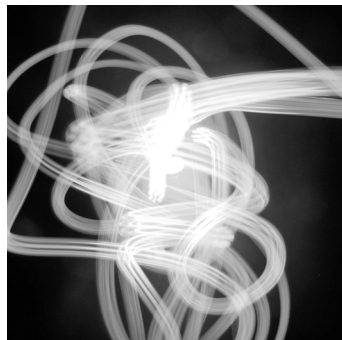
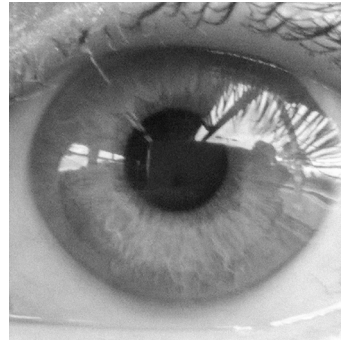




# SPOTLIGHT

STOKE NEWINGTON SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM MAGAZINE | SPRING 2016



BARBICAN | SNS DEBATES | CREATIVE DAY | SHORT STORIES

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**ON THE COVER:** A SELECTION OF IMAGES FROM PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS INSPIRED BY THE 'GLIMPSES OF THE EVERYDAY' EXHIBITION AT THE BARBICAN.



## CREATIVE DAY

Creative Day at SNS is always a day that lives long in the memory of students and staff alike. This one was no different.



## RIGHT HAND, LEFT HAND

Sixth formers were treated to a lecture from noted author, Professor Chris McManus.



## SHORT STORIES

Read two incredible short stories from Adeel and Leila in Year 8.

### Dear parents, carers, and friends of Stoke Newington School,

I am writing to refresh you about our school ethos. This seems timely as we approach our school's 35th anniversary next year – and as there appear to be possible changes of school structures ahead.

Stoke Newington itself has a long standing ethos of being home to writers, creative spirits and those seeking social reform for the wider good. Just some examples of people linked to Stoke Newington are Daniel Defoe – author, Paloma Faith, Labyrinth and Malcom McLaren – musical artists and actors, and Mary Wollstonecraft and John Howard of social reform fame. The school itself draws on this local spirit in our ethos of providing an excellent and creative education for all. We pride ourselves on our commitment to diversity and to tackling prejudice.

It is important to keep this fresh in our minds as we both look back over the past 35 years – as we will next year – and look ahead to new challenges. We will always need to be adaptable and to respond as is best

for our students to new changes, be they political or technological. However our steering emphasis will be on what is best for our students, bearing in mind the continued commitment we have to excellence, creativity and inclusion.

We will be looking to consult further on the direction we will steer through any structural changes necessary. Do look out for more information at the parents' forum

Very best wishes,

**Annie Gammon**  
Headteacher





# NEWS HIGHLIGHTS



## SNS concert at St Mary's church

A selection of Stoke Newington School's music students, at both GCSE and A2 level, were involved in the musical performances at St Mary's church last February.

The evening was dedicated to both GCSE music students, performing pieces they had worked on, and for the A2 students to hear their own compositions played before them.

The evening began with the A2 performances, the instrumentalists consisting of an assortment of professional musicians, school instrument teachers and some current students. Each piece differed from the last, some being inspired by the Baroque period where others took to Irish folk music. The Year 13 students who had been working on these compositions for several months were Alex Peake, Spencer Dent, Finn Quicke, Robbie McGrail and Georgia Stanley-Smith, with help from Owen Bourne.

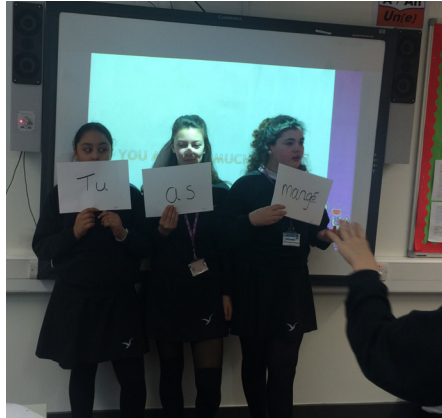
After a short interval, the GCSE performances were underway, ranging from Sir John Tavener's 'The Lamb' (which was to be performed at Sunday Mass after the night's event), and 'Roxanne', which featured Liam Stewart from the Drama department on vocals.

The evening's performances rounded off after having given GCSE students the experience of performing before a live audience, and A2 students in hearing their own pieces performed to them. For all parties involved, the evening proved a success.

## On the front cover!

Our front cover this term is a collection of images from Year 9 students inspired by a trip to the Barbican.

They visited the 'Glimpses of the every day' exhibition and then took similar images to create their own version of the work. Thank you to the Barbican for including SNS.



## French students plan their own lessons!

A huge well done and shout out to all of Miss Davidson's Year 8 French classes. Last week they worked incredibly hard planning some amazingly creative mini-lessons on the past tense to teach to the rest of the class.

One group made brownies at home (with a French recipe!) and gave these out as prizes during a translation game. Another turned a match-up activity into a rather intense competition by icing the French words on cookies.

The lessons weren't just about winning and eating baked goods though! The students produced some amazing presentations with clear explanations on the past tense, and with activities that were really useful for consolidating their knowledge. A massive well done to everyone involved again - it was great fun.

## PTA quiz raises over £300 for library books!

A hugely successful PTA quiz raised over £300 for school library books.

The money will go to re-stocking the school's recommended reading list, as well as the reading time book crates.

The evening itself was a mighty success. Taking place in the sixth form block, our quiz masters, Liz and Bev kept everyone entertained with a set of questions that was fun and challenging in equal measure.

An enormous thank you to Liz and Bev for being incredible quiz masters, and to all the companies from the local community who donated some fantastic gifts to our raffle.

Thank you to Ms Owen and Ms Samuel, who manned the bar all evening, making sure all guests were suitably refreshed. They also helped to get everything ready and tidy away.

Finally, a last thank you to Mr Davis and Mr Mitchell for providing equipment and technical support.



## Year 8 rugby girls win tournament!

The Year 8 girls rugby team entered a Haringey tournament as part of the rugby all-schools project and put in a great performance.

They played three matches, scoring 10 tries and going undefeated. They ended up winning the tournament, with Marilyn Ferizaj putting in a player of the tournament performance, scoring multiple tries and making several big tackles. Well done girls!



## SNS get bronze in cyclocross team race

A team of SNS boys won a bronze medal in a gruelling cyclocross event at Castle Manor Academy, Cambridgeshire in February.

Cyclocross is a little known sport; it is a bicycle race over a cross-country course, featuring steep hills and muddy terrain that also requires a rider to carry the bicycle over fences and up stairs.

The team, consisting of Thomas Bardill, Matthew Ventris, Jack Semper and Rudy Warren had to take part in an arduous 15 minute race on a challenging undulating course, competing against other schools.

Ms Sprakes said, "Massive congratulations to these boys for their achievements. They've worked very hard and deserve their success."



# Creative day



SNS Creative Day was an enormous success yet again this term.

Students took part in a variety of activities based on their year group. Year 8 students took part in an enormous LGBT march around Clissold Park at the end of the day.

It was the culmination of a whole day's worth of education and banner/poster making. The march received plenty of attention from park users, with a few people (and dogs) keen to join in!

The entire student body enjoyed themselves and student feedback was excellent.

Mr Cullingford said, "Huge thanks to the students who were amazing today. It's great that students are part of a such a supportive community."









**By Robbie McGrail**

The referendum for whether the United Kingdom should Brexit or Bremain in the European Union is fast approaching. The 23rd of June to be exact. There are arguments for and against on both sides - left and right, and Stoke Newington School's debate on Wednesday 16th of March shone light on these arguments.

The panellists included Roland Rudd of 'Stronger In' and Charlotte George of the Green Party, who both argued for Britain's continued membership of the EU, alongside Liam Marshall-Ascough of 'Leave EU' and Nancy Taaffe from the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC), arguing for Britain to leave the EU. Dr Schelkle, from the London School of Economics (LSE), chaired the panel.

The debate consolidated my initial view on the referendum – Britain should remain an active member of the EU. The crux of my belief is that the EU is a basis for European diplomacy on economics, climate change, human rights and a great deal of other things. And crucially, despite a small channel that separates us, we are part of Europe.

It is true that the EU has faults. Those on the right in favour of Brexit would say Britain are constrained by the unelected leaders of Brussels, restricted on immigration laws and economically held back from becoming a model like that of Norway or Switzerland. However they are forgetting the 2 million Brits abroad in Europe who would suffer from such an

exit. Or the £400 billion roughly gained in a year through trade with the EU. Though Britain may get access to EU markets, rules would have to be accepted without being a part of shaping them.

Those on the left have also been critical. Many figures I admire, from Owen Jones to Caitlin Moran, have expressed doubts about Britain's membership in the EU due to the EU's harsh austerity measures in Greece. I am equally opposed to this, but I don't believe leaving would make any difference. Would it not make more sense to stay and fix the problems in a union we are part of than to leave it as not our responsibility? What's more is the most vocal Brexit debaters are people right of centre, seeking tighter immigration laws and a British, not European, way of governing themselves. These are the ones pushing Brexit forward, with those on the left being a minority, and though it is good to consider both sides of the debate, the final verdict from the left as a whole should be to stay and fix that which we are part of.

Overall, the debate in which Stoke Newington School hosted was a success. For the most part, each speaker was able to get his or her view across without petty bickering. While it did not change my view, it did help me see a clearer picture of the other side, which everyone, regardless of their affiliation, should take the time to do. That being said, Britain is a European nation, no longer an empire, and I believe it would benefit from remaining a member of the EU.







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# The origins of asymmetry



**Year 12 & 13  
biology students  
were given a talk  
about the origins  
of asymmetry in  
brains, bodies,  
atoms & cultures**

**By Mr Lyons**

## **Are animals left and right handed? Why are most of us right handed? Is it nature or nurture?**

These are some of the questions asked, and answered by Professor Chris McManus when he visited SNS to speak to biology A-level students in years 12 and 13. Professor McManus - also a parent of current and former pupils - is a leading authority on handedness, having written an award-winning book, *Right Hand, Left Hand*.

As a former medical doctor and now professor of psychology and medical education at UCL, Professor McManus has a very broad background spanning multiple disciplines. This was reflected in his fascinating talk which looked at the concept of left and right in terms of cultures, brains, bodies and molecules.

Addressing over 100 students, including groups from Skinners and Cardinal Pole schools, Professor McManus used engaging examples and images to show that - in the words of Pierre Curie - 'asymmetry begets asymmetry'. In almost all cultures, left is associated with negative, weak and inferior while right is... well, right. Is this the reason most people are right handed, or is this because most are right handed?

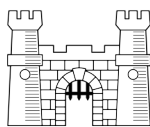
This questions of nature v nurture was partly answered by the revelation that 90% of foetuses suck their right thumbs so it must have a genetic (nature) basis. However this is not reflected in the animal kingdom where all other animals show an equal split of left and right handedness.

Other topics included the revelation that all amino acids (the building blocks of proteins) on earth are found in the left handed form. This was one of the many fascinating insights which were also very relevant to the A level curriculum.

Despite giving the talk at the end of a full teaching day - never the easiest slot - the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. One student complained that it was too short - not something one hears very often about a period 7 talk!

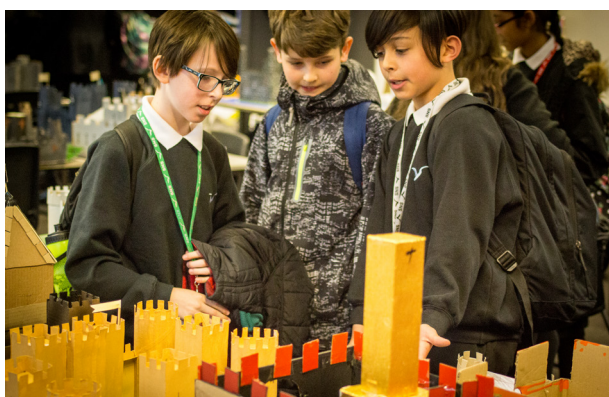
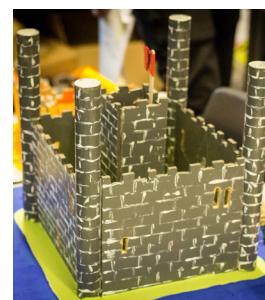
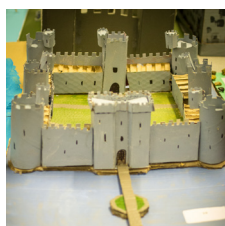
We are very grateful to Professor McManus - not least because he still came to speak despite a stinking cold. We would love to have him come back and speak, as there were so many unanswered questions. But the discussions have been continuing in biology lessons, and we hope to arrange a follow-up session.





# CASTLE SHOWCASE

THIS YEAR, OUR YEAR 7s PRODUCED SOME OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE, CREATIVE AND INGENUOUS CASTLES SNS HAS EVER SEEN IN ITS ANNUAL CASTLE SHOWCASE





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# SHORT STORIES

**YEAR 8 STUDENTS HAVE BEEN GETTING CREATIVE BY WRITING SHORT STORIES. ALL THE STUDENTS PRODUCED GREAT WORK, BUT THE STORIES BY ADEEL AND LEILA WERE PARTICULARLY OUTSTANDING PIECES OF CREATIVE WRITING.**

## **THE ENCHANTED FOREST**

By Adeel Shahzad

The enchanted forest called me into its beating heart. How could I resist the lush garden of Zeus. The deep haunting sound of its ancient song called out to me. As old as Eden the forest was still steeped in plushness and opulence.

I plunged into the wilderness. Vines hung down like severed limbs. It was not what I expected. The exquisiteness of the dawn light had not yet reached the dark, black forest. This resulted in hoods of black shadows hanging in the groves.

Coils of vaporous mist wrapped the shaggy heads of the oak trees. They writhed around them like conjurors milky smoke, sensuous sieves of mist caressed the lichen-encrusted bark. Adding its spectral gas to the damp breath of the forest, it glided with deadly intent.

Then a finger of supernal light poked through the misty mesh. It was followed by a whole loom of light, filtering down in seams of gold. Like the glow of gods, it chased the shadows, banished the gloom and spilled into spaces where the mist once stalked.

Now there were no shadows or darkness. It seemed like a place where there was no evil. White, lush mist hovered above the warm ground. Trees that once stalked you were now coated with different colours of holy fruit...it tasted better than mango and was sweeter than the ripest strawberry. What was that place? Was it heaven?



## STAGNANT WATER

By Leila Edelsztein

"Finish my painting."

Her eyeless face bores into me.

"You're not good enough, what's taking you so long?"

There's a sinking in my chest, a surge of shame. I'm not good enough. Not good enough not good-

"not good enough" she whispers. I fall to my knees.

"I need more time", I plead.

But she's gone. And there is only darkness, until there's not. I see two spheres, floating. They're eyes, beautiful eyes. The iris swims around the pupil, the colour of stagnant water, beguiling and ethereal: but with something rotten underneath.

I jolt awake, and lie paralysed, swamped in bed sheets. Fear pricks my skin and I exhale loudly into the dark room. I get up and turn on the light, and then turn it off again- immediately blinded by the spots behind my vision. The rising sun is enough to see the painting by. The painting – where do I start? It imposed itself so suddenly in my life it's become my obsession, my anguish, my frustration, the object of my nightmares. I found it in an antique shop. It stood out in the dusty little hoarder's room – something bright and strange, something from an era long forgotten.

I bought it, had to. It was extraordinary, painted with a flawless fluidity I had never seen before. However, there was something striking, something special – she had no eyes. She was unfinished – un-whole. It was not purposeful, that I could see. Yes, the artist had meant to finish. Something had stopped them. It gnawed at me, cracked into my dreams, what else could I do? I had to finish it. The girl in the painting wanted me to.

So I tried, and I couldn't. I tried again but my paintbrush wouldn't work. And all the time the girl telling me to hurry, hurry, hurry. I stare at the canvas, her face peers back at me morosely. The painting flickers. I blink, surprised, and, realising I'm probably still half asleep, shuffle to the bathroom. I turn the tap to cold and splash cold water on my face. Where mirrors should be there are black shawls pegged over the wall. No-one really gets it, but I can't look in mirrors. It's a superstition I've had ever since I was a small girl, an unjustifiable fear. Mirrors are wicked tricks of the eye. There's a Greek myth about a man called Narcissus, who fell in love with his reflection. He lost the will to do anything else and died staring at himself. I stagger feverishly back to bed, but, unable to sleep, resolved to sitting and contemplating my painting.

Dawn bleeds in to day, which gives in to night, which melts into morning. So goes a week, and then a month, and then two. Then family are calling, voices soft and worried on the answering machine. I never answer, she won't let me. So I lie in bed, wrapped in blankets, and question my existence. And then resolve my sole life aim is to finish the painting, which torments me to no end because I can't I can't I can't.

The dream never stops so I stop sleeping, and take to eating spaghetti out of the can because anything else is too much effort. My gradual degradation has affects on my appearance, unknown to me due to my dislike of mirrors – but I see the look in their eyes. Don't think I don't notice. And then, one night, my small destitute cycle of being all falls apart.

I was scrubbing the acrylic from beneath my fingernails when the shawl fell down. I had been attempting to capture the stagnant water colour of the eyes – which was so completely uncapturable that I was close to tears. The painting was perched behind me on the lip of the bathtub; the bath itself swam with motley colours, a result of my washing of the paintbrushes. And then the shawl fell down from over the mirror and I was exposed to myself, I couldn't move, I couldn't breath, I was shocked. I sidestepped to the left, observing the light falling on my face - the movement of my hair. That's when I saw it, the painting, behind me, that's when I knew. I looked from my reflection, to the painting, my reflection, to the painting, and back again. I looked into my eyes.


A small thrill went through me.



# Diary

•	23 May 16	- Year 9 parents' evening - 5.00pm-7.30pm
•	24 May 16	- Late start   school begins at 09.35am
•	30 May 16	- Half term begins
•	03 June 16	- Half term ends
•	06 June 16	- Year 6 student & parent interview week begins
•	10 June 16	- Year 6 student & parent interview week ends
•	15 June 16	- Year 7 forms N E W G H trip to Rochester Castle
•	17 June 16	- Year 7 forms S T O K I trip to Rochester Castle
•	17 June 16	- Year 10 careers networking event
•	21 June 16	- Parents' forum - 7pm-8pm
•	21 June 16	- Year 7 injections
•	23 June 16	- Year 7 injections
•	30 June 16	- Year 10 day trip to Bath
•	30 June 16	- Year 11 school prom
•	30 June 16	- Year 6 transition day
•	01 July 16	- Summer Showcase
•	06 July 16	- Year 12 induction day
•	07 July 16	- Sixth form prom
•	07 July 16	- Clubs showcase
•	11 July 16	- Year 12 work experience and music tour
•	13 July 16	- Sports awards evening
•	20 July 16	- Sports day   Years 7 & 9
•	21 July 16	- Sports day   Years 8 & 10
•	22 July 16	- Achievement assembly

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