AKADEMEIA
HIGH SCHOOL

MAGAZINE

2023 | 2024

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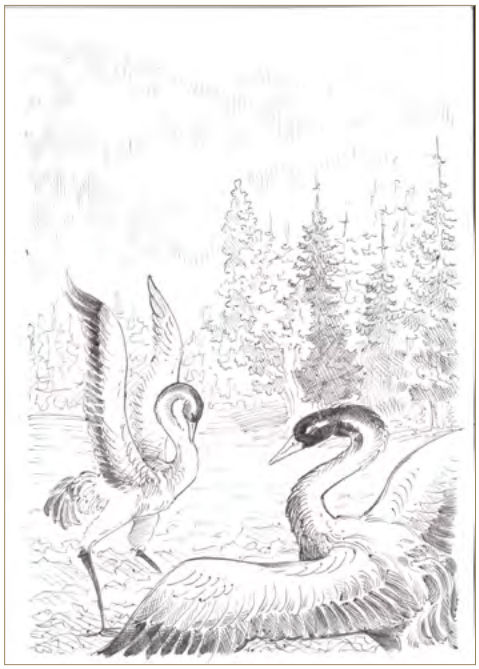
ALEKSANDRA BIŁOUS (Y13)



HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

Editor Sonia Blank
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Message from the Headmaster

Dear AHS Community,

What a successful and vibrant 2023/24 school year we had! It was rich in academic and extracurricular achievements and witnessed immense growth within our school community.

The first aspect – academic success – is perhaps more easily measurable, with superb exam results, including a sweep of Outstanding Pearson Learner Awards for the highest marks in Poland and the world. We also celebrated exceptional achievements in competitions, as well as fantastic university destinations for our students.

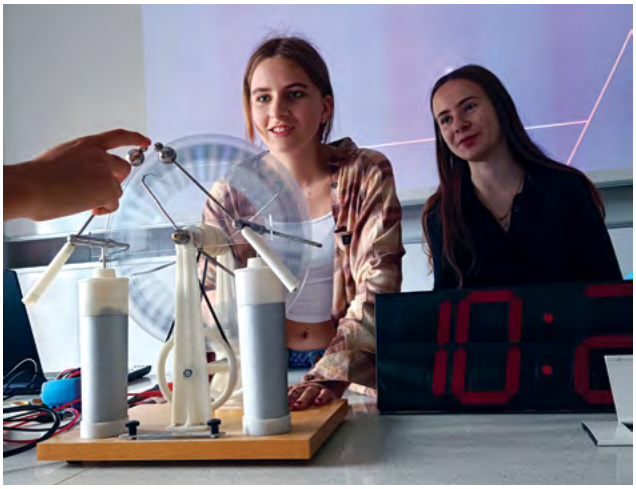
The second, communal aspect is harder to measure, perhaps even to qualify. Yet, it speaks to the character of our school and what makes it so special. It can be found in the numerous outreach projects undertaken this year, in the creativity of Arts Week, in the excitement of the musical, in the innovation showcased at the Science Fair, or whilst cheering on our sports team, and indeed, in the classroom. This AHS spirit, if you like, comes through the shared joy of learning and growing together, not only as students but also as people.

I witnessed this AHS spirit radiate through the graduating class of 2024 and trickle down into lower years, where I know it will grow and blossom further. It's also reflected in the increasing involvement of our parents, who contribute so much to the life of our school. From leading student clubs, giving seminars and career talks, and supporting community events – including our annual scholarship fundraiser – to the activities of the Parents Association, their engagement has been invaluable. We are deeply grateful for their support.

As ever, Ms. Blank has done a tremendous job of curating and showcasing all the wonderful work that has taken place this year. I am grateful to her and every student and teacher who has contributed to this year's magazine.

Every now and then, it is important to pause and celebrate what we have achieved and experienced. While not every moment can be captured, I hope you find the spirit of AHS and its many manifestations in 2023/24 within these pages.

Dr Karolina Watras



HANNA GOŁĘBIOWSKA (Y11)

Akademeia Outreach

We feel that this year we broke an absolute record when it comes to the number of outreach initiatives. What's more, ideas and events were often initiated by different members of the school community. We had successful student-led initiatives like the WOSP final and the Kanya Fundraiser. Some events were part of the obligatory curriculum, like the 5th Form PDS projects supporting the most vulnerable parts of society. Some are already an integral part of the school's program, like School Without Borders. We've also established cooperation with Ukrainian orphanages relocated to Ossa and provided children with Art and Sport classes at our school. Last but not least, we've developed a partnership program with public schools and created the opportunity for our students to put themselves in teachers' shoes.

We are particularly proud of all of this, as we believe that these kinds of activities are an important part of the well-rounded education we try to provide our students with. Outreach and volunteering activities are important on many levels. Through these different experiences, students have a chance to develop soft skills, better understand different social phenomena, and become more empathetic. We also find it very useful in teaching our students that the education and opportunities they have access to are a privilege, and that with privilege comes the responsibility to use it not only for individual purposes.

That's why we are especially proud of projects that were initiated and organized by students from beginning to end. While observing the preparation for WOSP or the Kenya Fundraiser, we noticed that apart from setting noble goals for themselves, our students learned a lot of practical knowledge on how to organize such events. They have also showcased great abilities when it comes to group work and task division.

We would also like to thank all students and staff members involved with projects that support marginalized or less well-off groups. We hope that they understand that sometimes giving one hour a week of your time might make a huge difference for someone you give this time to. We know for a fact that for children from Ossa, the few times they visited the school, played football, and did art meant a lot. We also know that this was mutually beneficial and that our students have learned a lot from these experiences.

Thanks to the activities held this school year as part of the partnership program, our students had the chance to work with younger students from three primary schools in Wilanów, Ursynów, and Mokotów. They shared knowledge and experience during chemistry and physics lab classes, led interdisciplinary art classes in our school's art studio that combined music with painting, and organized lectures on art history. Our students also taught English classes and held workshops based on their PDS projects in the primary schools. This collaboration gave our students the opportunity to share what we believe is a great value – the knowledge gained in classes, the passion for learning, and the spirit of dialogue and openness.

Patrycja Krysińska
& Maria Głowacka

SKI TRIP

Letter from the Head of Fifth Form

I am pleased to have this opportunity to reflect on academic year 2023–24. What a fantastic year it has been for our Fifth Form and wider school community marked by many of achievements and great successes of our student body. Underpinned by our school values our pastoral journey this year has focused on providing further opportunities for our students to take to the lead. This has resonated through a range of successful student-led assemblies and PDS projects with our students taking on teaching roles in many cases.

Our Fifth Formers have also continued to thrive creatively and academically, including achieving success in a wide range of competitions in a variety of fields, with destinations ranging as far as the United States!

Reflecting on the Fifth Form experience over the last year it would be impossible not comment on the extensive programme of trips and outings. The autumn term saw three successful integration trips to Kazimierz Dolny, Łeba and Sejny as well as the first Geography Fieldwork trip to the Tri-City coastal area. In the spring term there were two Ski trips, a Hiking Trip and a variety of outings. During the summer term, a range of International Trips from Scotland to Rhodes were enjoyed, as well as local outings from Kayaking to Bushcraft! All these opportunities beyond the classroom have significantly enriched the Fifth Form experience.

I will cheat a little with my own personal highlight, as my Mentors Hour definitely retains the top spot again this year. It has been a great privilege to support my mentees throughout their educational journey from Year 10 to the end of Year 11 and our discussions has also provided me with the best snapshot into the student experience of these two important years. On behalf of the fantastic Fifth Form mentoring team, I commend our Year 11s students for their hard work, dedication and personal growth and we wish you all the best as you continue your journeys into Year 12.

A huge thank you to all those who made the experiences of the last year possible and we all eagerly anticipate the next chapter in 2024–5.

Peter Davidson

SKI TRIP

Year 10: A Year of Growth and Adventure

As Head of Year 10, it is with great pride and satisfaction that I reflect on the remarkable journey our students have undertaken this past year. Their progress, both academically and personally, has been truly commendable.

One of the highlights of our year was the integration trip to Leba. This trip was not just an opportunity to see the stunning sand dunes and enjoy morning jogs along the beach, but also a chance for students to bond and strengthen their relationships. The workshops we held were instrumental in fostering teamwork and cooperation. Our visit to Gdansk was equally enriching. The World War II Museum provided a deep, impactful understanding of history, and the students enjoyed exploring the city's rich culture and heritage.

In addition to our trip, we organized a trivia quiz in the auditorium, where mentor groups competed against one another. It was heartening to see the enthusiasm and competitive spirit among the students. Their active involvement and camaraderie were highlights of the event. The winning group celebrated their victory with a pizza party during mentor's hour, a well-earned reward for their knowledge and teamwork.

Throughout the year, we did face some behavior issues, but I am proud to say that the entire cohort has shown significant maturity. They have grown into self-advocates and curious teenagers, displaying resilience and a willingness to learn from their experiences. Their development is a testament to their hard work and the supportive environment we strive to provide.

Moreover, several students went above and beyond, getting more involved in school life. They played crucial roles in organizing the fundraiser and the end-of-year fashion show, demonstrating leadership and a commitment to our school community. Their contributions were invaluable and set a great example for their peers.

Overall, this year has been a period of substantial growth and achievement for Year 10.

As we look forward to the next academic year, I am excited to see how our students will continue to thrive and excel. Well done, Year 10!

Ron Fränzel

AKADEMEIA FUNDRAISER FOR SCHOLARS

EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

GRADUATION


CHAIN RULE

SKI TRIP

Letter from the Head of Sixth Form

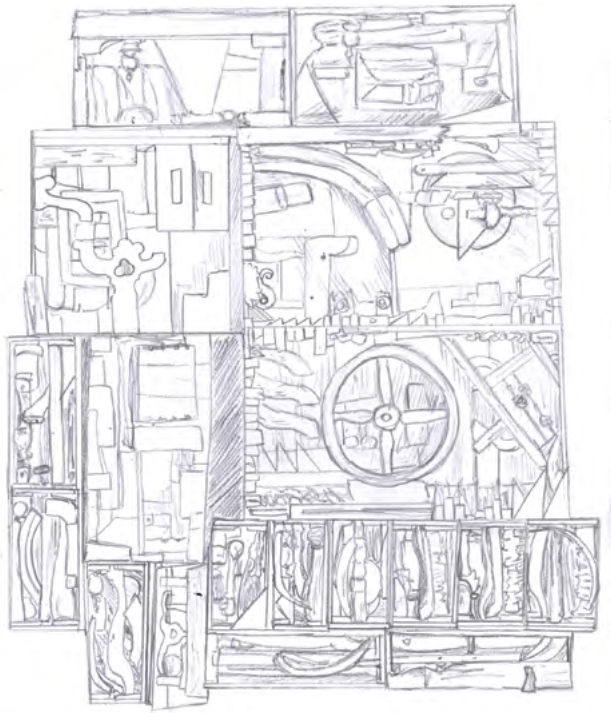
Yes, unbelievably, the 2023/2024 school year is over! I know that for many of our students (and staff!) it passed in a blink of an eye. Our Y13s graduated weeks ago and Y12s stepped into their shoes with curiosity and disbelief. Regardless of their path, however, all students deserve heartfelt congratulations: for their resilience in dealing with challenging material during lessons and still engaging in extra – and co-curriculars; for their passion in discovering and pursuing their interests, academic or otherwise; and for their kindness in supporting their peers and trying to create a sense of community within the school. I will forever be grateful for all their assembly contributions, from the "Assembly Time" jingle remix, through fun celebrations like the "Siblings Day" or "Bingo", to informative presentations on inspiring projects like the CanSat competition or the Villars symposium.

Indeed, this year has been marked by significant personal growth. It wouldn't have been possible without a whole body of dedicated teachers and staff. I would like to express my thankfulness to all the remarkable people supporting Sixth Form's endeavours: the Parents and Guardians, the Senior Leadership Team, all the teachers and counsellors, the University and Professional Guidance Team, the incredible Heads of Year, and above all, the Sixth Form Mentors, who provide unwavering support for all our students. Thank you! I already cannot wait to see what the Sixth Form has in store for the next academic year. May it be filled with wonder and adventure!

Dominika A. Fiołna

ZLATA RUTSKAYA (Y13)

MAX ZAJDEL (Y11)



JULIA BURZYŃSKA (Y12)

Letter from the Head of Year 12

The past school year has been a journey filled with challenges and triumphs, and our Y12s showed remarkable resilience!
Watching their growth, both academic and personal, has been a great joy. Among the many unforgettable memories, our October trip to Krakow stands out – an adventure that forged lasting bonds. In March, our budding bakers rose to the occasion during the baking competition, showcasing culinary talents and teamwork. But our students are not just keen travelers and talented bakers; they are primarily exceptional academics! Many received prestigious awards in various subject competitions and Olympiads, highlighting their hard work and passion for learning. A special mention also goes to those students who started the year with Ds and, through sheer determination and effort, finished with As and even A*s. Their journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and I am so very proud of them. School is about more than just grades; it's also about community spirit. To me, one of the most heartwarming moments of the year was the fashion show during our annual fundraiser. This event celebrated not only style but also kindness and compassion, leaving a lasting impression on everyone involved. As the year progressed, I was thrilled to see beautiful drafts of personal statements emerge in June. They reflect the talents and dreams of our students as they prepare for the next chapter of their educational journey – it is exciting to picture the bright futures that lie ahead for them in Year 13 and beyond.

Aleksandra Ladzińska

PROM


new balance


Helping Homelessness PDS

PDS FAIR

PDS 5th Anniversary Update by Kay Czepli-George

This year marks *the 5th anniversary* of the beginning of our Personal Development Scheme adventure!

Over the years, our PDS has evolved to better support and inspire our students, and this year is no exception. For the first time, Year 11 students were granted greater autonomy, allowing them to collaborate with project managers and conceive as well as execute their own projects.

The decision to implement this change stems from our commitment to:

- **Promoting Learner Autonomy**: Encouraging students to take charge of their learning and pursue their interests.
- **Creating a Bridge Between 5th and 6th Form**: Smoothing the transition and fostering a sense of continuity in their educational journey.
- **Preparing Students for EPQs and 6th Form PDS**: Equipping them with the skills needed for Extended Project Qualifications and more independent PDS activities in 6th Form.
- **Developing Research Skills**: Enhancing students' ability to conduct thorough and meaningful research.
- **Promoting Community Engagement and School Values**: Instilling a sense of responsibility and connection to their community and upholding the core values of our institution.

We are incredibly proud of our students' achievements and look forward to continuing our PDS journey with even more innovative and inspiring projects in the future.

This year's Y11 projects have been diverse and impactful, covering topics such as art and emotions, human behaviour on social media, flying model constructions, listening to Akademeia voices, and researching homelessness. ◆

ANIELA ZESZUTA (Y11)

“Homelessness – Understanding, Helping and Fighting Stereotypes”

Our PDS focused on the problems that homeless people are facing, as well as the stereotypes and the stigma around it.

Action taken

We decided that our PDS would be focused on aiding and educating ourselves about homeless people. We contacted and arranged meetings with people involved in supporting homeless people to educate ourselves. Between the meetings we watched interviews with homeless people to learn about their experiences first hand. During this time we also organized an event that would raise money that we could then use to support the homeless, it was a success as we managed to ammas over 1 thousand pln towards our goal, which we then manged to buy 350 croissants with and gave them away the homeless people on the central station. We managed to organize a meeting with ms Patrycja Drożyńska (who works at the “Daj herbate” foundation), which gave us a lot of insight since we learned about the true habits, actions and firsthand experiences with homeless people which was very different to stereotypes that are told and was extremely interesting to listen to. We then hosted a meeting with Hugo Bader in the assembly room after school hours, which was equally insightful and interesting. In the end we learned a lot about what homeless people are really like, the fact that it can happen to anyone and that these people want to break out of the poverty cycle, and we also raised 1300 pln which we gave away in the form of food for example to do what we can to aid these people. It was a very rewarding and it changed previously established perspectives we had on the topic.

Fighting the Stereotypes

There are many stereotypes about homeless people as a group we belief that those stereotypes are a part of enhancing marginalisation which makes it more difficult to escape the problem of homelessness. Initially we wanted to interview homeless people, but we decided that it could be too delicate for them. Instead, we talked with experts working in charities such as “Daj Herbatę”. There isn’t much available information about myths and stereotypes about homelessness that’s why we chose to interview people working on this issue.

In Poland specifically, homelessness is largely linked to a lack of affordable homes on the market, placing adequate shelter out of reach for many. According to Habitat for Humanity, “Poland lacks about 1.5 million affordable homes.” In addition, about 70% of Polish families cannot afford the costs of a mortgage and Poland’s

"rent market accounts [for] only 6% of the total housing stock." Due to these circumstances, many struggle without adequate shelter.

Research methodology

As part of our research, members of our PDS organised a variety of different meetings, video-calls and Interviews with different experts from the field. After a prolonged discussion with our PDS group, we decided that the best way to educate ourselves about the issue would be from people who have been directly involved and worked with it. Our group started by reaching out via email to different managers and members of companies which specialise in helping homeless people in Warsaw. After a few emails, our group had organised a video interview with one of the members of the fundraiser "Daj Herbatę" which took place on one of our PDS lessons. Through the interview we learned about many different habits and stereotypes surrounding homeless people and the entire issue of homelessness in Poland.

What we learned

We learned that the true behaviour and appearance of most homeless people is far from the stereotypes that we hear often, during the meeting with Ms Patrycja Drożynska, one of the members of the charity "Daj herbatę", we learned a lot about first hand experiences with homeless people as she works with them to give them necessities such as durable shoes, a phone, clothes, and other necessities such as a toothbrush. This makes it so that, as some people pointed out to Ms. Patrycja herself, the people that she cares for don't look homeless, as they are different from the image of the homeless people we have in our mind, all thanks to Ms. Patrycjas help. We also learned that, being homeless can happen to anyone and that there are a lot of circumstances that can lead to someone to someone being in a situation where they do not have housing, meaning there are a lot of different type of people that find themselves in this situation, for example, we were told that some

homeless people in Poland end up in the following situation because they make their children the legal owners of the house, after which they sell the house which unfortunately leaves them without a roof above their head. Addiction is also a contributor to becoming homeless, however there are a lot of different people that end up in a lot of different situations. We also talked about the myth that people "choose" to be homeless and that is their fault, which is also untrue, as a lot of people that Ms. Patrycja worked with work diligently every day to attempt to break out of this cycle, and a lot of people, with Ms Patrycja's help, have managed to break out of the poverty cycle. One particular case involved a man who used to attend their soup kitchen and shelter, when eventually he was hired by Ms Patrycja to help organize storage in their warehouse of supplies. He now lives in an apartment due to Ms. Patrycjas help. We learned that most homeless people are very kind, and try to work towards a more stable life, and are very different from the common stereotypes.

We also learned that a lot of what we hear about homeless people is simply not true, a large majority of them are determined to change their way of living and deserve better treatment, as they are not the people they are portrayed as and just need a little help. The way that they are portrayed, and what we are taught about what their actions and behaviour is like is completely unfair to them, as the majority of homeless people do not resemble the most commonly heard stereotypes, they are not all dangerous criminals, and they should be granted support, and be treated with more empathy. ◆

AHS Radon Hunt: "We don't want people to learn about radiation in some abstract way!"

During 2023/2024 school year Akademeia High School students were doing their research devoted to radon, radioactive gas released from the soil and rock where it is generated, in different locations around Poland sharing their findings with peers around the world via social media. For this purpose, Dariusz Aksamit, a physics teacher and a scientist, integrated the project with the Personal Development Scheme (PDS), which is a school program that enables students to explore a variety of topics outside the traditional curriculum. Sviatlana Volchak, a physics lab technician, interviewed Dariusz about the project, its objectives, results and students' work.

Svieta: First of all I want to ask why this topic is interesting for you personally?

Darek: About radon?

Svieta: Yeah! And about radioactivity at all?

Darek: The radon in the first place is the most important source of ionising radiation for humans. So it is a very important point of reference for any other discussion about, for example, radiation protection.

I remember when I was at university and there was a discussion to build a power plant in Poland. And there are some people that are scared because of the radiation. Even if there is a law that states that like 400 metres from the fence of the reactor, radiation could not be bigger than 0.01 mSv per year. Like what does that mean "milliSievert per year"?! Or is 0.01 a lot?! And people said: "Oh, but there is radiation!" And the point was like: "If you take a deep breath you have more radiation because of this radon!"

It was fascinating for me that this is also a natural radioactivity! Because like in media you have coverage of the Chernobyl, of Fukushima or of any kind of radiation accident, but no one knows almost about the potassium in bananas or in milk or like carbon-14 in your body, or simply all the radioactivity that is around us, and especially the radon. People are scared of the things that are completely irrelevant, but they don't know about the things that actually might be important because WHO (World Health Organization) states that radon is the second cause of lung cancer. So the elevated level of radon is important.

We don't have a problem with most places in Poland with the radon but in the Sudety mountains or in Lower Silesia it is a problem, not in the Mazovia region.

Svieta: You can not even imagine how interesting your answer is, for example, for belarusian auditory, because we have a power

plant which was built in Astrovets. And different ecology guys raise a lot of awareness that this is so bad. And, you know, no one understands anything. *(Svieta is a refugee from Belarus)*

Darek: I can understand the kind of a fear that comes from the organisation culture. I mean what happened with Chernobyl happened because it was the Soviet Union without the culture of safety and with this culture of obedience to authority. So this is why the people that were understanding what is actually happening could not like say: "Guys, that is wrong! That is going to explode!" Because someone up there said: "No, shut up."

That is the basis that in this safety culture "safety" is the most important thing.

Svieta: I also have seen that one of the objectives of the project was to build local contacts about this topic and build emotional relation to the research. What do you mean?

Darek: Yes. When we teach a regular curriculum in physics it is often very general. It is not about you! Someone forced you to learn this and you need to do this because you have an exam and that is it. And it works for most of the people. So in the first place aside from this project but in the first place when you can have an emotional connection or you have a local context to the thing you are covering, it immediately catches people's attention and changes their level of engagement.

So just like you can study in general the thing about the pollution in rivers, in air but it is different when you are taking a water sample from your pond or you setting up the device that measures air that you are bringing in the school, for example.

So in this context again we don't want people to learn about the radiation in some abstract way. Because it is abstract and it is not about them. But when we say again only about the things like Chernobyl or Fukushima then we missed the point that it is not important from this perspective of radiation protection.

When we say like radiation is all around you and you breathe with it. So then when we give them the equipment and let them actually measure it. Then it is different when they see the actual results from their home, from their tap water, from the soil in their garden and so on and so on. And then they are engaged and they want to know more about the topic. We don't need to force them to learn.

Svieta: That is cool! Thank you! So they are more motivated when it is close to them... I also wanted to know if "background radiation", "natural radiation" and "environmental radioactivity" are the same things?

Darek: Mainly, yes... When we talk about the "environmental radioactivity" it is mainly about the isotopes, so like the radioecology and... NORM, naturally occurring radioisotopes, but we also have artificial exposure. When we say "background radiation" it also includes for example the cosmic radiation, the radiation coming from space. And when we in general say about the exposure here we also include for example medical exposure. So sometimes we can use them interchangeably, sometimes not.

Svieta: Ok! Am I right that students took the detectors and put them in their homes?

Darek: Where they wanted!

Svieta: Even where they wanted?!

Darek: Yes! The detectors that were used for measuring indoor air were placed usually at homes. Or when they discuss where they actually live, I mean if it is a detached house or a flat, then we expected that, ok, if this is a single house with a basement, so let's take two detectors and place one in the basement and one on the first floor. If it is a flat, ok, you can use one in the garage.

Some of the students noticed: "But I have like an underground pantry for food, – the hobbit hole they called it, – in the garden, in the bungalow out there. So maybe we can take more?!" Or they went to their previous school

and gave it to the physics teacher to measure the concentration there. Same with the tap water. We measured using the liquid scintillators technique: we collected the samples and shipped them to the laboratory. And then students collected the water from their tap. I did it also from the school tap and from the tap in my place. And we also collected the water when we were in the underground facility.

The differences of the levels can now be understood. Like in the Warsaw district we have tap water coming from the Wisla river that is filtered. And in my place that is close to Warsaw it is a different company. They are a drilling dip for the water. And in the mine there is no exchange of that water, and there was a previous uranium mine. So you see the results now but now you can understand why they differ.

Svieta: Looks like the same water but...

Darek: Yes! But you see the reason. And also when we discussed this thing about the underwater sources one student noticed that we have Oligocene well and he took more samples to go and to check the underwater Oligocene source that is close to his place. It was the most interesting sample we collected. So, yeah, students were able to do whatever they wanted.

Svieta: I have seen some results. Maybe you can comment. So you, for example, said in this Oligocene well it was something interesting. I have seen downtown it was smth high and in Żoliborz, was't it?

Darek: But it was in the air. In water in general in tap water in Warsaw everywhere it was below the threshold for detection. So like below 2 Bq per litre. And the reason is it is a river water. So there was enough time for radon to escape. The open water. But in the mine we have got like 470 Bq per litre. So it was a huge number. But in the Oligocene it was around 30 something Bq per litre. So still it is drinkable and it is below the threshold that WHO set, because it is like 100 Bq per litre. So it is safe for drink.

It is very simply interesting that: "Oh, we can actually distinguish the origin of the water. That it is underground water not the water from the river".

And with the air we confirmed what we expected that in the basements we reached even like 300 something, but on upper floors it was like below or around the average in Poland and this is around 50 Bq per m3.

Svieta: Basement. You mean for the students who have this basement?

Darek: Yes!

Svieta: That is very interesting! And one more question. Tell about the international community who like doing the same job measuring radon. And how does it work? How are these initiatives connected?

Darek: The whole idea came from RadoNORM consortium, the consortium dedicated to radon and NORM, naturally occurring radioisotopes. And radoNORM consortium is like a pan European consortium of, I think, 60 institutes, laboratories, agencies, that are dedicated to dosimetry and radiation protection. And they are funded by Euroatom, so by the European Union.

And one of their work packages is dedicated to communication and training. And they had pilot projects about citizen science. So they wanted not only scientists to do the measurements. They wanted to engage people to also take part and through this understand better what this actually happening in their community and become a citizen scientist.

So because of that they ran these two pilots and then they announced the grant opportunity. So anyone could issue a grant proposal for like 25000 euro. So it was a lot of money for the small groups of citizens. And 6 projects were rewarded with the grants and one of these was ours. But there was also a project from Portugal, from Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

Those projects were a bit different from ours because ours was the only one focused on the high school students. That is why we have only ten students involved but we are building a capacity for radon measurements for the whole school for the future also. And we did a plenty of different things, because we did water, we did air, we did active detectors, passive detectors, we worked with the radon chamber. We did a lot of stuff! But they, for example, were focused on measuring the concentration in air and for example 200 people got involved in the project. And they undergo the training, they do the studies and then contribute to the analysis of these studies and for example also to mitigate to lower the radon levels that they measured.

In our project there was no need for mitigation, meanwhile one thing happened in Poland for the first time: in January 2024 one primary school was closed because of too high radon concentration. It was in Lubelskie voivodeship.

So simply these 6 projects were funded and then people recruited their teams, so teams of citizen scientists. Every few months we meet to sum up the progress and now we are heading towards the end and in June there is an annual meeting of the RadoNORM consortium and there will be (was) also a panel dedicated to citizen science projects.

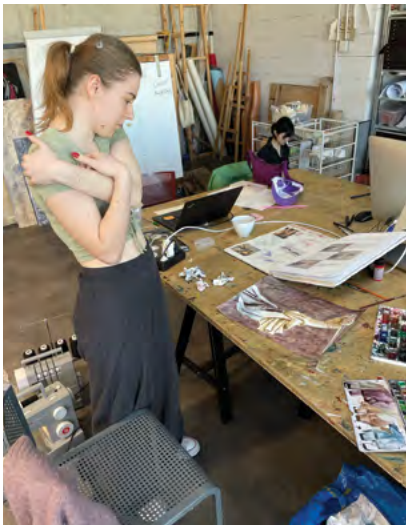
But like this idea of citizen science is something that is gathering more and more attention at least across Europe. Like more and more funding is going into this direction, because it is the feasible way to build trust for science by doing actual science because then you understand how it works and then no one will tell you that, you know, jews rule the world or whoever is doing this. Because like, you see, you actually did the measurements, you can trust them because you are trained you did them on your own in the lab. And especially if you don't trust the government, or the jews that are ruling the world or whoever you think... you can do actual research but in this case with professional support of people that can also help with the equipment with the analysis and so on. ◆

IGNACY BADOWSKI (Y13)

CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS

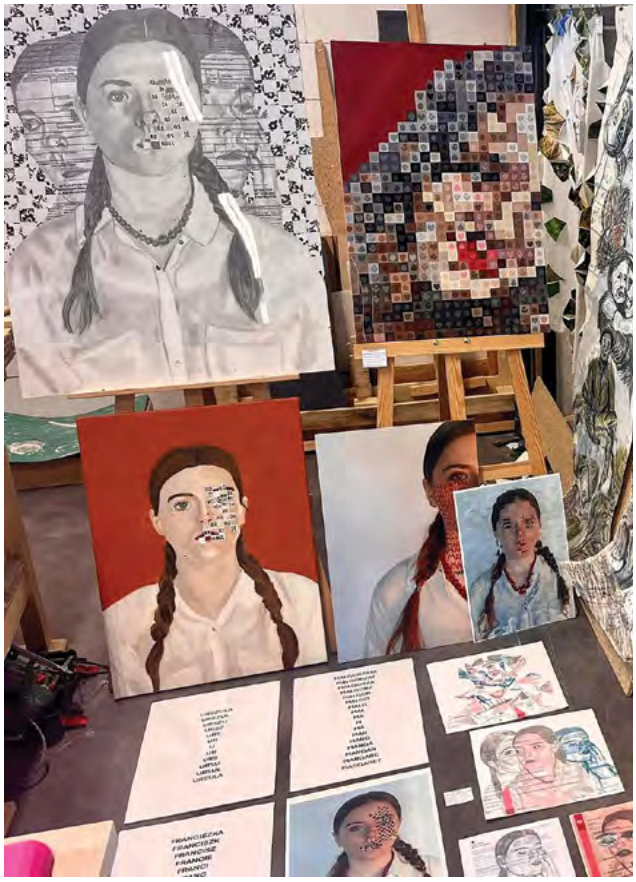
Working with creative and driven students is the hallmark of our work as teachers in the creative and performing subjects. Observing them hard at work in their natural habitat is a fascinating and inspiring pastime. There is nothing more gratifying than seeing students work not because they have to but because they want to realise their ideas and are lead by their personal visions. The following expressions and body language (captured during the yr13 Fine art exam) are a perfect manifestation of the creative process and a reflection of the inner artistic life of our students. Lets not forget that Art is as much physical as well as mental exercise!

Magdalena Strzelczak – Head of Creative and Perfoming Arts



EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

ALEKSANDRA BIŁOUS (Y13)



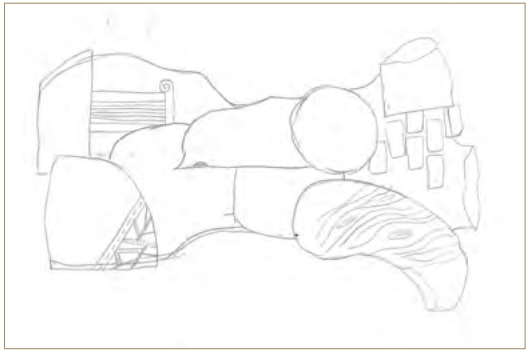
Creative process

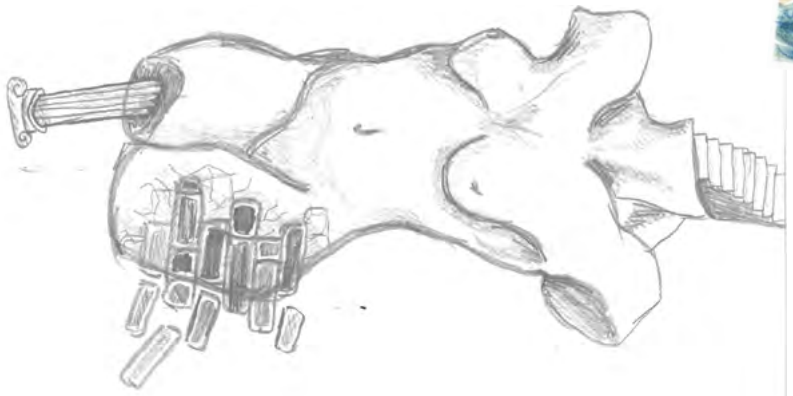
Understanding that art is a process is an important part of our students' education. At the beginning of the process students learn how to visualise their initial ideas through quick sketches and diagrams. This stage helps students to visually compare directions and allows them to choose the best idea with which to proceed. Then they use their drawing skills to create alternative sketches that picture their chosen idea. Students explore various ways of making the same image with slight differences. They compose their image in different ways and test different media to compare how an idea might change based on the arrangement of parts and materials that it is executed in. This leads them to a more confident place from which they can make their final artwork.

JULIA WIDUCH

AMELIA FRĄCZKIEWICZ (Y10)

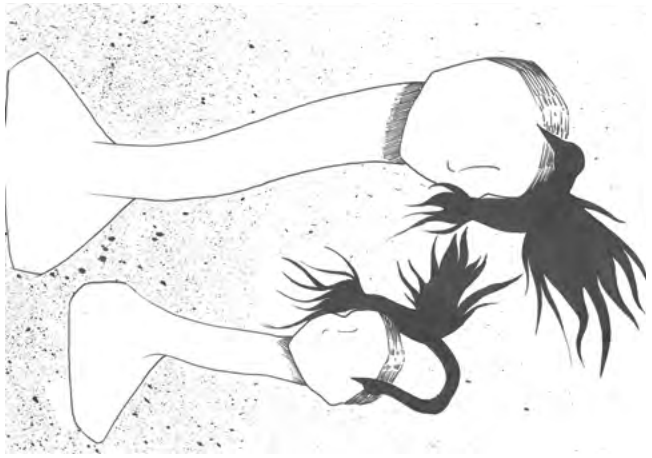
HANNA GOŁĘBIOWSKA (Y11)

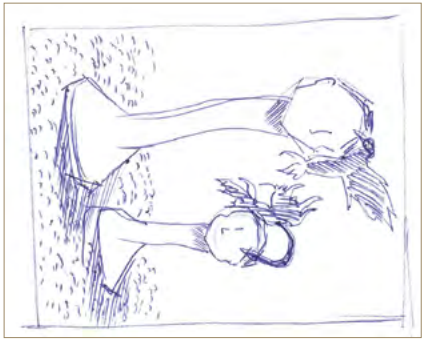




EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

ALEKSANDRA BIŁOUS (Y13)

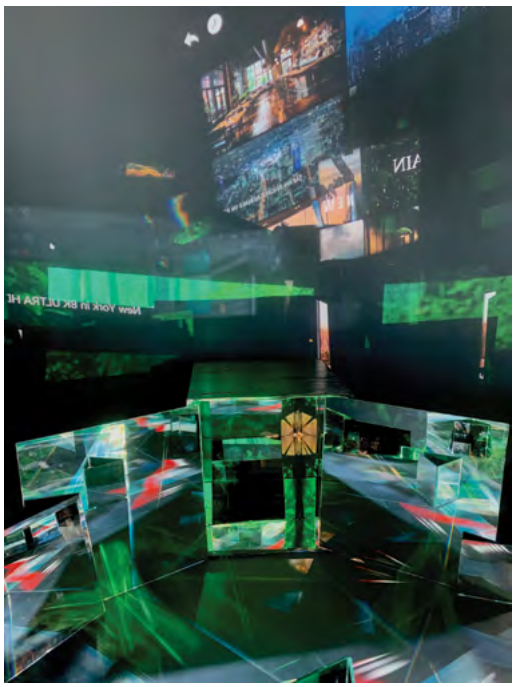




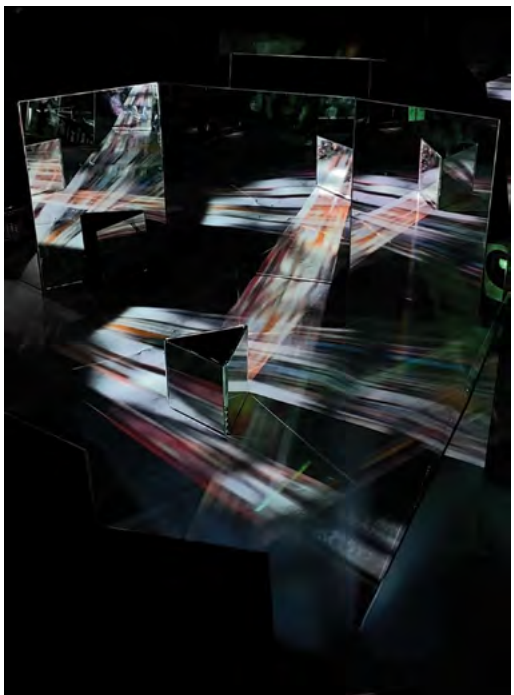
ALEKSANDRA POTURALSKA (Y13)

A Level Photography

So far in our A Level Photography course students explored both analogue and digital ways of image making. This year we have offered students modules in moving image. Students learned how to develop a strong creative vision and the ability to convey compelling narratives. This skills they practiced involved crafting engaging scripts, envisioning the visual representation of the story, and directing the film's artistic elements.

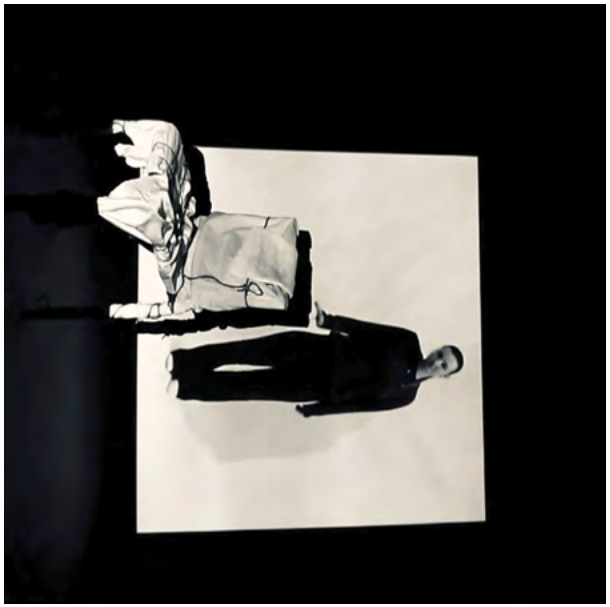


IGNACY BADOWSKI (Y13)



APOLONIA GACA (Y13)

ZLATA RUTSKAYA (Y13)



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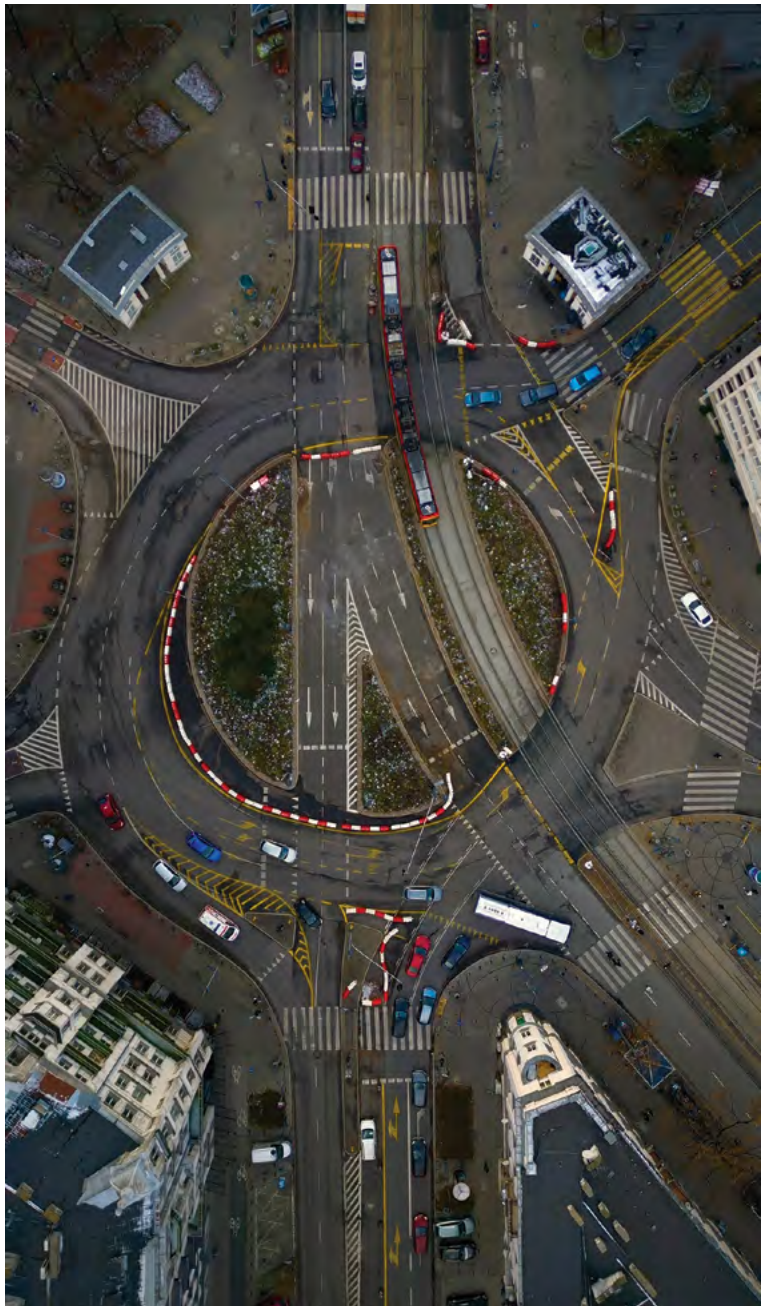


ALEKSANDRA POTURALSKA (Y13)

ENGLISH & DRAMA

HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

Repetition Keeps Me Green
by Justin Lenderking, Drama Teacher

The actor Al Pacino was once asked about repetition –

"How do you keep performing something over and over again, don't you get bored?"

The answer he gave, perhaps surprisingly, was,

"Repetition keeps me green."

By way of explanation, Pacino told the story of playing Richard III and finding particular difficulty with a court scene. As director and star he gathered his colleagues, advisers, and even some friends to discuss, analyse, and theorise possible solutions – the scene just didn't work as they had it, and the reason was that they didn't fully understand it. On his 85th attempt performing the scene he suddenly understood it, saying,

"I gave up the ghost with it, I just let it happen. Maybe I'd been getting closer each night, but it was only through the repetition that I finally came to terms with it."

There are many pop culture and academic references to this approach – everyone from Luke Skywalker to Malcolm Gladwell know the benefits of being in a "flow state". In Drama, we achieve that state through repetition. As we repeat an exercise, a movement, a gesture – we come to understand it, inside and out, so that we might refine it, and through refining it, shifting understanding from the conscious repetition of a gesture to the instinctive expression of an impulse. The distance measured in that process is equivalent to the difference between the twitch of a muscle and the grace a ballet dancer.

Which brings me to our yearly Drama trip – alongside curricular exploration and social engagement, we want to give students this same opportunity of repetition, a chance to step into a flow state, to express their critical skills instinctively. The trip is a fantastic opportunity for shared discovery as well as another unique and critical experience we offer our students: the chance to settle in and spend a couple of days with their creative expression.

Text by Filip Olszewski (Y9)

Dystopian Fiction Story

11/10/2121 9:53AM

Location: The Island of New York City

In only a few years the sea levels have risen by a drastic 98%. All the huge cities have fallen except New York and Beijing. Those were the only major cities that were prepared for what was inevitable. There are still multiple colonies of people in higher parts of the world like Nepal or Russia struggling with resources and food. Some going rogue and some getting killed off by others one by one. In New York an inflated platform of about 500,000 square meters has been built around what used to be Central Park Tower. The current population of New York is eighty-eight thousand people, a lot less than the previous population before 'Poseidon's doom' struck.

EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

That is what we call it now.

We recently discovered that there is a small colony on a mountain in Alaska: we found a corpse drifting through the waters outside Old Seattle wearing a dog tag with the name and coordinates of his colony. We are still trying to fix the radio so we could maybe find someone even closer to us, maybe LA or Chicago. There have been some changes with the government due to the president drowning in his own house with his whole family. All colonies decided to elect their own leaders. Our leaders aren't that bad except that they don't provide enough food for all the eighty-eight thousand mouths to feed. The most respected people now

are Fishermen, who give the colony a chance to live another day, and Divers that bring up the resources that we left behind in the drowned city below. We are glad that we survived the apocalypse and that we will see another sunrise and another sunset. In spite of everything, we still have McDonalds. For the rich. For now.

19/12/2121 6:18PM

Location: The Island of New York City

Two months have passed and the sea around me has frozen. Now that human pollution has been drastically reduced global warming has stopped, so the winters are harsher on us. Fishing has become a lot easier though, and in winter we allow New York to feast at Christmas. Everybody is gathered on the float at “New Central Park” where huge rows of tables and heat lamps are placed all around. Thanks to this, for one day out of 365 everybody can enjoy a few hours on this new sea colony. As a senior general of the exploring section in the NYCM (New York City Military) I am informed about all the discoveries that happen. Recently we received intel that led us to believe a smaller group of about five thousand people had survived in Los Angeles. We will explore in the next month and try to trade with the savages that are left in Yosemite.

20/3/2122 9:42PM

Location: The Island of New York City

Our operations in LA have been delayed by the extreme winter. To preserve resources, we decided to wait for the ice to melt before heading out. High protein survival food is strictly rationed, but the Fishermen continue to catch fish to sustain us. If they don’t keep up their work, our colony will run out of food. Survival is a struggle. We haven't told the citizens yet, but they are suspicious of it due to getting smaller potions in their daily rations. Soon the 28th anniversary of Poseidon's Doom will come around. On this day each year everybody stays in their houses and refuses to drink water the entire day

HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

long. This typically coincides with the biggest storm of the year, each year: Poseidon’s wrath returning. So, most of March is sacrificed to prepare for it. People build sandbanks and seal their windows and doors with rubber.
But not me. Tomorrow, we will finally set out on the LA mission, so I have to work early. I am going to sleep, looking forward to tomorrow.

25/3/2122 11:58AM

Location: The Los Angeles Colony

My name is Junior Admiral Thomas Smith of the NYCM exploration department. Today we came as the back up team for the first explorers, led by Senior General Paul Wilson. Unfortunately, we found nothing but slaughter and blood. Only a handful have survived from the first exploring mission. The remains of LA has turned into a savage city ruled by violence, driven by hunger. Most of the scouting group were turned into dinner by the barbarians. Unfortunately, the Senior General didn't survive. His last demands were for us to put a final entry into his journal, which I do now.

The author of this journal will be remembered as the one who saved New New York from starvation because he discovered resources to sustain us post-Poseidon: mountains of canned food, hidden under the water. Next Remembrance Day, we will seal our lips in his honour. ◆

Text by Nadia Żak (Y11)

Endurance

If I could hold on just a little longer...

Actually, I don't know if 'little' would be enough. Even though my whole body ached, I managed to lift my head and look around. My three opponents, the strongest ones left, seemed focused yet somehow relaxed. They were not shaking yet. They would endure for minutes to come.

I lifted my elbows and put them back on the floor in a more comfortable position. Still, they ached unimaginable. That's the beauty of plank exercise: not only do your muscles ache, but also your skin and bones, and even your face from all the blood flowing into it. I must have been as red as a tomato.

'Thirteen minutes!' shouted our coach.

I knew that score was impressive. After all, only four people from my whole school managed to keep going for that long. Still, for me it wasn't enough. I wanted to be better than the three other guys. I wanted to prove to myself that I was strong and worthy, and that all the hours spent at the gym were not wasted.

I looked around again, but this time at the spectators. A few hundred people. Students and teachers. The yearly strength competition organised in our school was quite a thing. Which was why I wanted to win.

'Fourteen minutes!'

This time the voice was louder and sharper. My hands and body were shaking uncontrollably. I looked down. My red hands were covered in extremely visible veins. My heart pounded as if I was running for my life from a predator. I tried to breath, but it seemed that the crowd had used up all the oxygen available in the sports hall.

Suddenly, I heard a thud and the floor shook a bit. I looked up. One of my opponents was lying on the floor, gasping for air. At least I had a place on the podium guaranteed.

'Fifteen minutes!'

I wanted to give up so badly, but I couldn't. it really mattered. My aspirations mattered. My ego mattered.

I glanced at my recently defeated opponent. Having reached his bag he took out a water bottle. The liquid mesmerizingly reflected the rays of the setting sun coming through the giant windows. He opened the bottle and started to drink hungrily. Some of the water escaped and ran down his sweaty face. For a moment I thought he looked at me provocatively. Whether he actually did or not, it worked.

Now noy only did I wanted the pain to go away and oxygen to enter my lungs, but I also desired this simple yet vital drink. I had to have it. But not now, not right after he supposedly looked at me.

ZLATA RUTSKAYA (Y13)

‘Sixteen minutes!’

I looked around. Realistically, there was no point in continuing. The other two guys left would surely reach twenty minutes’ time.

Hating myself for it, I slowly lay myself on the floor. My opponents looked at me with bitter satisfaction. The whole school looked at me, but perhaps with a bit less interest. I would not stay for long in this shameful position. I got up, picked up my backpack and headed towards the changing room. Only here did I drink the so ardently-desired water, but it was not the refreshing draft I had dreamed of. It tasted like defeat, and so did my salty tears. ◆

HUMAN & SOCIAL SCIENCES

ANIELA ZESZUTA (Y11)

ALEKSANDRA POTURALSKA (Y13)

Text by Julia Morusiewicz, Ewa Wuczyńska, Jan Bakić-Pawlak and Jan Kapliński

She's a witch!

ANIELA ZESZUTA (Y11)

According to historian William Monter, there were as many as 80,000 witch hunts and trials recorded over the centuries in Europe alone. When most people think about witch trials, they think about the Salem trials that occurred in the 1690s, and while those are the most famous, they were far more widespread and common than one might think.

Even though these stories took place years ago, the trials of witches continue to be seen even in today's modern world. There are instances recorded from as recently as 2021 when yet another soul was condemned to death under suspicion of witchcraft. Sangweni Jostina, a 59 year old woman hiding from dangerous individuals who were reportedly chasing her when she was accused of witchcraft. She was brutally beaten and burned alive in South Africa under the pretext of wearing 'healers' attire similar to that of witches. Many witch trials were also rather similar across the globe, which is visible in the comparison of trials in America; Massachusetts, Asia; China, and Europe; Germany.

The tragic saga of Liu Ju stands as the earliest recorded instance of a witch hunt. During China's Han Dynasty in 91 BC, he fell victim to his own father's accusations and was left with no recourse but suicide. This marked only the first in a series of scares that have rocked China over centuries – including incidents dating back to 1768, 1810, 1876 and even as recently as 1908. Minority populations were often accused of using dark sorcery for soul-stealing, which allegedly caused fatal diseases or even death. In South Asia especially Nepal and India the belief in the supernatural has led to instances of witch-hunting and abuse against women accused of witchcraft. Even more alarming are the statistics showing that over two thousand murders related to witch hunting were reported between 2000 and 2012. The legal systems in many countries have not adequately addressed these issues, leaving the victims without proper protection or justice against these atrocities.

There were many instances of recorded witch

trials throughout history that age back to as far as in 1563 in Wiesteig, Southwestern Germany, and one of the most well-known witch trials took place in 1692–93 in colonial Massachusetts, America, more famously known as the Salem Witch trials. It was the most violent and brutal of all the recorded witch trials in North America with 19 people executed, 5 more dying in jail, and 1 from torture with even two dogs killed for supposed witchcraft. The trials began with a few women being accused of witchcraft by a group of teenage girls around present day Danvers Massachusetts and present day Salem. This kick started the long period of mass hysteria that swept over Salem during those troubling times. Witch trials back then were taken extremely seriously due to the church's high standing. The first women accused in the witch trials were accused for a variety of different reasons stemming from rejecting puritan ideas, remarriage or even not going to church enough. Additional signs were things like moles or birth marks that were often associated with the devil. It is clear that these methods were not reliable and further led to the random nature and unfairness of the trials.

JULIA JASIŃSKA (Y11)

One of the greatest mass trials in the world were the Trier Witch trials in the area of western Germany. The outbreak occurred around 1581 and lasted until 1593. 368 people were burned alive for sorcery in twenty-two villages, leaving only one female inhabitant alive in two of those. This made it the largest mass execution in Europe during times of peace. Torture was one of the main reasons that led people to confess to witchcraft, making it once again a case of mass hysteria, which seems to be a common theme whenever we look at cases of belief in witchcraft. Germany had one of the highest execution rates in Europe that varied between 25,000 to 50,000 executions of people accused of witchcraft between the 15th and 18th century, with between 500–1000 in the Trier witch trials themselves. The witch trials in Trier and Würzburg lead to families being split apart and a general sense of mistrust and terror among neighbors as a result of the trials' profound impact on communities. Furthermore, the witch trials had a lasting effect on German history and culture, acting as a warning against mass hysteria and the persecution of marginalized groups.

It is remarkable that something as obscure and irrational as witch trials could be so common and that they could happen so often across the globe and throughout history. It highlights the human desire to look for someone to blame and to look for a drastic response to crises. ◆

ANIELA ZESZUTA (Y11)

Text by Kinga Szczepańska and Zonia Jankowska

The Vanishing Point of Civilisations

Since the dawn of time, humankind has begun to establish the fundamental elements of politics, driven by the need for governance and structured decision-making. The early theoretical framework of politics is commonly attributed to the ancient Greeks, notably for their introduction of democracy, paving the way for modern politicians and leaders. Due to this, other influential civilisations of the ancient world, such as the Mesopotamians, who also committed themselves to the formation of political systems such as city-states, can sometimes be left to the dim and distant past.

One of the major Mesopotamian civilisations were the Babylonians, who were renowned for several innovations, namely the first set of written laws known as 'Hammurabi's Laws', which signify the value of order and sovereignty. The 4,000-year-old monument on which the laws were codified dates back to the reign of King Hammurabi, the instigator of the laws. This suggests that the central political structure under which the Babylonians functioned was a monarchical one, akin to some of the absolute monarchies of Europe. What is more, the kingdom was divided into provinces, each of which was governed by officials appointed by the King. Their duty was to maintain order, implement the King's policies, and collect taxes. As such, it doesn't matter if it was four millennia or three centuries ago; some things throughout history never seem to change. Yet, not all civilisations adopted such political systems, including the Indus Valley civilisation. According to some historians, this civilisation operated under a decentralized and egalitarian form of administration, which can be supported by the less pronounced social stratification, unlike in other ancient civilisations such as the Mesopotamians or Egyptians. This conjecture is based on the lack of explicit archaeological evidence of monuments, such as palaces or temples, dedicated to monarchs, emperors, or court officials, which would classify the Indus Valley civilisation as an empire. Thus, it is speculated that the civilisation was governed on a local scale by councils or assemblies, as artefacts and relics from excavations suggest that there were some individuals who carried seals, which could be an indication of power and authority.

If you would start looking for the most important inventions of Mesopotamia, you would probably come across mass-produced pottery. Decorated vases were made with the use of a turning wheel. But if you try to find out about the same thing in the Indus Valley civilization, you will find … well, the same thing! Measurements, writing, and hydraulic systems – all of those were highly developed in both of these cultures seem to have been developed independently of one another. The development in both is exceptionally high; the culture of writing culminated in the establishment of a library in Babylonia, and the script used by the Indus Valley civilisation is so complicated that it has still not been deciphered to this day. The script, which would be a primary source of any kind of legal regulation in the Indus Valley, was very complex, as it consisted of approximately 400 pictograms. It most likely originated completely independently from the alphabets of Mesopotamia or Egypt. Therefore, both Mesopotamian and Indus Valley civilisations relied on writing and created a large catalog of pictograms. De-

ALEKSANDRA POTURALSKA (Y13)

spite the various ways in which these civilisations were separated, they both seemed to have taken similar paths, with similar outcomes. While their languages and scripts are drastically different

From these findings, we can observe that both civilisations, despite being divided by thousands of kilometers, had a few things in common. It is evident that both civilisations relied on a system of writing, mostly in the form of scripts, which consisted of various symbols. They were apparent on different artefacts, such as pottery and seals. However, this wasn't the only correlation between the two civilisations, as they also made similar technological advances, particularly in infrastructure systems, despite the fact that the two civilisations created different types of structures. Therefore judging from these two examples, it would appear that this not possible. There seems to be tendencies and shared goals that don't need to be physically communicated for them to appear in different places. Perhaps certain goals and developments are hard-wired into our DNA? ◆

EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

Interview with Małgorzata Krześniak
by Weronika Lubaszka (Y12)

Psychology and Marketing

Małgorzata Krześniak – strategist and marketing manager with 10 years of experience in developing and implementing marketing strategies, creating integrated communication campaigns, and consulting. Recipient of industry awards including Young Creatives Cannes and Next Gen of PR. Worked with both global and local food brands.

How is food marketing different?

MK: Food and beverages belong to the FMCG (fast-moving consumer goods) industry. These are basic necessities that we buy very quickly for a relatively low price. Poles shop for groceries more often than Europeans. Statistically, we buy food several times a week. Due to the frequency of purchase, low price, and therefore low risk, customers are more willing to try new products. They often decide on purchases on the store shelf. Therefore, in the case of food, it is very important to build a long-term brand, but also activities directly at the point of sale: attractive product appearance, packaging design, promotions, advertising materials (POS), product display, salespeople's incentives, and tastings. Food preferences can be influenced by seasonal factors, cultural trends, and dietary fads. Food marketers need to stay attuned to these shifts and adapt their strategies accordingly to capitalize on emerging trends or seasonal demands. Moreover, it is crucial in food marketing to build appetite appeal, influencing the body and emotions to stimulate appetite and arouse desire for a specific product.

WL: How do you utilize principles of psychology in your marketing strategies?

I employ principles of psychology strategically in my marketing strategies to connect with consumers on a deeper level and drive desired outcomes. I particularly focus on the market segmentation research which is used to help a firm identify segment in a market, with an aim of developing different strategies and tactics for the different segments. The 4 main types include demographic, geographic, psychographic and behavioural. Understanding consumer behavior is foundational to effective marketing, and psychology provides valuable insights into why people make the choices they do. Emotions play a significant role in decision-making, often guiding our choices more than rational considerations. I focus on emotional connections, leveraging persuasion techniques like social proof and scarcity, and personalizing marketing efforts. Additionally, I prioritize simplicity to minimize cognitive load and enhance the overall user experience. These approaches help drive engagement, loyalty, and ultimately, business success.

Can you share examples of successful marketing campaigns that were heavily influenced by psychological principles?

Effective marketing campaigns must rely on the psychology of the customer to appeal to their desires, emotions, and behaviors. The term we use in the context of designing marketing activities is "insight." Insight refers to a deep understanding or revelation about consumer behavior, attitudes, motivations, or needs that can be used to inform marketing strategies, campaigns, and product development. Insights are often derived from analyzing consumer data, conducting market research, and observing consumer trends and behaviors. Marketers look for insights because they provide valuable information that can help them better understand their target audience, identify opportunities for growth, and create more effective marketing initiatives. Kit Kat's iconic slogan "Have a Break, Have a Kit Kat" and marketing campaign appeal to consumers' desire for relaxation and indulgence. By emphasizing the idea of taking a break and enjoying a moment of pleasure with a Kit Kat, the campaign taps into psychological principles of stress relief and reward, making the product more appealing. The other good example is the Lay's "Do Us a Flavor" campaign that invited consumers to submit their ideas for new chip flavors, engaging them in the product development process. This campaign leveraged the psychological principle of "co-creation" and "engagement," making consumers feel valued and involved with the brand. It also created buzz and excitement around the brand, driving sales and brand loyalty.

What specific psychological theories or concepts do you find most useful in crafting marketing messages?

In crafting marketing messages within the food industry, I find Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs particularly useful. This theory suggests that humans are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, starting with basic physiological needs before moving on to higher-level psychological needs. By positioning a food product as not just fulfilling a basic need for sustenance but also catering to higher-level needs such as belonging (through family meals), esteem (via luxury or artisanal products), or self-actualization (through health and wellness foods), we can craft more compelling marketing messages. Additionally, the principles of Social Proof and Scarcity, derived from the broader field of psychological persuasion, are also highly effective. Highlighting popular choices or limited availability can create urgency and increase consumer desire. This makes these concepts powerful tools in a food marketer's arsenal. Another significant thing is that marketing needs to evoke emotions in a customer.

Can you explain how you apply principles of persuasion in your marketing efforts?

We use them rather in advertising, i.e. in the part of marketing that focuses on persuading customers to take specific actions. In these cases, there are various techniques, often linguistic ones: addressing the recipients, calling on people to take action, e.g. Buy it!, etc. Or Try new cookies! Etc.), speaking in the language of benefits and what I talk about the most, i.e. influencing emotions. Emotions sell. People make decisions emotionally. They also emotionally share content that interests them. That is why, for example, when transmitting online, it is very important to appeal to and build emotions. We know which of them are the most viral because it has been tested.

How do you handle ethical considerations when using psychological tactics in marketing?

It is certainly unethical to mislead the customer and, above all, it is also against the law. Ethics means acting based on social norms and principles. Of course, as marketers we have access to tools and knowledge that create a certain disproportion between who sends the message and the recipient. We have access to customer data, we conduct qualitative and quantitative

research, we know how to influence emotions, so we can say we have a certain advantage. We know how to design activities to achieve a specific effect. Despite this, we operate within certain frameworks – we do not cross boundaries. We have to communicate the truth, reach the customer with a message, but ultimately it is him who makes the purchasing decision. In Poland, we have institutions that guard ethical communication – these are, for example, the Advertising Council (they have the Code of Ethics in Advertising), the Association of Public Relations Companies, and the Association of Advertising Agencies. All these institutions react and comment on cases of communication ethics violated.

How do you analyse consumer behaviour to adjust marketing strategies accordingly?

We usually look at 2 types of market research: qualitative that provides insight into why people do the things they do and quantitative which measures how many people think in a certain way. In addition, I use ethnographic research which is the study of people in their own environment through the use of methods such as participant observation and face to face interviewing.

Combining these insights, I use segmentation to categorize consumers based on shared characteristics or behaviors. This allows tailoring marketing messages and strategies to resonate with specific segments. Additionally, continuous monitoring and A/B testing are vital to evaluate adjustments' effectiveness and iterate on strategies. By staying responsive to consumer feedback and data trends, we can refine our marketing approach to better meet consumer needs and preferences.

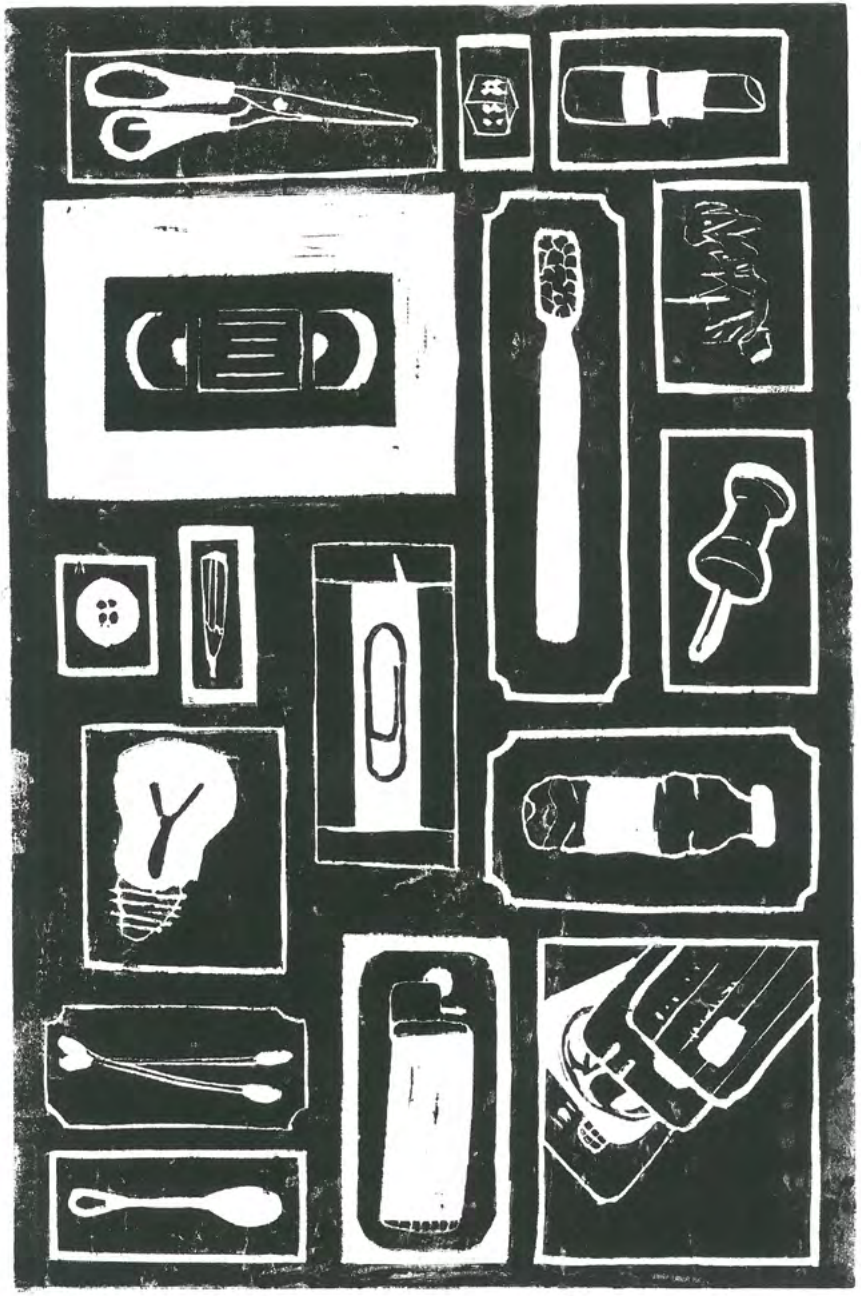
To analyze consumer behavior and adjust marketing strategies accordingly, I employ a mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative data, from sources like sales patterns, website analytics, and social media engagement metrics, provides insights into what consumers are buying. It also provides insights into how they're engaging with our brand online and the effectiveness of different marketing channels. This data helps identify trends, preferences, and areas for improvement. ◆

ANIELA ZESZUTA (Y11)

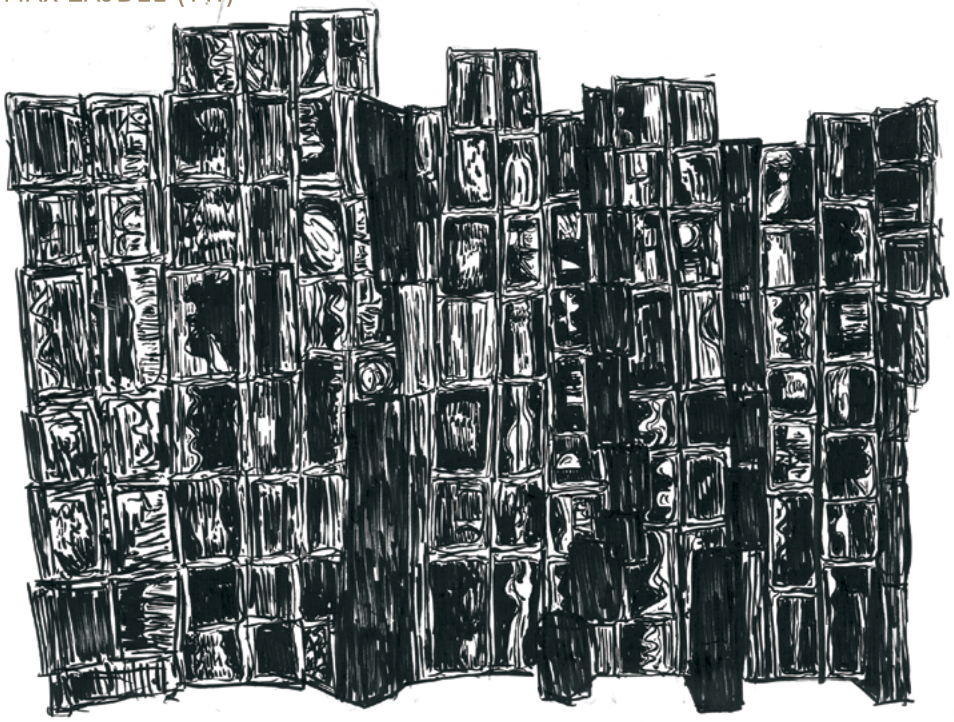
JULIA BURZYŃSKA (Y12)

JULIA JASIŃSKA (Y11)

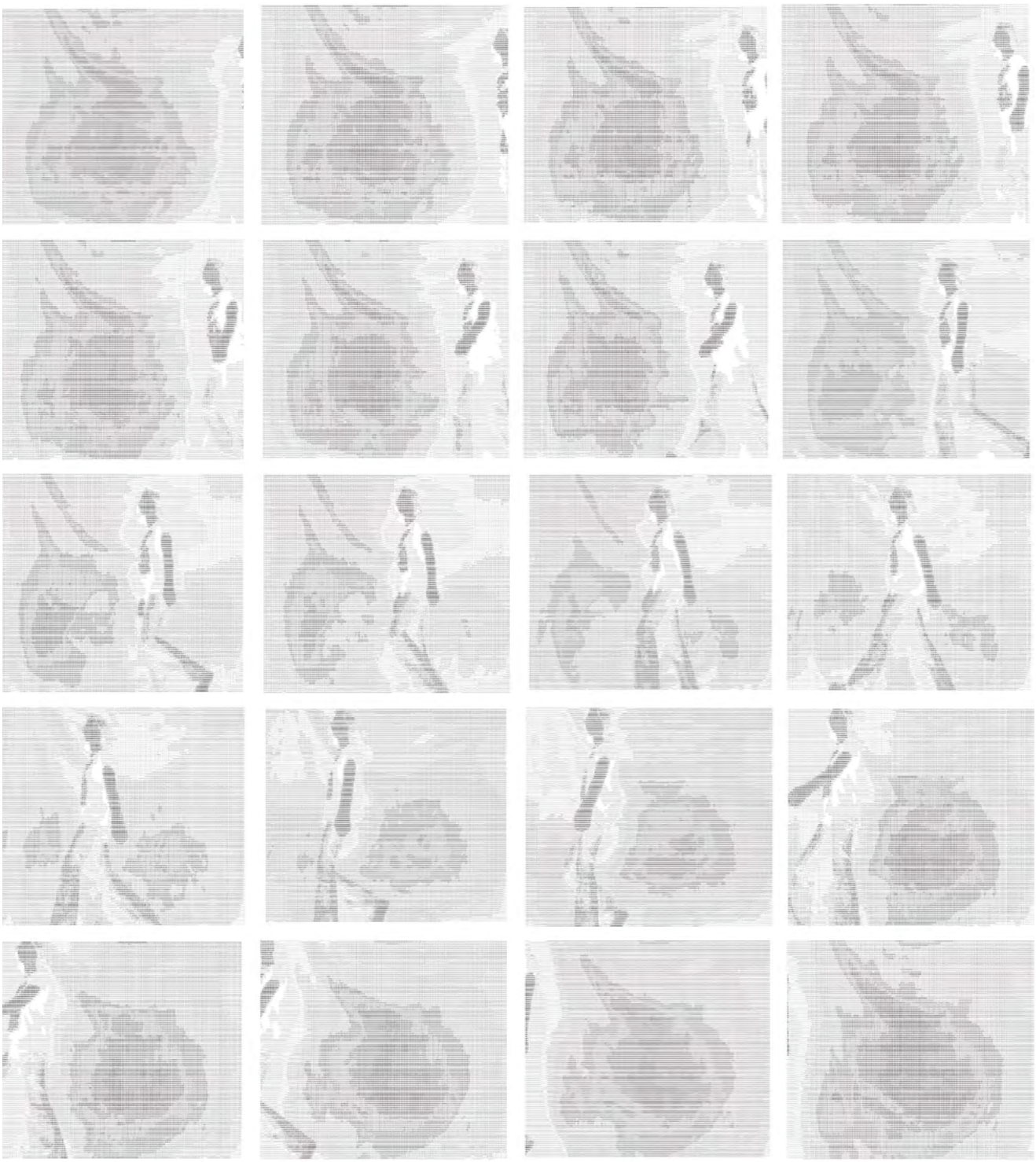
MAX ZAJDEL (Y11)



MAX ZAJDEL (Y11)



MATHEMATICS



ALEKSANDRA POTURALSKA (Y13)

Letter from the Head of Department

As the Head of the Mathematics Department, I am thrilled to share some exciting accomplishments from our students this year. Mathematics is not just about numbers and equations; it's about critical thinking, problem-solving, and logical reasoning, which are essential in every aspect of life. Our students have demonstrated exceptional skills and dedication, participating in various math competitions and achieving outstanding results. The year began with the news that Mateusz Kasprzak obtained the best score in the WORLD for A Level Mathematics, an incredible achievement made possible by the hard work and dedication of both Mateusz and his teachers at Akademeia, and the numerous engaging discussions with his peers about challenging mathematics problems both inside and outside the classroom.

Beyond the classroom, our students have had the opportunity to go beyond the standard curricula via clubs on GCSE Statistics, UKMT and Olympiad preparation, and advanced combinatorics and probability, led by Mr Jovicic, Dr Poole, and Dr Kysiak respectively. These clubs have given our students the opportunity to solve quirky problems that require students to be creative, or see the more practical side of mathematics when using statistical methods to analyze data. With regards to competitions, this year has seen our largest medal haul in the United Kingdom Mathematical Challenges: an impressive 24 gold medals, 63 silver medals, and 71 bronze medals. There was further success in the British Mathematical Olympiads with the following students achieving merits: Adam Przybył (Y13), Natalia Hutten-Czapska (Y13), Witold Gryżewski (Y13), Adam Szkaradek (Y11), Aliaksandr Kuryla (Y11), Nadia Żak (Y11), and Harry Walker (Y9). Adam Szkaradek impressively obtained a merit in both the Intermediate and Senior British Mathematical Olympiads, with Aliaksandr Kuryla missing our first Distinction in the Intermediate Challenge by one point! Every year, we also enter teams for the Naboj team competition, which gives students the opportunity to collaborate on some rather unconventional and creative mathematical problems, and I cannot leave this section without mentioning the Akademeia Maths League, a competition that is gaining popularity in our school and offers students an additional opportunity to tackle Olympiad problems; our champions this year were Ngo Anh Cac Nguyen (Y11), Kwasery Dubno (Y10), and Harry Walker (Y9), with the coveted title of grand champion going to Kwasery Dubno. Such was the competition this year that only 0.6 points separated these students.

I am incredibly proud of the hard work and perseverance of both our students and teachers. Together, we are making mathematics a subject that inspires curiosity and fosters a love for learning, which is exemplified by the incredible project of Kuba Darowski and Stanisław Oszynski in Y10; a must-read for everyone! Here's to another year of numerical adventures and intellectual growth!

Dr Peter Kowalski

GCSE Statistics Club – Olga Stefańska (Y11)

This year, I participated in the Statistics GCSE club as an addition to the standard mathematics classes. During regular maths classes, I always felt the need for more challenging material, and the Statistics GCSE provided the perfect opportunity for this. I am confident that the knowledge I gained from this course will benefit me in the future, as I aspire to pursue a degree in biochemistry, or something related, where statistics knowledge is certainly needed. The course offered me insight into more advanced statistical concepts than those covered in standard maths, giving me tools that I can apply even in everyday life. I recommended this course to anyone who wants to be more challenged – whether you want to study Economics, Engineering or Biochemistry– I think this course is exceptionally useful for everyone.

Naboj – Zuza Malinowska (Y12)

In late April, two teams of students from our school participated in the Náboj Maths Competition. During this competition, each team began with six math problems and received a new one upon solving any of the initial questions. Despite facing disadvantages, such as our Senior team only having three students instead of five, we decided to participate and give it our best effort! The competition was intense, with challenging problems that required quick thinking under pressure and strong teamwork. Rather than focusing on simple arithmetic, the questions ranged from complicated logical problems to abstract mathematical concepts. Ultimately, our Senior team placed 111th in the country, while our Junior team placed 54th in their respective category. Regardless of the results, both teams learned the importance of resilience, effective communication, adaptability to unexpected challenges, and strategic problem-solving during the competition.

Maths Competitions – Jan Gierszewski (Y12)

In Akademeia, mathematics students can participate in various competitions and initiatives. We are presented with numerous opportunities to challenge ourselves, namely Nabój, Kangur or the British Maths Olympiad. These competitions not only test our mathematical and critical thinking abilities, but they also offer invaluable chances for growth and learning, while also providing a strong foundation for successful university applications.

Further emphasis is placed on olympiad preparation. In class, we often discuss the appropriate thinking methods for constructing proofs appropriately in olympiad questions. We are also notoriously encouraged to further pursue our mathematical skills through electives such as higher maths – finite combinatorics and probability – organised by Dr. Kysiak. There we discuss topics such as set theories, advanced probability combinations and De Morgan's laws.

This approach results in many notable achievements amongst the students, with numerous gold medals and distinctions.

Akademeia Maths League – Ksawery Dubno (Y10)

The Maths League is a competition that not only tests your mathematical skillset but also your outside-the-box thinking and work ethic. Over its 4 month duration, I have certainly been challenged countless times and feel as though my confidence and mathematical abilities have grown significantly. Winning the Maths League is a great honor and I would like to thank my mathematics teacher Dr James Poole for organizing the Intermediate Maths Challenge club which prepared me excellently for this competition. Additionally, I would like to thank my older sister Ola Dubno (Akademeia High School alumni, 2023) who first motivated me to take part in this challenge.

Maths competitions – Adam Szkaradek (Y11)

Our school offers a wide range of mathematical competitions, providing students with numerous opportunities to excel in various math contests and Olympiads. For students in Year 11 or lower, the Mathematics Department organizes the Intermediate Mathematical Challenge. Additionally, we have the opportunity to participate in Cayley, Hamilton, and Maclaurin, Mathematical Olympiads, allowing us to compete against the best math students in the UK. For students in Years 12 and 13, there is the Senior Mathematical Challenge, followed by the prestigious British Mathematical Olympiad (BMO).

Apart from these individual competitions, our Mathematics Department also enrolls us in the international Náboj competition, for which I am very grateful and have participated in for years. This team competition involves solving tasks against the clock in groups of five, offering a unique and enjoyable experience that helps build stronger relationships with school friends.

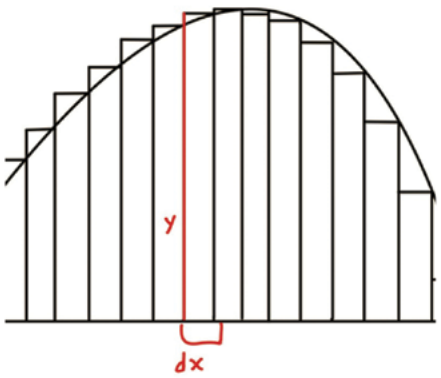
At Akademeia, there is certainly no shortage of mathematical activities. The variety of competitions is so extensive that choosing which one to participate in might be a challenge. Fortunately, our Mathematics Department is always eager to assist in making these decisions.

Jakub Darowski & Stanisław Ożyński (Y10)

Calculus in Architecture

Introduction

Throughout the project our objective was to calculate the cross-sectional area (area of the shape created when an object is cut through the middle) as well as the volume of a building. The interesting shape and history of the Sydney Opera House got us to make it the main object of our attention. We were keen on examining its unique design further and so we started looking at some mathematical aspects of its structure.



How does Integration Work?

Integration works in a way where the area under the curve is filled with tiny rectangles (disks when calculating volume) with the same width and the area of the rectangles are calculated by multiplying height by width and then summed up to give an incredibly close approximation to the area under the curve. We can see this concept visualized in the image where the curve is filled with larger rectangles.

The Formula

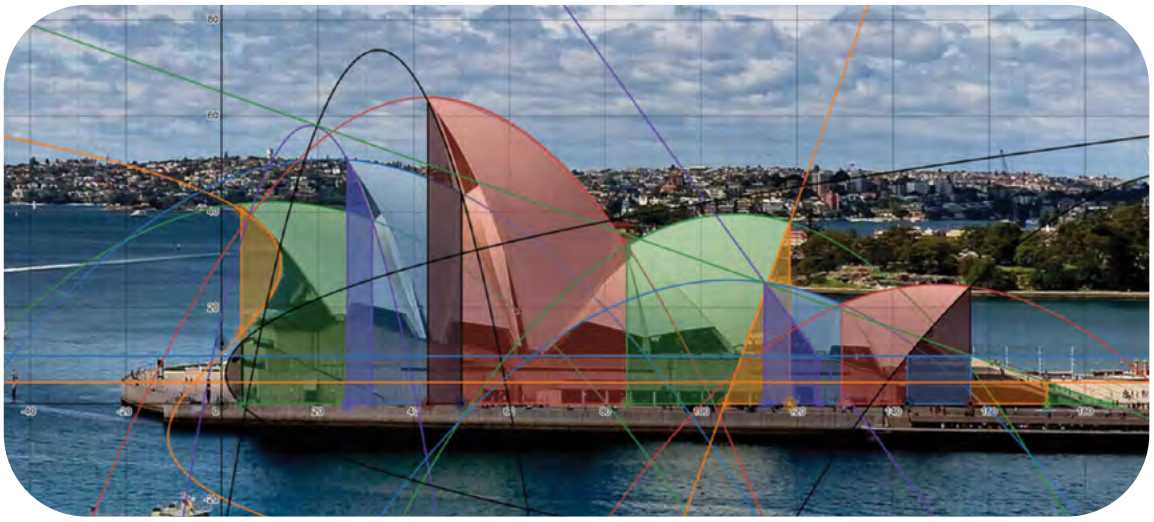
To find the area under the curve we used many different formulas however due to this being a summary of our project we are only going to show the formula we used to find the cross-sectional area. This is what the symbols in the formula mean:

= sum
a = lower limit
b = upper limit
f(x) = the equation of the line
dx = width of the small rectangles

$$\int_a^b f(x)\,dx$$

The Journey

After finding our topic we continued to the important parts of our projects which are the calculations together with the graphing of the lines needed for the calculations. To recreate the curves present on the opera house we used a graphing calculator called “Desmos” which gaves us the equations for our lines which we could use to calculate the area under the curve. After this we used the fromula for integration by inserting the formula created by Desmos into the equation and set the lower limit the beginning of the area and the upper limit which is the end of the area we wanted to calculate. The visualization of these calculations can be seen in the image below.



Results

Result for Area	Hypothesis
$5562m^2$	$6000m^2$
Result for Volume	**Hypothesis**
$206600m^3$	$225000m$

In conclusion, the project allowed us to gain a lot of insight about calculus, and to gain valuable knowledge about the Sydney Opera House. Our journey was full of ups and downs, but we managed to persevere. We also applied our results to real life by calculating how much it will coast to paint the whole Sydney opera house pink, which came out to around 84 thousand dollars. This project gave us an overview of how mathematics can be used outside the school environment. Finally, if you want to have access to our full project, be sure to check it out by scanning the QR code!

MODERN LANGUAGES

ALEKSANDRA BIŁOUS (Y13)

Letter from the Head of Department

In the MFL Department the year began with International Week 25th–29th September organised to coincide with the European Day of Languages on the 26th September. There was a treasure hunt, a competition to identify twenty of the myriad languages spoken at the school (won by Tatiana Ihnatova) and a menu of Italian, Japanese, Indian, Mexican and Greek dishes chosen by the students.

January saw our first interdisciplinary event with the Drama Department to celebrate 120 years of Chekhov's final and most famous play, 'The Cherry Orchard'. This began with a presentation on the history of the play and the innovations in Chekhov's dramaturgy and was followed by a workshop led by Mr Lenderking on psychophysicality, i.e. how individuals pursue intentions through the use of manipulation, reason and the occasional tantrum!

In May we organised a Careers' Event to highlight the many opportunities offered by modern language study and were joined by a poet and former lawyer, a language therapist, an interpreter, a curriculum policy officer, and a language software analyst.

The year ended with the annual international trips and, as ever, the MFL Department played a leading role. Beata Mroczek and Krystof Wolanski headed to Vienna, where they sampled the famous 'Sachertorte', visited the Schönbrunn Palace and Saint Stephens Cathedral, and learnt about Klimt and the famous Empress Elisabeth (Sisi). Keith Walmsley and Vladyslava Reznyk explored the twin Baltic capitals of Riga and Tallinn, kayaked around the Baltic islands and visited the Lahemaa National Park, as well as sampling medieval cuisine.

Dr Keith Walmsley

HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

APOLONIA GACA (Y13)

Project by A Level Russian Students

Russian Gaming

Благодаря нашим урокам мы получили базовые знания…

NATURAL SCIENCES
BIOLOGY

DANYLO RYSHKOV (Y13)

A year in a life of the Natural Sciences Department

2023/2024 academic year was a genuine kaleidoscope of events and achievements for Akademeia's Natural Sciences Department. Our team can be compared to a reasonably mature human being now but we never cease to develop and seek innovations. In order to reinforce that approach, we were joined by two new team members this year. Mr Hristo Stefan brought top quality, genuine passion and variety of ideas not only to the Chemistry team but also to the entire school. His involvement in the 12th of March Science Fair but also extracurricular activities and shift in teaching philosophy is exactly what we're fishing for when recruiting new staff members. We were also joined by Ms Sviatlana Volchak, our new Physics laboratory technician who brought some well-needed support to the practical lessons and equipment maintenance. She's also been providing us with invaluable 3D printing services. As every member of our Department is full of surprises, it couldn't be any different with our new colleagues – Mr Stefan's Japanese language and culture skills and knowledge combined with Ms Volchak's passion for painting gave us many more opportunities for awe. Main objective of the Natural Sciences Team is still to educate and support the development of our students and – oh – they have, as always, delivered in so many ways. From top results in the Biology, Chemistry and Physics Olympiads, through high scores (including medal) in junior Challenges, up to top quality posters, presentations and experimental stations in the annual Science Fair. Regarding the Science Fair – every year our full-day science feast gets tastier, especially due to students taking more and more responsibility for all of the components. This year two students deserve a special mention for their involvement. The last component of the Fair consisted of three mini-lectures followed by a quiz and one of the lectures was fully prepared and delivered by our own Y11's Pola and Tosia. Presenting next to myself and Mr Aksamit, they showed top quality and skills. Science Fair aside, I have way more fond scientific memories, including the stunning quality of the EPQ presentations – from the Physics of the race car design to the intricacies of HIV infection mechanisms. I also have an utmost respect and admiration for our Innovation Hub Team who keeps delivering new magazine editions filled with the essence of STEM research and experiences. Remember our Dear Students – those are not the grades or medals that make us proud of you, it's the passion and hard work you put into all the challenges that science world can throw at you.

ALEKSANDRA BIŁOUS (Y13)

Dr Jakub Mikoszewski

Biology reflections *by* Dr Jakub Mikoszewski

HANNA GOŁĘBIOWSKA (Y13)

Biology initiated 2023/2024 academic year with the usual preparation for the Winter-time 2024 British Biology Olympiad. The biggest cohort to date, including the record number of Year 11 students, worked together seminar-style on a selection of challenging, scientific articles. Our discussions and inquiries took us to topics such us intricacies of evolution, communication between the immune system and the rest of the human body, mechanisms of HIV infection, blood clotting diseases, genetics of immortality up to mRNA vaccination model and the recent Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. The award itself deserved a separate mention and our students presented the crucial findings during one of the 6th form assemblies. Our Olympiad Team's hard work came to conclusion in February with a line of great scores – seven Bronze, two Silver and one Gold Medal category awards plus large number of commendations and high commendations. Four Bronze Medal awards were achieved by our Year 11 students and that's stunning, considering the Olympiad is rooted in A Level course + the extracurricular content and those students are only about to commence their A Level adventure next year. What's however more valuable than medals is that our Bio students still use the knowledge and skills they gained in the Olympiad Club during our regular lessons – for me that's a top award. Winter passed and on a Spring Tuesday many of our students demonstrated their achievements and skills during the annual Science Fair. Biology experimental station allowed our guests to experience, hands-on, UV-induced fluorescence of oat root extract compound, shifts in lemon pectins solubility and the breakdown of proteins caused by the enzyme concealed in the pineapple cells. Science Fair's cherry on top moment came with Pola's and Tosia's mini-lecture on the impact of various pollutants on human health and environment in general. Spring kept on giving and in April our Year 12 student, Zuza Malinowska, had her critical review article on the inheritance of human mitochondrial DNA accepted for publication in the highly recognized Journal of Student Research. Both Zuza and the Innovation Hub Team keep showing on a daily basis that hard work and genuine passion can get you into places one usually associates with university-level achievements. In the meantime a group of Year 9 and Year 10 students participated in the UK-based Biology Challenge with a fully independent preparation process. Their efforts brought another round of great results with Commendation, multiple High Commendations and two Bronze Medal awards. This year – yet again – our Biology students showed that they are indeed an inspiration and quite often also genuine academic partners for our teaching staff. ◆

Student Biology reflection by Zuzanna Malinowska

KAROLINA MALINOWSKA (Y10)

This year has been remarkable for our school's biology department, marked by significant achievements and contributions to the scientific community. Students from 5th and 6th forms participated in many biological competitions, including the British Biology Olympiad and the Junior Biology Challenge. Additionally, many students pursued biology outside competitions, for example by writing scientific papers or participating in workshops.

The year began with our recently established Akademeia Science League, a monthly competition for biology, chemistry, and physics students. Students were faced with answering questions from one or all three natural science subjects, reaching far outside the A Level curriculum. From the role of fatty acids in aerobic respiration to the cellular line origin of pacemaker cells in the heart, the biology questions required us to explore the world of scientific research and use creative and critical thinking. My favorite Science League topic was the cultivation of free mitochondria since this year also marked a special moment in my biological career: I authored my first independent review paper. Titled "A Critical Review of the Inheritance of Mitochondrial DNA in Humans", my paper was published in the Journal of Student Research – High School Edition. Writing this paper, however, was not without challenges: I had to examine numerous scientific papers and present my findings concisely. Nonetheless, the project taught me invaluable lessons in time management and motivated me to further pursue scientific writing.

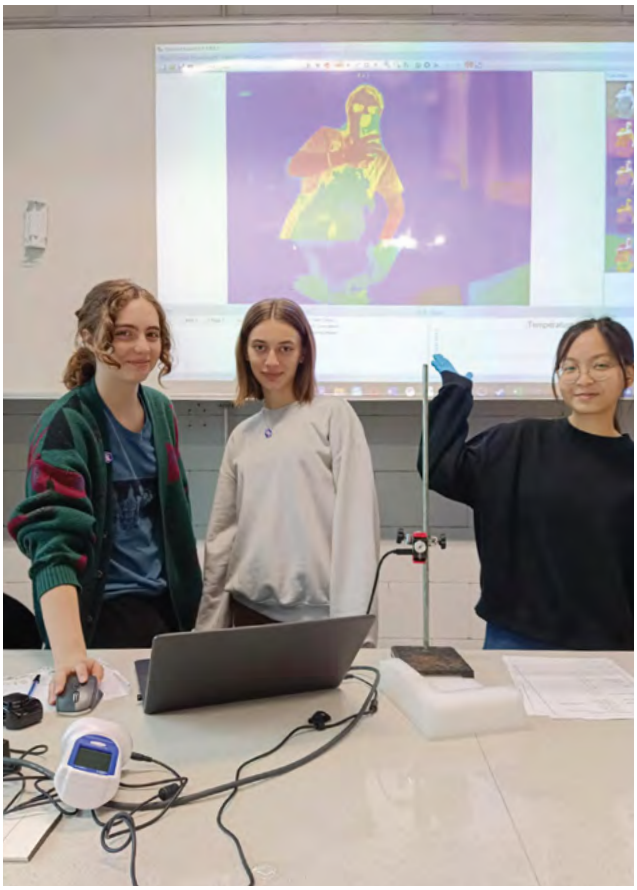
For this reason, in the second half of the school year, I refined my research skills by participating in a two-month-long scientific writing workshop led by Dr. Joanna Jurek, alongside two other students. During the workshops, we studied the concepts of structuring scientific papers and following the standards of academic integrity and style. Additionally, we learned about the importance of teamwork and effective communication in the biological research and writing process. This collaboration wasn't always easy; we encountered many problems such as meeting deadlines, efficiently distributing the workload, and choosing appropriate sources and citations. However, our diligent efforts ultimately paid off, culminating in the successful publication of our paper – "A Review: Exploring Nutrition Approaches to Improve Mental Health Among Athletes: Focus on Depression and Disordered Eating" – in the Journal of Coaching and Sports Medicine. Being a published author as a high school student feels immensely rewarding since we can truly connect with the world of scientific research!

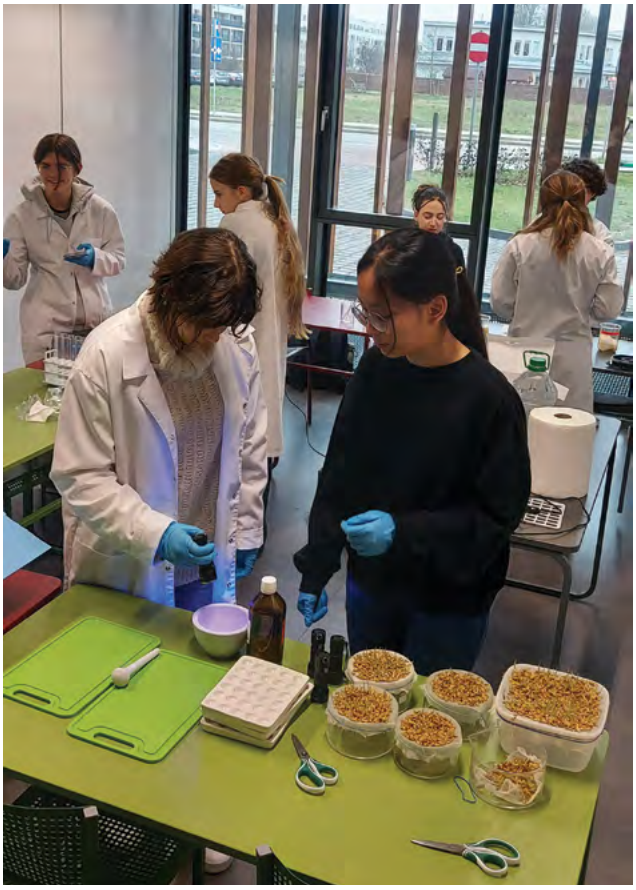
My personal experiences from this year undoubtedly helped to prepare me for future biological endeavors since I'm planning to study biochemistry or biotechnology at university. I hope the following years are equally as successful for Akademeia's biology department, characterized by growth, collaboration, and most importantly a deepened passion for science. ◆


SCRABBLE


roztwory
probówka
test tube


SHORTCUT
GENERAL
WASTE





SCIENCE FAIR

Science Fair logo
created by Milena Targańska (Y12)

NATURAL SCIENCES
CHEMISTRY

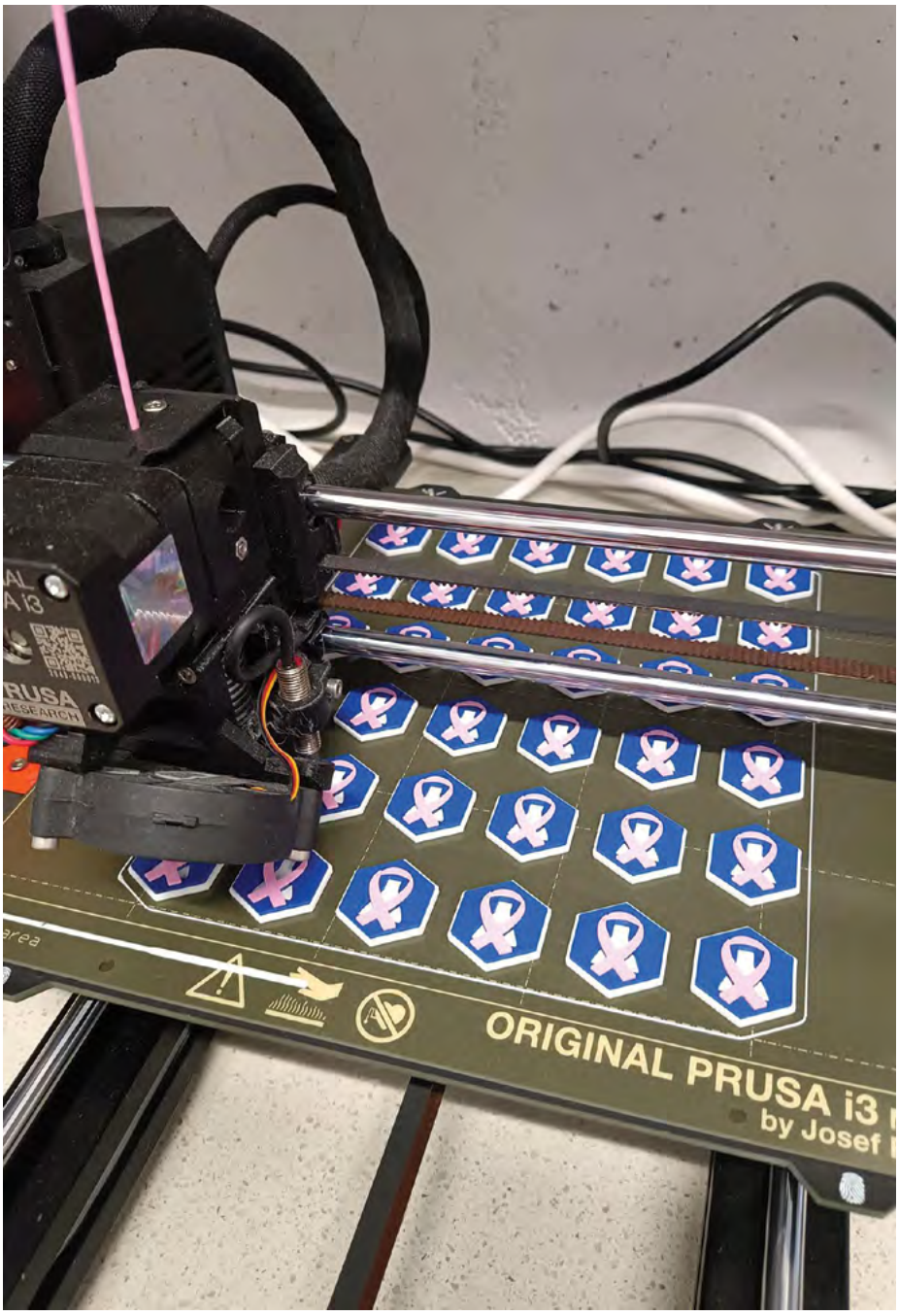
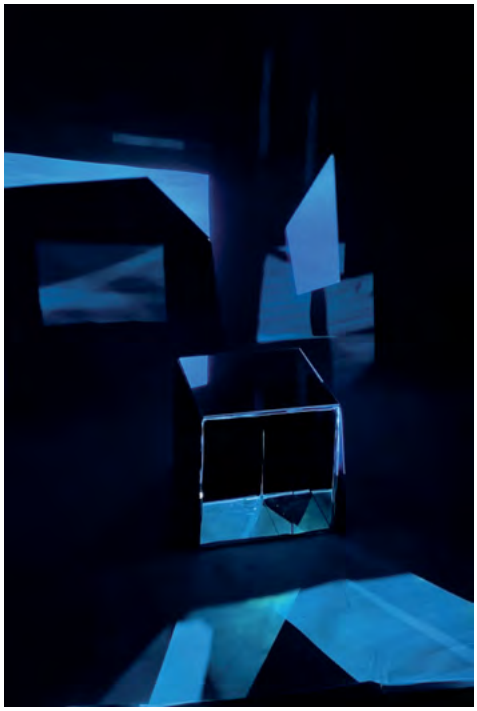


Fig. 1 Science Fair pins printed by our Physics laboratory technician, Sviatlana Volchak, on Prusa MK3 printer using PLA filaments

Letter from the Head of Department

This year our Science Fair took place in March and was dedicated to the Cancer Day which was reflected in the event's pin (figure 1) and logo. It had a lot in common with events from previous years, including a section where best Y10 independent projects were presented and a poster session prepared by our young Y9 students, inspired by created earlier science related blogs; experimental stations run completely by our students (figure 2), and some experiments (wood carving and "the screaming jelly baby" (figure 3) supervised by our teachers. There was a session where our y11 and Y12 students shared their experience and knowledge gained from their extracurricular projects, namely the RED Club, CanSat, and Innovation Hub, or research carried out by their genuine interest in a topic which will be reinforced and explored further next year.

However, 23/24 Science Fair was a unique event as a new multifaceted tool was added to it to celebrate efforts and enthusiasm of our Y9 and y10 students – The Science Fair Booklet (figure 4), thoroughly created by our young, dedicated students – an incredible memory to take away.



APOLONIA GACA (Y13)

This year we also introduced a new format for internal competition – Science League – which was open to all STEM students from both 5th and 6th Forms. Our students had a unique opportunity to explore the topics lying much beyond the curriculum and to be challenged whether in a singular or a triple science contest.

Outstanding results were obtained by our chemistry students in the UK Chemistry Olympiad, bringing gold, silver and bronze awards, demonstrating strong dedication and passion to explore new topics and approach unfamiliar problems. It is worth mentioning that this year the paper was more challenging than last year's which was reflected in the released grade boundaries with a decrease in the marks required to obtain each award.

Finally, our collaboration with the Polish public school in Ursynów has continued also this year. In April we hosted 15 pupils from grade 7 participating in the workshop on chemical gardens led by Mr Kałęcki in the chemistry laboratory. This workshop was photo documented by Zofia Michnowska (figure 5), chemistry, fine art and 3D design Y12 A Level student, whose photography works were exhibited in the school premises. It is an indispensable example of an interdisciplinary approach which we are looking forward to nourishing and developing further.

Dr Nataliya Marchyk

Zofia Rutkowska (Y9)

The school science fair began early with a buzz of excitement. The day kicked off with year 10 presentations showcasing innovative projects, from making perfume to water-powered engines. The presentations were truly inspiring and creative.

Next, it was time for the year 9 posters. Each student stood by their projects, sharing their research. My friend and I created a poster on the science behind basketball, merging our passions. We engaged visitors with a quiz, fostering interaction and sharing our knowledge.

Throughout the day, the school was filled with various experiment stations. A highlight was Mr. Hristo's "screaming jelly baby" demonstration. The day concluded with an awards ceremony and a final quiz. Overall, it was an unforgettable experience of sharing and learning about science, that I cherish.

Kamil Kowalewski (Y12)

The best memory from RED club (figure 6) that I remember is the time spent with my friends while the entire laboratory smelled like oranges and cloves during our research.

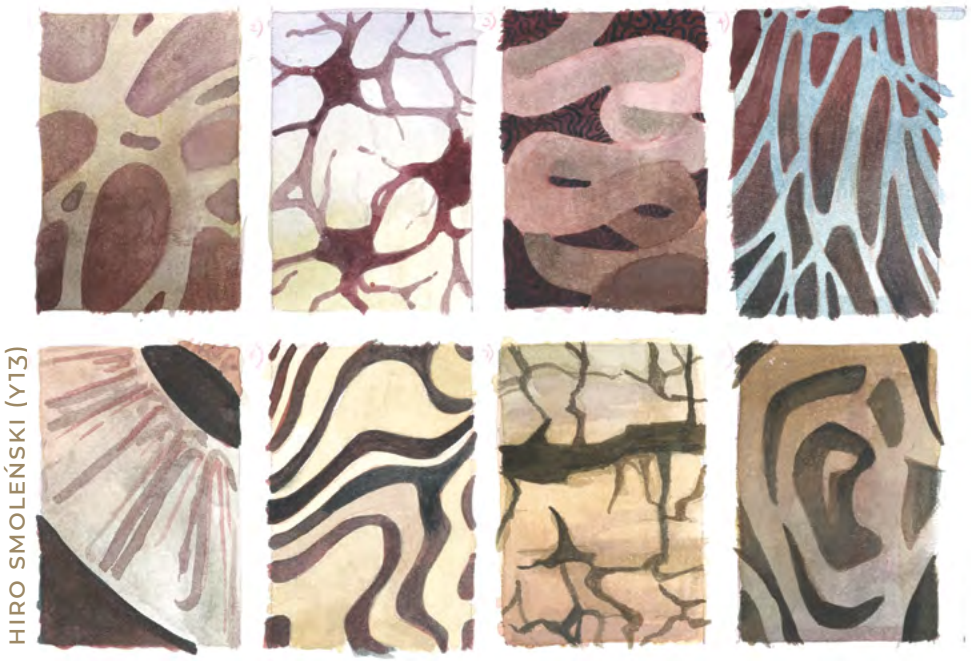
RED club is for you if you want to explore the beauty of natural sciences further and to experiment like a researcher. This year, we have grown bacteria on agar plates using samples from various water sources, such as water from a subway station and from a river. We then extracted various essential oils and tested their antimicrobial properties on the samples we produced. RED is also the place to look for research-related EC's for universities, and we're going to submit our findings to a contest called Crest Award! That's just one thing, and we can do so much more. We're open for everyone's ideas and initiatives, as well as collaboration with other departments!

Viktorie Pavlíčková (Y12)

Our lessons are intriguing, informative and always fun to attend. The teachers are very patient with us and there is always room for questions. As such there is a welcoming atmosphere in class as we help support each other whenever someone doesn't know something. Moreover, this year we were able to go on an interesting trip to the Różan Facility, which is Poland's only radioactive waste repository.

Our teachers are willing to explore extracurricular topics with us. An example of this is our most recent discussion regarding the hazardous nature of chromium (in its 6+ oxidation state). However, I would say that the most engaging part of our curriculum are the practicals which are a great way to practice our knowledge while also making the day much more entertaining.

Fig. 2 Science Fair experimental stations run by our students



HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

Fig. 3 "The screaming jelly baby" experiment run by Mr Hristo Stefan

Fig. 4 Science Fair Booklet with 44 pages, edited and compiled by Y10 students – Mikołaj Kowalczyk, Zoja Skotnicka, Zuzanna Jakimowicz and Anna Zhukovskaya

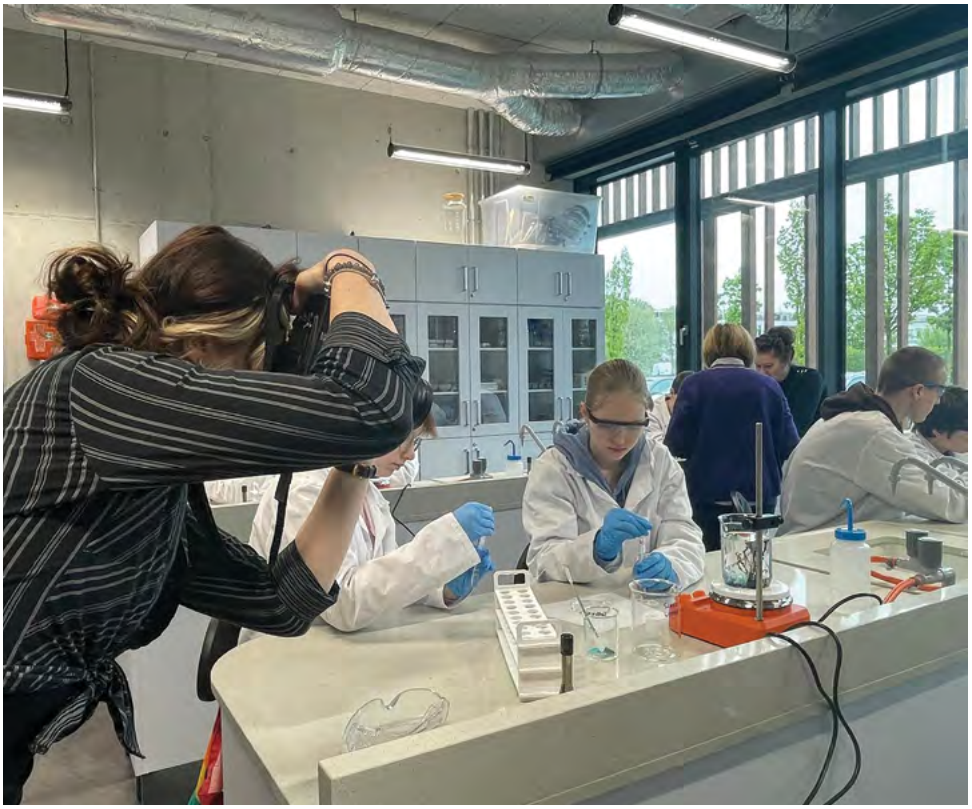


Fig. 5 Y12 student, Zofia Michnowska, is capturing in photographs the beautiful 'gardens' created by inorganic salts

Fig. 6 One of the RED meetings on solvent extraction of essential oils from herbs

NATURAL SCIENCES
PHYSICS

Physics makes you smile

The moon observed with the school telescope

Letter from the Head of Department

The life in the Physics department of Akademeia reserved also in this year many opportunities of discovering the natural world, sometimes accompanied by lot of good laughs.

In November we welcomed to the team the physics lab technician, Ms Sviatlana Volchak, who has given a massive help in carrying out practical activities in the physics lab, managing and operating the 3D printer of the school. This opened a new opportunity for students to use 3D printer and to create custom models and solutions for physics curricular and extracurricular practicals. The department has promoted extracurricular activities, offering guidance for the CANSAT competition with Maksymilian Glowacki, the Young Physicist Tournament club with Adam Markiewicz and various EPQ projects supervision physics/engineering oriented.

Students have shown a fabulous engagement in Physics Olympiads, achieving historical results in the prestigious BPhO Round One competition in November, with a Silver (Kamil Kowaleski) and three Bronze medals (Jan Gierszewski, Mateusz Wozniak and Alan Tomaszewski). In the Senior Physics Challenge in February our Y12 students have secured three golds (Piotr, Jan and Kamil) and 5 bronze (Alan, Julia, Gabriela, Wiktoria, Konstanty) medals.

The highlight of the school year has been the Radon Hunt Project, a citizen science project that aimed to assess the need to act on the levels of concentration of radon in Warsaw. It was part of the RadoNorm project, a European Union consortium from which our school received a grant under the coordination of our physics teacher Mr Aksamit. The project was carried out in the framework of a PDS project by a class of enthusiastic Y10 students, from October until March. It allowed students to develop and explore topics in the field of nuclear physics that are very advanced and exceed the iGCSE curriculum of physics. Students could explore high-tech laboratories by working with detectors and analysing water samples collected in Warsaw. Students also visited the Uranium mines in the South-West of Poland, where they learned not only physics and chemistry but also the history of Poland and the people who worked in those mines.

In term 3 the Physics Department has ignited an initiative driven by the enthusiasm of our Year 10 students. Physics teacher, Mr Aksamit, and physics lab technician, Ms Volchak, collaborated to launch an informal Electronics Club, stemming from a casual mention during a lesson on electricity. According to the iGCSE specifications, students typically wouldn't be familiar with capacitors. However, it's remarkable to see how they've progressed to requesting specific components based on their calculations, such as a capacitor with a capacity of 220 micro Farads. This new club not only highlights their newfound knowledge but also underscores their eagerness to explore Physics beyond the boundaries of traditional learning.

Dr Giovanni Peralta
Senior Physics Teacher

POLISH

"Reading increases awareness and reduces ego," said Polish Nobel laureate Olga Tokarczuk in one of her interviews. This idea is particularly close to the hearts of Polish language teachers in AHS. That's why we decided to share with you some book recommendations from our recent reads. In this way, we hope to encourage the entire school community to engage with literature regularly.

Patrycja Krysińska – Polish teacher

Antoni Słonimski
Moja podróż do Rosji

When, in the 1930s, the Soviet Union briefly "opened" to the capitalist world due to a need for economic support after unsuccessful economic reforms, foreign artists and businesspeople were invited in hopes of making them advocates for communism. They were given staged, group tours – similar to those organized today in North Korea – designed to convince them, and thereby the world, of the greatness of the utopian proletarian state. In 1932, Antoni Słonimski – a popular Polish poet, columnist, playwright, and satirist – also took advantage of this opening. Opposing the usual route set by propaganda officials, he decided to tour the USSR as an independent visitor, as much as was possible at the time.

The peculiar balancing act of the author on the thin line between faith and skepticism, idealism and rationalism, being a rebel pushing at the door and a defender, is undoubtedly a strength of the book. As Leszek Kołakowski summed up Słonimski's reflections in Moja podróż do Rosji. He very much wanted the Russian socialism to succeed, but he also saw, without a doubt, that it did not succeed."

I thought of a fascinating essay collection while discussing Skamander poetry – a literary group from the Interwar Period – with my Year 11 students. The author of Moja podróż do Rosji was part of this group, along with Kazimierz Wierzyński, Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, Jan Lechoń, and Julian Tuwim.

We now understand communism very well. Słonimski, however, still tried to believe in its noble ideals. This inner struggle of the poet, torn between being an idealist and a skeptic, is an unquestionable strength of the book.

Patrycja Krysińska

Karl Ove Knausgard
The Morning Star

"The Morning Star" (Morgenstjernen) by Karl Ove Knausgård is a mysterious novel that blends realism, horror, and philosophical reflection. The story begins when a blindingly bright star appears in the sky over a small Norwegian town, setting off a series of strange, inexplicable events. The characters, each with their own unique background and struggles, try to make sense of the situation while grappling with questions about the meaning of life, death, faith, and humanity's place in the universe.

I really enjoyed "The Morning Star", because it doesn't provide clear answers, giving it a mysterious and open-ended feel. Knausgård immerses readers in states of contemplation, fear of the unknown, and spiritual disorientation. The book demands attention, as it leaves many questions unresolved yet inspires reflection on our place in the world. It is a novel filled with an unsettling, mystical atmosphere, charged with the beauty and terror of life and death alike.

Natalia Kowalczyk

Amor Towles
A Gentleman in Moscow

I have to admit that the reason I reached for the novel written by a Boston-born writer was a recommendation of a person who, after reading this work, stated that it would be something just for me; Indeed, reading this bulky (560 pages) work turned out to be an worthwhile adventure. The main character of the story, Count Rostow – once a debonair dandy and a famous womanizer, after the victory of the Bolsheviks and the fall of old Tsarist Russia is being kept in a very specific kind of prison; he is going to occupy a small room in the luxurious Metropol Hotel in Moscow, where he had used to be a frequent visitor in times gone by and from whose edifice he will henceforth have no right to poke his nose.

This radical change, as it might seem, should be both a painful and a degrading process. Meanwhile, the Count – who will soon no longer be able to use his aristocratic title – tries to enjoy his current position as much as possible; Finally he finds time to read books that have always been put off, he gets to know the hotel edifice thoroughly – not only from the façade accessible to the public, but also from the backstage, he makes friends with its staff. All this will be crowned by him taking up the position of a waiter in one of the hotel restaurants, where he will sharpen his innate sense of observation to perfection. In time he will become a shadow that, seemingly invisible, will accompany important political figures at their meals and who will not hesitate to pull the strings where he sees fit.

Towles only seemingly lulls the reader to sleep with this story devoid of fast-paced action – at the very end it gains the pace of a thrill-

er. What will connect the former aristocrat with the daughter of a communist dignitary, who will show him all the secret nooks located in the Metropol building? How will Rostov's unfortunate feud with the rising star of Soviet cinema end? And finally – how will a distinguished gentleman come to terms with the advent of a new order when in a hotel restaurant instead of hundreds of types of wine only two will be served – white and red?

It is worth noting that Towles became thoroughly acquainted with the social changes taking place in the Soviet Union in the period from early 1920s to late 1950s. He also shows an extraordinary knowledge of Russian literature, often referring to the works of beloved nineteenth-century classics: Dostoyevsky, Turgenev and, above all, Tolstoy. Fans of such masterpieces as War and Peace or Anna Karenina will be certainly pleased with the numerous references to the characters and plots immortalized on the pages of these masterpieces.

Dr Michał Fijałkowski

Allan Bullock
Hitler: A Study in Tyranny

I first read this book at the end of primary school, and it had a great impact on me. It was the first "serious" book in my life, and I largely owe my future career path to it. Bullock's biography of Adolf Hitler not only presents the German dictator himself in a fascinating way but also explores the complex aspects of political life during the interwar period. I think the book's great value lies in how it portrays Hitler not as a demonic figure, but as a highly competent and cynical politician who knows how to manipulate public opinion and expertly identify the weaknesses of the democratic system. The book is written in an engaging style that doesn't overwhelm with historical facts but instead focuses on the human aspects of Hitler's character.

Certainly a book not just for historians!

Stefan Głowacki

Anna Bikont, Joanna Szczęsna
Lawina i kamienie. Pisarze w drodze do i od komunizmu

I recently read the book as part of my effort to understand better Jerzy Andrzejewski, one of the writers the authors aim to help us understand. What I appreciated about the book was its careful approach to authors who were drawn to the communist regime. It also examines why they later chose to reject it, exploring their motivations in a more complex way than just wanting to follow those in power. The book provides a detailed description of the historical context leading up to the communist regime in Poland, including the horrors of war and the red terror that some of these writers experienced. I preferred it over another well-known book on a similar topic because the authors are more understanding and less judgmental in their perspective.

Maria Głowacka

HIRO SMOLEŃSKI (Y13)

KAZIMIERZ DOLNY & SEJNY TRIP


WORLD SCHOOL
BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONSHIPS
THE WORLD SCHOOL
BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

SPORT

HIKING TRIPS

CHRISTMAS FAIR


AKADEMEIA
HIGH SCHOOL
wielka orkiestra
świątecznej
pomocy

WOŚP

For those graduating Year 13s who took lead roles in this year's final musical, the show marked the end of an incredible journey. Since Year 10, seven talented actors graced the stage with their remarkable voices and dedication, with some participating in as many as all five of our annual musicals. Their passion for singing and harmonizing brought magic to each performance, showcasing not only their individual talent but also their incredible ability to create stunning musical moments together. Their final show, "The Greatest Showman," was a fitting tribute to their exceptional skills and the joy they've brought to our school community, especially considering that with time and experience, they leaned into self-direction, and so their last show was well and truly their own.

Dr Adam Anders – Musical Director

THE GREATEST SHOWMAN MUSICAL

EWA RACZKOWSKA (Y13)

LEGO LEAGUE


ARADEMEIA
MEDIA SCHOOL
tick, tick... BOOM!
[Verse 1]
Yeah, I was right all along
Yeah, you come taggin' along
Exhibit A on a tray, what you say
I throw it back in your face?
Exhibit B, what you see? Well, that's me
I'll put you back in your place
Yeah, I done it before
And I can do it some more
So what you waiting
forrrrrrr?
Yeah, I was right all along
[Chorus]
'Cause I have done it before
And I can do it some more
I got my eye on the score
I'm gonna cut to the core
It's too late, it's too soon, or is it?
Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, boom!
[Verse 2]
Yeah (Yeah, yeah), I was right, you were wrong
Yeah (Yeah, yeah), going, going, you're gone
I saw you hesitating, waiting too much
Until it slipped through your hands
And then you stagger to your feet and out the door
'Cause there's no second chance (That's right)
[Chorus]
'Cause I have done it before
And I can do it some more
I got my eye on the score
I'm gonna cut to the core
It's too late, it's too soon, or is it?
Tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, boom!

END OF YEAR