined in KS4 through Mark Kermode's series Secrets of Cinema. KS5 students gain wider understanding of film meaning through the bespoke programme GCSE-ish Film Studies which was shared throughout the GDST.

The theme for the 2020 Northampton High School Film Competition was 'A Vision of the Future'. Students were asked to consider a future where the environmental impact changed life on Earth forever. The winners were: Matilda (Y4), Emily (Y6) and Laura (L4).

Northampton High Film students have achieved tremendous success since leaving the school. Amelia Simpson (2018) was named a National Youth Film Academy Emerging Brit. Every three years the most committed and successful members of the NYFA are nominated to join an exclusive programme consisting of workshops, work experience and collaboration.

Throughout the year Emerging Brits have been given a budget to work in groups and create a short film. Amelia wrote the screenplay for Kindred which was showcased at the Odeon BFI IMAX Cinema in London in February 2020. You can read Amelia's interview [here](#). She is currently studying Film and English Literature at the University of Birmingham.

Jett Robertson (2017) has just completed her degree in Animation from Bradford University. Her final showcase film used the same techniques she learned in our Film Department trip to The Imaginarium where Jett was first introduced to motion capture Lauren Jackson (2017) has just completed a four-year BA Honours course at the University of Brighton in Television and Digital Video Production.

Georgina Beeby (2017) is studying Film at St Andrews University, Tess Heaton-Harris (2018) is studying Film and English Literature at Exeter University and Leila Shahin (2019) is studying Film Production at Birmingham City.

Ms Heimfeld
Subject Leader Film

English

The school's debating and public speaking club was ably led throughout the year by Isabel B and Poppy J, to whom much thanks is due. The L5 debaters competed in the English Speaking Union's Public Speaking Competition. Neeya B, Hannah S and Angelica S produced some excellent performances, placing second in the first round in November 2019 at Denbigh School, with Hannah winning the best chairperson award. At the branch final in February 2020 only one team out of six could go through to the next round and, despite best efforts, that wasn't us. It was, nevertheless, a pleasure to hear the girls ably competing at such a high level.

The 6.1 debating team was made up of Niamh M, Katie N and Amelie W, who delivered a compelling performance in November 2019 on the environmental impact of flying. They went through to the next round at the expense of some strong teams, including Bedford School. The standard of debating at the second round in January 2020 was phenomenal. Debating the topic of the commercialisation of Pride, we lost out to the team that eventually made it through to the national semi-final.

High School students also entered two GDST-run competitions. Lexy D gave an excellent speech on the importance of retaining an element of childishness in our lives as part of The Chrystall Carter Competition. She impressed the judges with her poised delivery and fluent response to questions. A number of students also entered the GDST-wide Virtual Debating Tournament, with Katie N and Daria A kindly giving up their Saturday to help judge debates, while Eliza A, Laura C, Tevini D, Tara E, Grace H and Leona R were chosen to represent the High School in the debates themselves.

Two issues of the student-run magazine 'Backchat' have been produced this year, with the theme of the first on

Space and of the second on Time. A special edition of Junior School contributions has been produced in light of Guided Home Learning. The editors have worked incredibly hard all year, with Jess C coordinating the team of Elena C, Saskia J, Ruby H, Olivia R and Eeman Y. Together, they have shown immense creativity and quick-wittedness in looking to develop the magazine further. In addition to publishing issues, the team has raised money to cover printing costs through special events and has developed a stronger online presence to raise the magazine's profile.



The High School's winning entry for A Level students to the GDST Laurie Magnus Poetry Prize was the poem "Heusos" by Hannah G (6.1), with Ruby H a formidable runner-up with "Glassy Eyed".

Janice H won in the Key Stage 3 category with "The Experience of a Musical" (U4) and Tara E (U3) was runner-up "Swan". The theme of the GDST Creative Writing competition was "New Rules for the Future World". The High School's winning entry was an ambitious diary-style entry by Xinyu Shannon M (U3), with commendations for Kirsten M (U3), Sonya M (U3) and Ques-Li D (L4).

This has been a strong year for reading in the Senior School; one silver lining of school closure has been the opportunity to read more and there is a Book Club Team for recommendations. Pupils in the U3 now have a

personal reading log on Firefly to record progress and review comments. This year's Carnegie shadowing has had to take place at home and the 2020 shortlist is an interesting mix of titles. Three books have a political edge as they portray the emerging identities of various teenagers confronting issues such as racism, sexism and homophobia. Angie Thomas's 'The Hate U Give' lost out last year but she is on the shortlist again with another strong contender, 'On The Come Up', which is narrated by Bri, a sixteen year old rapper from a rough American neighbourhood. The other five books are wide-ranging in style from Nick Lake's Sci Fi thriller 'Nowhere on Earth' to 'Lark' by Anthony McGowan, about two teenage brothers lost in a blizzard on the Yorkshire moors, to the reworking of an old fairy tale in Annet Schaap's book 'Lampie' .

Dance

This year our Gym & Dance theme was 'around the world' and it would have culminated in our usual Gym and Dance Extravaganza! Unfortunately lockdown occurred before some of our groups got started but Junior pupils still managed to visit many countries through their dancing; Reception explored English country dancing while Year 2 performed Scottish Ceilidh dances. Year 1 went under the sea and Year 6 visited Africa incorporating gymnastics into their routines. Year 3 were due to visit India, Year 4 the USA and Year 5, the HAKA from New Zealand.

We also we welcomed a professional dancer in for a CATS musical workshop in the Autumn term which some of our Seniors enjoyed.

Miss Hurst
Teacher of PE

As part of last June's Literary Week, we welcomed award-winning writer Clare Mulley to speak to our L5 and 6.1 students. Clare spoke about the life and times of Eglantyne Jebb, founder of Save the Children and all-round extraordinary woman. Clare provided insights into Edwardian life, as well as an idea of what it takes to be a historian and biographer. We were also fortunate enough to be visited by the children's author Ross Welford, later in the week, who spoke to pupils from the Junior and Senior School. Ross expounded the magic of storytelling, both literal and figurative, explaining some of the concepts of story construction.

Mr Williams
Head of English Faculty









NORTHAMPTON
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

We believe in our girls. And they believe in themselves.

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