

AUTUMN 2016 ISSUE 12

# Et Cetera

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

# Contents

PAGE 3

ICONIC  
Gormley Visits *Connect*

PAGES 4 and 5

PERFORMANCE  
Anything Goes  
Much Ado

PAGES 6, 7, 8 and 9

GRANDIOSE  
Mozart's Requiem

PAGES 10 and 11

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM  
Winter Wonderland  
Roman Britain  
Live from Holland Park

PAGES 12 and 13

THE ATRIUM  
Remembrance  
Hollywood in London

PAGES 14 and 15

AND A FEW OTHER THINGS

Cover shot:  
Steven Spielberg

## HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

The Autumn Term is, I always think, half of the school year. It comes with force, energy, optimism and focussed creativity; during the term we lay the foundations of 2017's results but we also bring a number of things to fruition. The term has brought our placement in the top 4% of schools nationally: despite a changing (harder) framework for examinations we are sustaining our place at the very top of the academic tree. We have just been given a Flagship Inclusion Award for the second time for our work as a school to include all in its success. The most pleasing thing about such a highly sought-after national award is that they are about valuing people, so I am very proud of all those who have played a part in creating this success. My pride knew no bounds when I watched our students perform *Much Ado About Nothing* on a London stage: witty, fast-paced and eloquent, it was a triumphant opening to our latest venture with the Shakespeare Schools Foundation. The school's production of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes* was joyous fun; it is ever-rewarding to see young people enjoy themselves: the orchestra played sonorously and beautifully. The choir's performance of Mozart's Requiem was, as you will read, a deeply moving and spiritual experience. I am in awe of Nicholas Robson's creative gifts and his capacity to develop the exceptional in people. Singing, were not only our students, but some of their parents, some ex parents and friends of the school. It represented a whole school community. An audience of four hundred stood and applauded. It was an inspirational start to the last few weeks of term. I was much moved and equally moved by a brief meeting I had with a student to offer a little help with a problem: his eyes filled and I was reminded of the privilege of what I do. School has its grand moments of public success and acclaim- they are rich and meaningful but school is made up of individuals and it is they who are its beating heart. Solving or assisting one of those in need is the unseen but equally vital part of school life. When school closes on 21st December and we seek rest, awards will matter, but the triumph of Requiem and the little unseen, unknown, personal exchanges will mean more. School life is the sum of all those bits. I will remember, with gratitude, my very good fortune in being able to offer leadership to so many kind people: students and adults.

MR COLIN HALL  
HEAD



## GORMLEY VISITS *CONNECT*

We recently hosted a visit from Antony Gormley and all 33 of his studio staff. This was his first visit to the site since *Connect* was positioned on the school's roof line just over a year ago. In that time, the sculpture has developed a rich orange patina. If you visit Gormley's website you will see an image of Holland Park feature on its homepage. This month the White Cube, in Bermondsey, presented 'Fit', a major exhibition by Gormley. For this exhibition he configured the gallery space into 15 chambers to create a series of dramatic physiological encounters in the form of a labyrinth. Visitors were faced with a choice of passage through differently sized, uniquely lit spaces where each room challenged

or qualified the experience of the last. As with *Connect*, the notion of scale, in particular the scale of a human body in relation to architectural space, was explored. In form, *Connect* resonates most closely with Gormley's Extended Blockworks series, the majority of which were completed between 2010 and 2012. These furthered the artist's investigation of the human body and its relationship to the built world. These massively extended block works use an architectural language of stacking, propping and cantilever to suggest a tension which is indicative of our urban-bound human condition.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ASSOCIATE HEAD





## ANYTHING GOES

...but certainly in this production it was not a case of anything goes (or does). A wonderfully judged orchestra played Cole Porter's music delightfully. Mr James Clements on the piano with verve and élan, Miss Amy Chapman concurrently playing the trumpet and conducting an orchestra which has gone from strength to strength. Singers and soloists brought Cole Porter's lyrics deftly before the audience. The narrative wove itself clearly and was beautifully fast paced benefiting from some talented performances which sustained an American tone throughout. The lead parts were played with wit and a delightful physicality which added significantly to the humour. In a production which demanded that actors must sing it was enjoyable to see just how well students adapted to these dual demands. This feat was carried off often with elegance and poise and whilst the lead cast undoubtedly sparkled it was however delightful to see a whole new generation of young talent making

their debut and demonstrating some pizzazz. They had clearly been artfully trained by the performance's director Ms Laura Deacon whose capacities were roundly displayed through Cole Porter's lyrics and ideas. Myla Cole-Newell played Reno Sweeney as a sassy, slick and sophisticated woman. George Offenbach played the part of Billy Crocker convincingly as a man seeking his 'gal'; his energy was much complemented by Jonah McLeod's portrayal of Lord Evelyn Oakleigh which was gloriously and riotously amusing. Josie Dixey Watson's Evangeline was beautifully orchestrated and timed. The rendition of Porter's songs by Sophie Cobb, Noga Levy-Rappoport and Myla Cole-Newell reflected some inspired musical direction. It was hard not to beam from beginning to end. One is reminded of a line from a Larkin poem: it was 'a joyous shot at how things ought to be'.

MR SIMON DOBSON  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## MUCH ADO

Opening the Shakespeare School's Festival performance on Thursday 17th November, Ms Nightingale's fun-filled production of Much Ado About Nothing glimmered and shone. On an evening of Shakespeare plays performed by three schools at RADA Studios in central London, Holland Park's production was the jewel in the crown, embracing comic timing, ferocious repartee, superbly-staged slapstick and delicate romantic poetry in this memorable half-hour romp. Thespians drawn from every year group constituted a balanced and cohesive ensemble, a performance characterised by *joie de vivre*. Shakespeare's women are frequently the real heroes and this production was no exception. Ava Zarate's Beatrice was played with sublime subtlety; Star Gaze's Hero characterised by the utmost poise and a startling naturalism - both characters indisputably virtuous and highly mature, whatever their propensity for wit and good fun. Amongst the boys, Don Pedro, Leonato, Benedick and Claudio (Edisher Kipiani, Alex Perez, Teo Krivosic, Cai Rees-Manuel) exploited the range of their roles marvellously, undulating seamlessly from droll badinage to acting in 'most profound earnest'. Dogberry, Verges, Don John, Conrad and Borachio coloured their performances with a neon luminosity, the most vibrant of caricatures rife with humour and intensity, making the production so engaging and accessible. And students were not just treading the boards. Led by Ms Murray, a technical team on lights, sound, stage-management and costume design, ably assisted in making this the polished performance it was. So successful, indeed, that students are already canvassing MS Nightingale for Twelfth Night later in the year!

MS NAINA NIGHTINGALE  
TEACHER OF ENGLISH





# Mozart's Requiem

More grandiose than lachrymose, this year's Come and Sing event hosted by Holland Park school choir was more ambitious than ever before. During a day's worth of rehearsals, the school choir taught members of the community, teachers, governors, parents and friends the music for this monumental choral work. And it was not for the faint hearted. Nourished by lashings of tea, coffee, cakes and a sumptuous luncheon, the chorus worked tirelessly from 09.00 until late to get to grips with the complexities and requisite virtuosity of Mozart's final work. Joined by his younger brother, Mr Tom Robson, Nicholas Robson was determined to capitalise on the culmination of three weeks of rehearsals with the school choir. And unlike last year's inaugural event Handel's *Messiah*, this was Mozart uncut: not one motet missed, nor one fugue escaped, Our Lady of Victories, High Street Kensington, housed the whole opus. And what a venue it was for this most majestic of works. The building in its august spirituality was the perfect setting for this sacred work. The towering organ, masterfully played by Matthew Jorysz, gave all the splendour and might of a full-blown orchestra - a tender wind section to the sweetest Benedictus; a forceful brass to the most vigorous Confutatis. And

this unique ensemble of voices was in full strength: a collection of 80 singers from age 10 upwards gave power and puissance to Mozart's valedictory work. No challenge proved too much: the semiquaver runs delivered with control, the homophonic declamations performed stridently and the yearning Lachrymosa charged with emotional depth. We were delighted to be joined by stunning professional soloists. A soaring soprano (Rebecca Hardwick), a sensitively rich mezzo (Katie Slater) a powerful tenor (David de Winter) and a lusciously resonant bass (Julian Debreuil) brought deft musicality and gentle sweetness to the multitudinous chorus. An audience of over four hundred people: parents, students, colleagues, alumni, governors and friends of the school gave a standing ovation at the end of a stunning rendition of Mozart's last piece of work, imbued with all the drama characteristic of a Mozart opera. Over £1,400 was raised for our 2016/17 charities: The Royal Marsden and The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation. We are most grateful to Monsignor Curry for the free use of the church. The photograph accompanying this article was taken in the morning's rehearsal and the one overleaf during one of the performances climactic moments.

MR COLIN HALL  
HEAD









# Winter Wonderland

Amongst the bitter chill, the biting frost and the perishing wind, an altogether more comforting and comfortable note: our winter wonderland. Each year, at about this time, the school gathers to revel in the winter cold and huddle together immersed in a series of readings, music, speeches and moving images that are intended to illuminate and excite the warmest elements of the human spirit. In our commitment to secularity, we refuse to shy away from the spiritual and although our winter wonderland has little to do with Christmas, some of the stimuli stir powerful sentiments of the majesty and wonder of life. While nature is dormant and lifeless, we take some time for

reflection about ourselves and our school, preparing for the rest of the holiday break and contemplating the year ahead. The television film, *Shadowlands*, sits alongside Gustav Holst's *In The Bleak Midwinter* and Peter Cornelius' *The Three Kings* to stir potent sentiments and provoke heartfelt reflection. Snow machines, T. S. Eliot, dramatic readings and the school choir's dulcet melodies enrich and enliven this festive spirit. The school's 23 foot winter tree a symbol of resilience and resistance of the cold weather, a symbol of light in darkness and life in the lifeless.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON  
DEPUTY HEAD



## ROMAN BRITAIN IN THE RAIN

A group of Year 8 and 9 Classicists embarked upon a whirlwind tour of life in Roman Britain at St. Albans. Leaving a sunny London behind, we arrived to a less sunny St. Albans and made our short walk through the park to a Roman mosaic complete with hypocaust for all to admire. Mr. Quinlan's excitement was matched by our explorers' amazement at the sophistication of Roman engineering. This excitement became a steadfast determination to explore the distant past as the rain, nothing short of torrential, began to fall. As we took shelter in the museum, students were enthused by a treasure trove of artefacts. The weather appeared to be cooperative as we journeyed to the only Roman theatre in Britain. It was, however, merely mocking us and, heavier than before, the rain descended. Huddled beneath the few umbrellas, the spirit of Indiana Jones lived on as we visualised the spectacle of Roman Comedy.

MS MARISA PILLING  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## LIVE FROM HOLLAND PARK

Live from Holland Park is a live recording session that takes place at lunchtime on the last Friday of every month and welcomes students of any age and playing ability to perform. The first event of the year showcased a range of student performances, including renditions of Gershwin's *It Ain't Necessarily So*, Chopin's *Waltz in B Minor*, Jimi Hendrix's *Fire* and an original composition by Isabella Weinstein in Year 9. Before taking to the stage, Isabella explained to her audience the context in which she had written her song and then captivated her listeners through her beautifully crafted melodies and passionate singing style. Whilst this event may be somewhat novel in its conception, for each recording made, there is the feeling that important moments of history are being preserved.

MS AMY CHAPMAN  
LEADING PRACTITIONER, MUSIC



# REMEMBRANCE

There is something quite remarkable when the school gathers in the atrium: it is infrequent and reserved for special moments. The space is inspiring and 1400 people in contemplative silence provide a wonderful moment in time. So, we stood, at the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month to mark the sacrifice of life in our world was that makes our current day existence possible. Sixth Form students had led our poppy fundraising efforts and were models of exemplary citizenship exercising

maturity; for the last two years Ms Eddison has led the school's efforts in what remains a very British event marking our resolve to maintain a tolerant and just world. As the Last Post played, the school community experienced one of those moments when our daily worries subside and we feel our place in a grander scheme. Such feelings are often felt in our assemblies where we search for that which helps sustain our sensitivity to others and to the world in which we live.

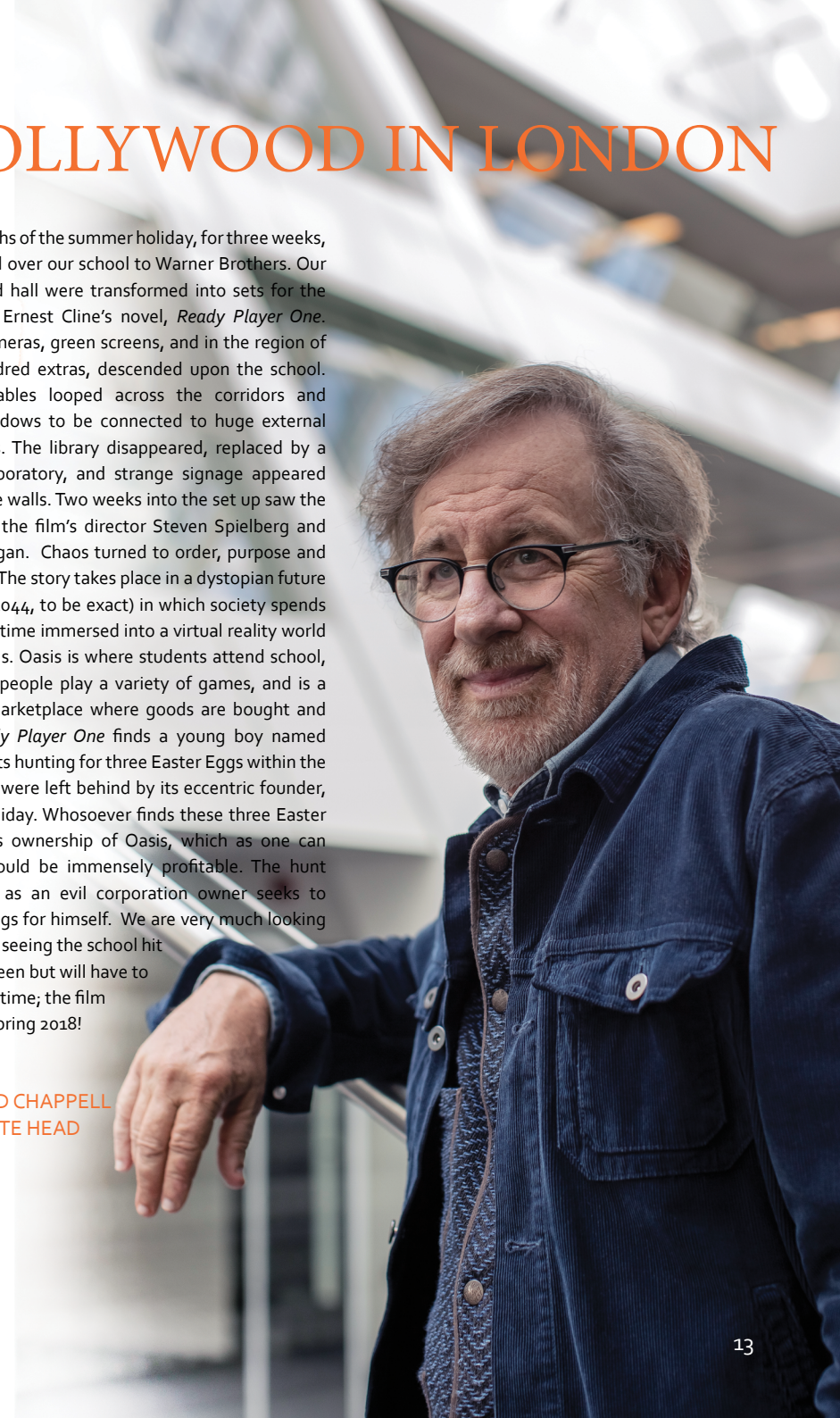
MR NICHOLAS ROBSON  
DEPUTY HEAD



# HOLLYWOOD IN LONDON

In the depths of the summer holiday, for three weeks, we handed over our school to Warner Brothers. Our atrium and hall were transformed into sets for the filming of Ernest Cline's novel, *Ready Player One*. Lights, cameras, green screens, and in the region of three hundred extras, descended upon the school. Endless cables looped across the corridors and exited windows to be connected to huge external generators. The library disappeared, replaced by a science laboratory, and strange signage appeared all over the walls. Two weeks into the set up saw the arrival of the film's director Steven Spielberg and filming began. Chaos turned to order, purpose and efficiency. The story takes place in a dystopian future (the year 2044, to be exact) in which society spends ever more time immersed into a virtual reality world called Oasis. Oasis is where students attend school, it's where people play a variety of games, and is a massive marketplace where goods are bought and sold. *Ready Player One* finds a young boy named Wade Watts hunting for three Easter Eggs within the Oasis that were left behind by its eccentric founder, James Halliday. Whosoever finds these three Easter Eggs gains ownership of Oasis, which as one can imagine could be immensely profitable. The hunt intensifies as an evil corporation owner seeks to find the eggs for himself. We are very much looking forward to seeing the school hit the big screen but will have to wait some time; the film opens in Spring 2018!

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ASSOCIATE HEAD





## WORLD CHALLENGE DUKE OF EDINBURGH

This term we have launched our inaugural World Challenge expedition to Nicaragua. Students in Years 10, 11 and 12 have progressed through an intensive application process and our teams have met for the first time to begin planning and preparing for their adventure. The visit will allow students to take part in a gruelling trek through Nicaragua's volcanic landscape, undertake community work with a local Nicaraguan village and for the more daring of our teams they will whizz down an exhilarating zip line adventure through the rainforest. For the moment, however, our students have switched on their business brains and the challenge to fund-raise is underway.

## A TEACHING SCHOOL CHARITY COOKATHON

The school has been deepening further its foundations as a 'Teaching School' in collaboration with Thomas Jones Primary School and Cardinal Vaughan Memorial School. This term we have hosted training for a significant number of newly qualified teachers from across West London. We have welcomed visitors from the length and breadth of the country including Wyomdham High Academy Trust who returned for a second visit having been bowled over by their first visit to us during the Summer Term. We have continued our support of Sir Craig Tunstall and his team in the establishment of their new school, the Gipsy Hill Academy, which is due to open in September 2017. Our slick new Teaching School website is now live and you can find out more about our work as a Teaching School at [www.rbtsa.co.uk](http://www.rbtsa.co.uk). Our trainee teachers from last academic year are flourishing currently in their new full-time roles and this is fuelling our ambition of finding more dynamic and inspirational future teachers who we can train in our unique mould. We have been visiting the country's most exclusive and highly regarded universities in search of the most exceptional candidates. Nicholas Robson has been appointed as a Director of Fairfax Multi Academy Trust and this will bring us ideas as he learns more about how a group of schools in the West Midlands create success.

Powerful waterproofs, virgin walking boots and even the odd ice-pick were packed into our school minibus as it drove off to two stunning destinations in England: the Derbyshire Peak District and the renowned Lake District. In the end most of the equipment proved superfluous as shafts of sunlight and the clearest of blue skies welcomed our silver and old hopefuls. The impeccably turned out Mr Ball matched by the uber fit Mr Mitchell, were of course both put into the shade by our eminently reliable D of E experts Laurence Dawson and Ian McClelland. Great Gable, Scarfell Pike - England's two highest mountains presented themselves as our students' walking challenge.

"Yes chef", came the weakened response from an increasingly fatigued Mr Northover as our Head Chef demanded perfection from his plate of wild mushroom gnocchi, white truffle sauce and hay smoked free-range chicken. Fifty-five students gathered to eat a sumptuous three-course menu. The chicken dish was followed by a deluxe chocolate cake which had been freshly baked at 05.00 that morning. Following over eight hours of preparation in the kitchen, Mr Northover's feast raised a considerable sum of money for The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation.

## A GEOCACHE ADVENTURE

On a wet and windy Autumnal afternoon, a group of hardy and adventure seeking souls headed out of school in search of hidden 'Geocaches' found in the local environs of Holland Park. Using technology to locate these devices, Geocaching involves a combination of map reading skills and riddle solving to locate hidden 'caches' (usually a small sealed container of some sort) that are placed in hard to find and unexpected places. Daniel Clarke, Oscar Neilson and Gabriel Dubitsky formed a formidable team and together proved particularly successful managing to locate most of the caches in Holland Park. Nevertheless some caches remained elusive despite our best efforts to unearth them from their hiding places and we have vowed to return again to continue with our exploration. The search continues!



## HAMPTON COURT INTO THE JUNGLE

A level historians (I am thrilled to be teaching them) accompanied me to the very nerve centre of the Tudor empire - Hampton Court. We were aiming to comprehend how a place so beautiful and graceful, the countryside retreat for the Tudors, could also have been the place for dark political intrigue and the centre piece of so much of Henry VIII's reign. The fascinating thing about studying sixteenth century history is how profoundly different the monarchy was. We were suddenly in the world so effectively recreated by Hilary Mantel in her novel *Wolf Hall*. With our students dressed as royalty and cardinals we attempted to imagine the sometimes dark and dangerous paths which were trodden by those in the pay of the king and those desiring to be in the pay of the king. Courtiers, royal divorces, beheadings, defections, treachery, all part of the landscape of the most fascinating periods of English history.

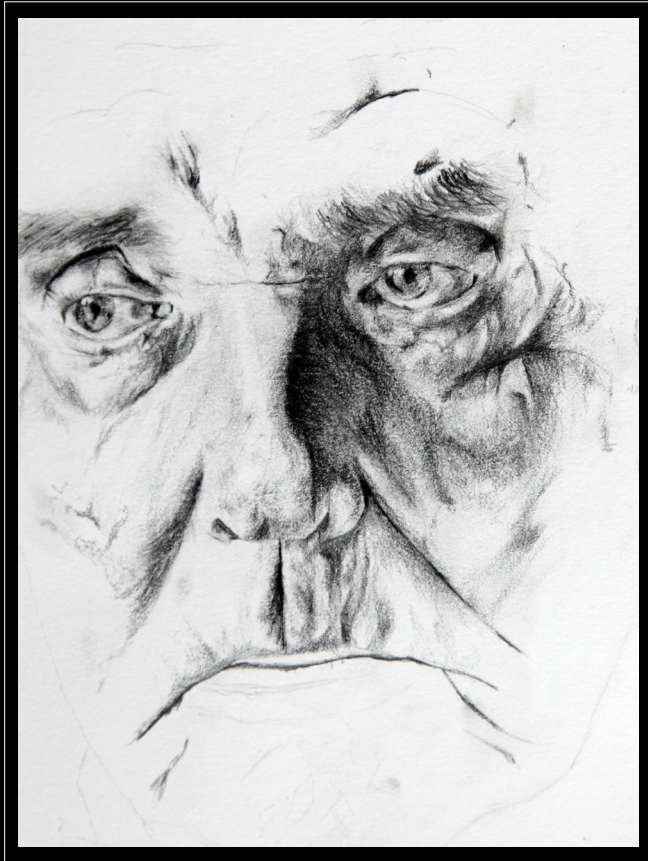
MS SARAH HALFPENNY  
LEADING PRACTITIONER, HISTORY

Inspired by Rudyard Kipling's, *The Law of the Jungle*, Year 7 and 8 Art Aptitude students filled our gallery with an unseen world of flora and fauna. Collage, sculpture, print and film where the mediums of choice and each gave rise to elaborate and colourful pieces of art work. Visitors to the private view were warned to '*keep your wits about you, this is unexplored territory; new species of flora and fauna will be discovered, new tribes' people will be met and you may become confused and disoriented*'. Completed in the students' additional learning sessions on Wednesdays after school, they had each been challenged to take artistic risks and seek to extend the boundaries of their own creativity. The exhibition was the first to be curated by our new dynamic Art team and reflects their artistic excellence. Demand for a place at the school on our art aptitude programme continues to grow, with the school receiving 480 applications this year for the 24 places.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ASSOCIATE HEAD



Designed and produced by  
HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL



Mona Barakji | Kenn 2016 | Pencil on paper