

WINTER 2025

RISSUE

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL MAGAZINE NR. 10



DOF E

NEW
TEACHERS

TRIPS

RISSUE
REWIND

INTERVIEW WITH **DAD**

BETWEEN **RISS & UNI**



ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL



Message from the Editors-In-Chief



Mia Valla

I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to join RISSUE as the co-editor-in-chief for this school year. This year has been a significant milestone for me. Finishing my IGCSEs and moving to the IB has not been easy – and I would not have been able to be as successful as I was without the RISS community. From teachers who help make our workload feel less overwhelming, to friends who make school feel like home, RISS has become a safe space for me. I am therefore excited to be able to give back to the community, and contribute to a piece of media which ties all of us together; RISSUE.

In this edition of RISSUE, the concept of change will be talked about in all articles. This theme will be explored through many different aspects which different people in the RISS community have endured. From fashion trends all the way to personal life changes, change is a huge aspect of life which is sometimes overlooked – and which we therefore aim to highlight here.

I would like to express how grateful I am to everyone who contributed to putting together this edition of RISSUE. I would like to thank Zoe, my co-editor-in-chief, for helping me organize and create this edition. Furthermore, I would like to thank Mr. Badyna and Mr. McMinn for guiding and supporting the RISSUE team through this entire process. Most of all, I deeply thank all the writers and photographers who have worked on this project. Zoe and I wouldn't have been able to do any of this without you. We are both beyond excited to share this edition with you, and are honored to carry on the legacy of RISSUE which previous members of the RISS community have carefully crafted. Without further ado, I would like to welcome you all to this 10th edition of RISSUE.



Zoe Argo

I am excited and honoured to be joining the RISSUE team as the co-editor-in-chief for the 2024-2025 school year. I want to welcome everyone to the 10th edition of RISSUE and I hope everyone enjoys what we have compiled for this huge milestone. In this edition we wanted to highlight the theme of change, as we all experience it and deal with it in different ways. I myself went through the huge change of moving to the Netherlands this summer and starting at RISS. I am extremely grateful for how RISS has welcomed me with open arms and I am ecstatic for the opportunity to give back to the school community.

In this issue you will explore the concept of change through various lenses including changes to the teaching staff, changes in fashion, and changing hair.

On behalf of the RISSUE team I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who helped make this edition possible. I would like to thank Mia, my co-editor-in-chief, for helping me organize and put together this edition. I would also like to thank Mr. McMinn and Mr. Badyna for supporting the team and overseeing the entire process of the magazine coming together. I would like to thank all the writers, photographers, and everyone else who contributed to RISSUE. Lastly, I would like to thank the overall school community. RISSUE would not exist if it had not been for everyone's continued support, and I hope that we can continue to exceed the already established standard.

Mia Villa and Zoe Argo



MESSAGE FROM MS. DU PLESSIS



It is a delight to be asked to contribute to RISSUE: our student-led magazine which encourages and celebrates the voice, agency and creativity of our students. For this issue, I have been asked to contribute a message on the topic of change: change is ironically the one constant in life, and there are few places in which it is as visible as in a school community! Young Grade 6 students hesitatingly start on their journey of high school and then, seven years later, confident adults or near-adults stride out into their own future after Grade 12. The educational experience, which allows this growth and development of our students, is one that should be responsive to the evolving contexts of the world outside, and that should be meaningful and engaging, so that we can fulfil our mission of “educating our students for self-awareness, curiosity and integrity in a changing world”.

Celebrating and Managing Change

Our core values at RISS – Relationships, Courage, Respect and Responsibility – are always a good place to begin when considering our approach to change and growth, as at RISS we firmly believe that these values should be actively lived by – and not just mere slogans on the wall.

Our committed and caring teachers, who invest in the relationships and care of our students while being innovative and critical educators, are the cornerstone of the school's success and its ability to manage change and support growth. The other equally important partner is our student community which embraces and furthers the students' own growth and development, both academically and socially-emotion-

ally during their time with us.

Building and maintaining relationships is crucial to helping manage change – here at RISS and elsewhere. As an international school, RISS knows how challenging a change of school, country and environment can be for so many of our students, and it is part of our mission (and privilege) to support our students and families in managing these changes. Open, responsive communication, turning up and seeing each other in real life – not through devices and social media – is one of the mainstays of our approach at RISS while helping each other cope with change. Having people around you to help process change(s) and support you – through either actions, talk or just presence – is vital, and we are truly thankful for our RISS community which acts as a critical and

EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS FOR SELF-AWARENESS, CURIOSITY AND INTEGRITY IN A CHANGING WORLD

The status quo often feels safe, but not changing can have dire consequences. This is where courage is so important. I am sure many of you have seen the quote by Willem de Kooning on the Willem de Kooning Art Academy near Blaak in Rotterdam: “I have to change to stay the same”.

This seemingly simple quote succinctly reveals how stagnation or avoiding change is fatal and can lead to regression and losing yourself, instead of progression. Sometimes change entails taking huge steps and making drastic decisions, but often small incremental changes (the so-called 1% changes) can be just as efficient in challenging and changing the course of your life or school. One of the tools we use extensively in school – and teach our students – is the continuous cycle of inquiry, action and reflection; evident especially to our IB students with the service learning cycle (investigation, preparation, action, reflection and demonstration).

Here at RISS, we consistently use this approach to critically reflect on our processes and approaches to see how we can remain critical and reflective when it comes to our actions and processes, and to encourage the implementation of those seemingly tiny marginal 1% gains, which can lead to huge and effective changes in the long run. It requires dedication to one's values and truths to reflect bravely on how things could be done better. Some of the small tweaks we have already made at RISS are our approach to target setting in Grade 6, our system of using and implementing student data, the updating of our safeguarding policies, adding new parent meet-up opportunities to our school calendar, redesigning our student leadership structures, and developing a gifted and talented provision in school – to mention a few.

All these changes always happen with the input of our whole community, and we appreciate the insight and support the community has given, as it has helped us change and improve our practices, while adhering to the intrinsic goals of our school's mission and vision.

Our CIS/NEASC reaccreditation process and outcome was an unequivocal success. The school community, particularly our teachers, worked diligently and passionately to present a

transparent, proud, and reliable account of our mission to the evaluators, students, and families. We embraced every challenge posed by CIS/NEASC, emerging with the knowledge that our past five years represent a history of consummate dedication to our work and the belief that this profession is not just a job but a true vocation and an inner calling to assist others, especially young people.

Our reaccreditation, granted with immediate effect, is a significant achievement that few institutions manage to secure so swiftly. This qualification does not mean we can rest on our laurels; rather, it marks a new beginning that calls for celebration and a renewed commitment to refining our practices. It also urges us to confront and address emerging issues within a rapidly changing world. I am confident in RISS' ability to rise to these challenges and continue its journey of excellence.

All these changes always happen with the input of our whole community, and we appreciate the insight and support the community has given, as it has helped us change and improve our practices, while adhering to the intrinsic goals of our school's mission and vision.



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COLOPHON

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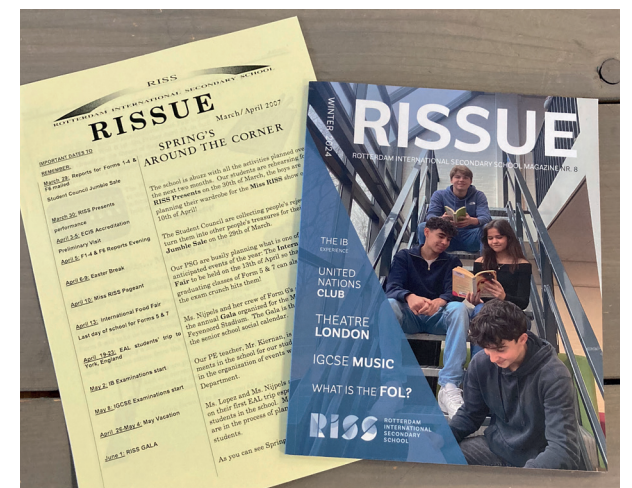
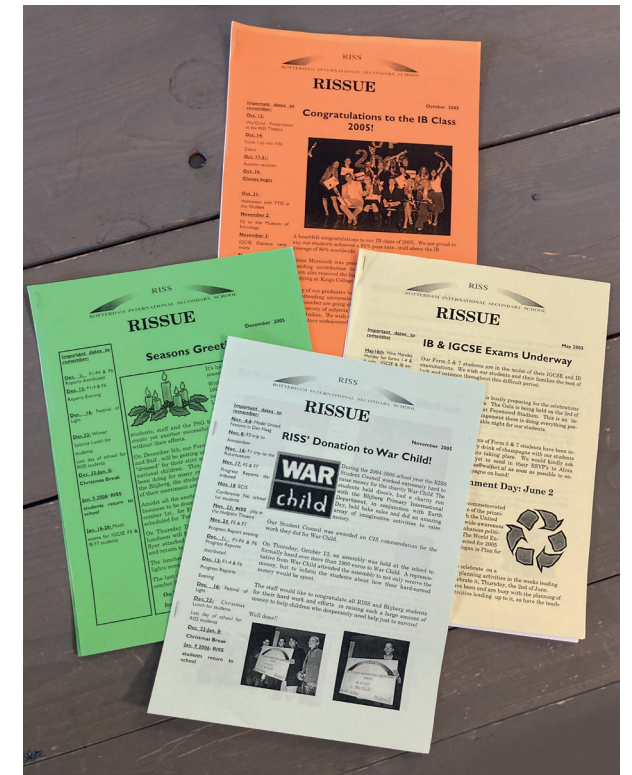
RISSUE Rewind

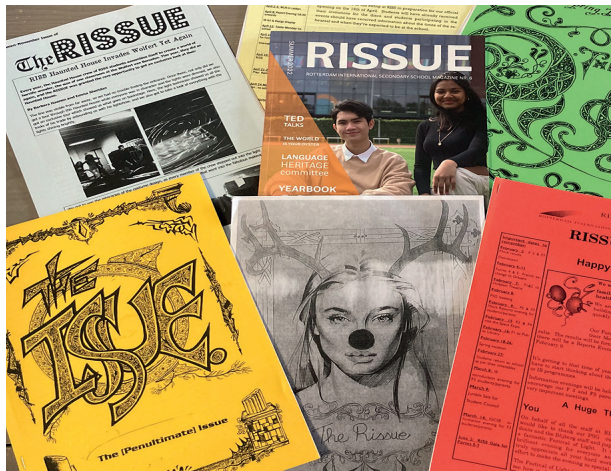
A LOOK BACK AT OUR SCHOOL'S MAGAZINE

I'm sure most of you are already familiar with our magazine; maybe you have heard of it from teachers or fellow students, or maybe you've seen it lying around in the JC lobby. RISSUE has been around for quite some time, however it has probably been around for longer than you think. After Ms. Bier kindly allowed me to have a look at the folder of past editions that is kept safely by her in the SC library, I was shocked to learn about our magazine's extensive history and how much more there is to know about our school.

Our magazine's history is closely tied to the story of RISS itself. Our school didn't have its own building until 2004. Before then, it was a small program called 'English Stream'; part of the Wolfert van Borselen school, which in 1988 had only 48 students. Surprisingly, RISSUE documented this journey from the start. One of our older editions includes an article covering the milestone of RISS finally getting its own building. This article, entitled "WE'RE IN!!", was published in January 2004, right after the JC building opened.

Following that edition, our magazine has released many others. Reading through all the different articles and editions I got a much better idea of what RISS was like in the past, and how many things have or haven't changed. So I thought I'd share some of the things I found while looking through all the different editions of our magazine.

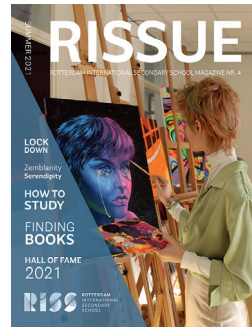
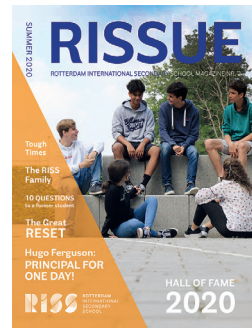
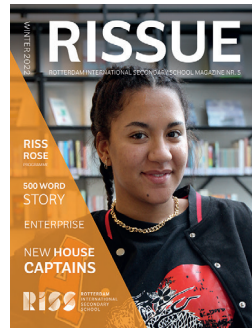




The first thing I noticed was how much our magazine has improved in quality throughout the years. In the editions from the 2000s, the magazine was just a bulk of printed pages stapled together. The cover page didn't exist in the first editions and the magazine would just start right away with an article. However, as time went on, past students started getting more creative with their front pages, starting with putting the name of our magazine in a very dramatic and strong font with a bright colour in the background. The cover page wasn't the only thing that improved, the quality of pictures has improved drastically throughout the years, along with its shift from black and white photos to coloured ones.

It's very clear that even in the past our school was very proud of its events, as in every edition that I looked at, there was at least one article about a school event. Some of these events you are all familiar with, such as the Halloween Disco and the Festival of Light. However, there are some I'm sure you have never heard of, such as the Beauty/Drag contest which was called "Miss Riss". Students back then really knew how to have fun, however they also knew the importance of serious topics, as some editions discussed feminism, some the war in Syria and some child hunger and poverty. It was very interesting to see how much – or how little – things have changed over the past decade. For example, some teachers that you currently all know and love were part of the RISSUE in the past, such as Ms. Christoffelsz and Ms. du Plessis.

Overall, we should be very proud of how far our school and magazine have come since RISS got its first building. We should also appreciate how much things have changed for the better throughout the decade.



New Faces, New Perspectives

MEET THE TEACHERS OF ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

By Peter McMinn

Change and Adaptation

■ **Can you tell us a little about your teaching journey? Where did you teach before joining us at RISS?**

Previously, whilst living in Melbourne, I taught at Cheltenham Secondary College in 2018 and 2019. In 2020, I moved to the Netherlands, where I taught at Wolfert Tweetalig until 2023.

■ **What's been the biggest change for you in moving to Rotterdam or starting at our school?**

I think the biggest change has been getting used to the way things are structured with IB at the RISS, which is very different compared to the Dutch education system. Another difference is that the number of students at RISS is much smaller than I am used to.

■ **Is there something unique about Rotterdam or our school that surprised you when you first joined?**

Something unique and special about RISS is the tight-knit staff that have been very welcoming and made me feel right at home.

Fun Facts and Hidden Talents

■ **Do you have any unique talents or skills that might surprise us?**

I have a unique talent of playing a sport: Australian Football. In fact, there is an Australian Football competition in the Netherlands with three teams.

■ **What's one unusual or quirky thing about you that not many people know?**

I love drinking water. I usually drink more than five litres of water per day.

■ **What's something on your bucket list that you haven't done yet?**

I enjoy travelling and doing activities in nature. Something that I would love to do involves going camping and hiking in Iceland, or going to Patagonia in Chile.

Inspirations and Passions

■ **What's one book, movie, or song that has deeply impacted you? Why?**

Gladiator – this is my all-time favourite film. Maximus is a very inspirational leader and has an important message: true leadership is about respect, loyalty, and standing by your values, even in the face of immense adversity. The way he inspires people around him, not just by his skills but by his honour and integrity, is incredibly moving.

■ **Who has been a significant inspiration in your life or career?**

There have been many people who have provided me with inspiration and support in my life. Both of my parents have been incredibly supportive and I wouldn't be where I am today without them.

■ **If you weren't a teacher, what do you think you'd be doing instead?**

I would be a farmer. I grew up on a farm 500 km north of Perth which is where my family still lives. My father still works there with my brother, who is now a fifth-generation farmer.

For this edition of RISSUE with the theme of change, we're spotlighting the new teachers who have joined the RISS community. We all know that a new school year brings change, growth, and fresh ideas. So, let's dive into what our new teachers bring to the table – both as educators and as individuals!

Chris Carson



New Faces, New Perspectives

MEET THE TEACHERS OF ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

‘I was so surprised by how friendly and approachable the people working here were.’

Semra Ozal



Change and Adaptation

■ **Can you tell us a little about your teaching journey? Where did you teach before joining us at RISS?**

Before RISS, I taught mathematics at an IB school and before that I taught at an international school in Turkey. This academic year is my eighth year of teaching.

■ **What’s been the biggest change for you in moving to Rotterdam or starting at our school?**

Since I only arrived in Rotterdam in August, I don’t have detailed knowledge about the city, but the weather has definitely been a big change for me. However, since I previously lived in Istanbul, it is very enjoyable to bike around the city and have a coffee at a café within walking distance. So far, my favourite place has been Het Park.

■ **Is there something unique about Rotterdam or our school that surprised you when you first joined?**

When I first joined RISS, I was so surprised by how friendly and approachable the people working here were. I also really appreciated how they asked detailed questions to get to know me and listened to my answers with genuine interest.

Fun Facts and Hidden Talents

■ **Do you have any unique talents or skills that might surprise us?**

I sang Macedonian songs in a choir for one year when I was at university, and I was quite good at it.

I won’t be modest, cooking is my other talent

■ **What’s one unusual or quirky thing about you that not many people know?**

I can cry anytime I want (of course if I am in an environment where I can focus on it enough)

■ **What’s something on your bucket list that you haven’t done yet?**

For sure; solo travel.

Inspirations and Passions

■ **What’s one book, movie, or song that has deeply impacted you? Why?**

Book: Gunduz Vassaf – A Praise of Hell

Movie: Yorgos Lanthimos – The Lobster

■ **If you weren’t a teacher, what do you think you’d be doing instead?**

A farmer, or something related to the land.

‘The school is a lot smaller than what I am used to, and I really enjoy it. It is a lot easier to get to know everyone and I feel right at home.’

Daphne Krepel



Change and Adaptation

■ **Can you tell us a little about your teaching journey? Where did you teach before joining us at RISS?**

I have been a Dutch teacher for almost nine years now. I started teaching at OSG Hugo de Groot (Rotterdam-Zuid) then went to Wolfert Tweetalig (your neighbours). I took a little detour to the Amsterdam International Community School, and now I am happy to be a part of RISS.

■ **What’s been the biggest change for you in moving to Rotterdam or starting at our school?**

The school is a lot smaller than what I am used to, and I really enjoy it. It is a lot easier to get to know everyone and I feel right at home.

■ **Is there something unique about Rotterdam or our school that surprised you when you first joined?**

I grew up in Zeeland on a farm. Rotterdam is the city I moved to after high school, and moving from the countryside to the city has brought so many surprises. I love that there is always something to do or see in the city, which is very different from my small village. In fact, there is still a lot to do and see, even though I have been living here for nine years.

My favourite spots in the city are: Comedy Club Haug for a fun evening, By Jarmusch for some great pancakes, Het Park to relax when the weather is nice, Koekela for some great pie (especially the lime pie), and in the winter I love to go ice skating at De Schaatsbaan. And of course I love my gym, Haven BJJ, where I practise Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (and you can too if you sign up!).

Fun Facts and Hidden Talents

■ **Do you have any unique talents or skills that might surprise us?**

There is never a moment when I can show this particular talent, but I can ride a uni-cycle!

■ **What’s one unusual or quirky thing about you that not many people know?**

I broke my arms four times... (twice left, twice right) and I once choked on my braces (which I had to go to the hospital for).

What really relaxes me, is working with iron-on beads. It is marketed for children, but I have found it is also very entertaining for adults. Here is some stuff I have made!

■ **What’s something on your bucket list that you haven’t done yet?**

I would love to go skydiving one day, even though it also frightens me.

Inspirations and Passions

■ **What’s one book, movie, or song that has deeply impacted you? Why?**

Ever since I was a kid I have loved to read. Every comic book/magazine/novel has brought me something, such as a new perspective, empathy or just laughter. Some books which I love: A Little Life, And the Mountains Echoed, A Thousand Splendid Suns, and HHHH.

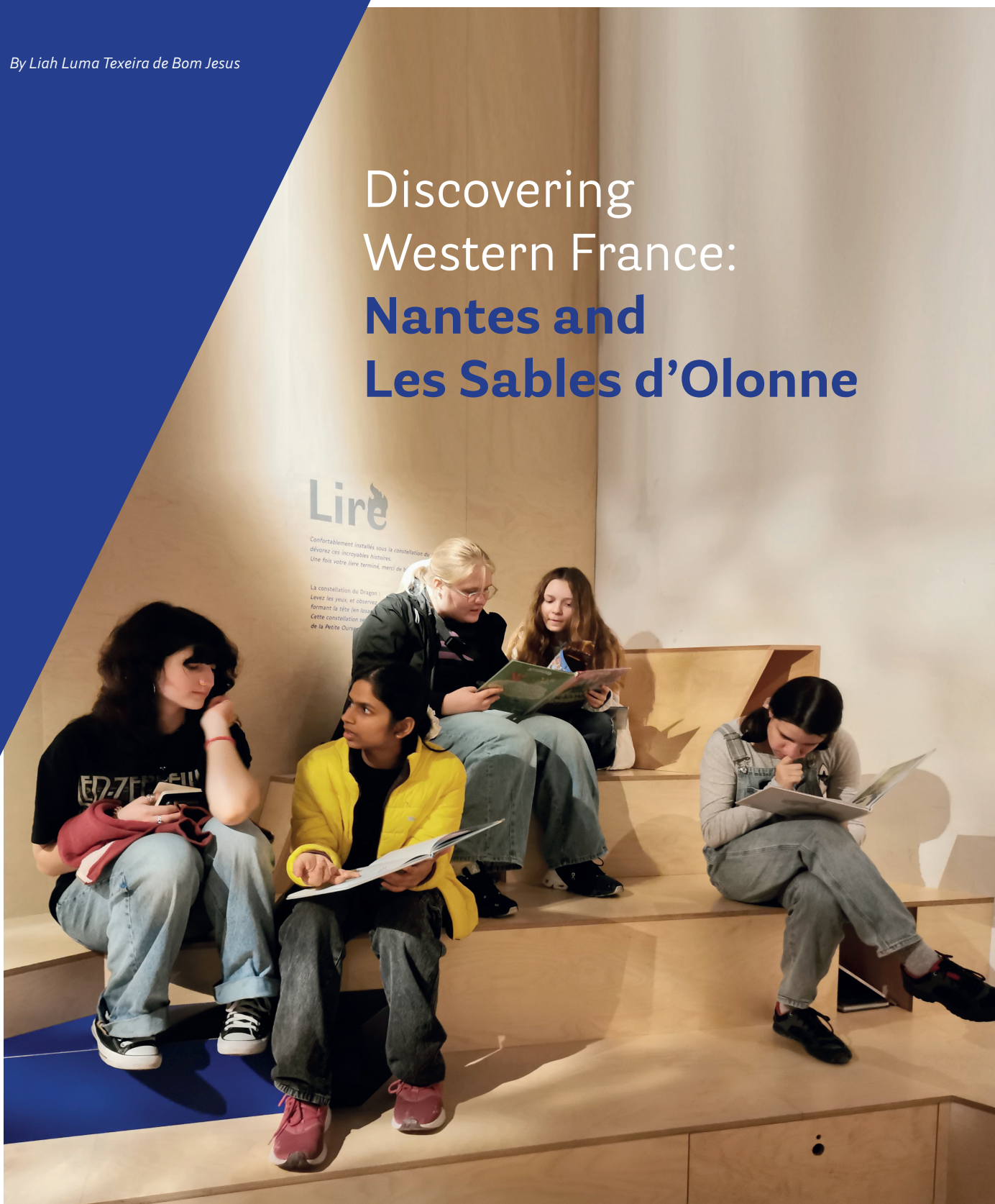
■ **Who has been a significant inspiration in your life or career?**

I get a lot of inspiration from family and friends. Everyone inspires me in their own, unique way. And, of course, my students also inspire me in various ways!

■ **If you weren’t a teacher, what do you think you’d be doing instead?**

I have always had a dream of being a tv-host for either Het Klokhuis or Het Jeugdjournaal. Het Klokhuis is a Dutch informative tv-show for kids and Het Jeugdjournaal is a Dutch news channel for kids.

Discovering Western France: **Nantes and Les Sables d'Olonne**



On the 5th of October, seven Grade 10 and 11 students who study French at RISS, and Ms. Ternieden, left to go to France. We arrived at Nantes, a city in France, and we met up with Mr. Morilleau, a geography professor at the Lycée Rosa Parks, our partner school. He showed us around the city of Nantes and the Castle Des Ducs de Bretagne. We learned about the history of Nantes and other interesting facts about the city, such as that the LU biscuits were created in Nantes and that the queen, Anne de Bretagne, was married to two French kings.

After walking around the city, we had dinner at a place that offers different foods from around the world. For example, Italian, Mexican, Greek, South American, Cambodian, French, and Korean. This way each of us chose the cuisine we liked.

The next day, the 6th of October, we went to the tourist office to hear about different things we could do in the city. We met up with Ms. Gautier, who lives in Nantes and who accompanied us on our discovery of the city.

We went to the castle again but this time we visited the museum located within it. Inside the castle were many different rooms and each one of them had different information about the history of Nantes. We saw many paintings, weapons, sculptures, models of the city, and clothes, all from 1495 up to today.

After visiting the castle, we had lunch at a crêperie, which serves French crêpes called galettes. It was very nice to be able to taste a traditional French dish. Then we visited the memorial of the abolition of slavery. We learned about the slave expeditions that left from Nantes, and saw the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in many different languages.

We also visited Les Machines de l'île, which had a lot of mechanical animals. We saw a machine elephant that is 12 meters tall, 21 meters long, 8 meters wide, and weighs 48 tons. And it can move and function as a living elephant. Sadly, we didn't get to see the elephant moving, but it was still nice seeing all the machine animals.

On the 8th of October we went to visit Les Sables-d'Olonne, which is a coastal city. We visited the port of Les Sables-d'Olonne and saw many fishing and sailing boats. We also saw the

place where the Vendée Globe, a sailing race, starts every four years. The world record for the fastest time in this race is 74 days, 3 hours, and 35 minutes. We walked along the beach of Les Sables-d'Olonne – it was very pleasant, even though the weather was windy and rainy. We saw some beautiful mosaics created only with seashells, different fish and many sea creatures. We also took a boat ride which was very fun, albeit short.



New Hair: New Me

By Vidhi Singhi

Last night, inspiration struck you. You lay awake until 3 AM, thinking about all the new things you're going to start doing and all the goals you're going to reach. You're ready to be a new person, but before you start, there's one thing that must be done...

YOU HAVE TO... CUT YOUR OWN BANGS. THERE, NOW YOU'RE READY!

Does this story sound familiar? You make a plan to start changing your life, but the first thing that has to change, is your hair. It's certainly familiar to me, as someone who's cut her own bangs numerous times, thinking I was going to change my life afterwards.

When we imagine personal change, the first thing that comes to mind is big life changes: changing your job, moving cities, starting new relationships. We consider personal change as moving forward, from the old to the new. We typically adjust our behavior, our actions, and our attitudes when encountering new experiences in life. Isn't it interesting that we also tend to change... our hair? Whether that means cutting your hair, dyeing it, or changing your hairstyle: one way or another, people adjust their appearance.

To find out about this phenomenon in our own school community, I spoke to people from RISS to find out more about their experiences with life and hair changes:

Have you ever made any large changes in your hair following life changes? If so, what were they?

■ "Not really. I've pretty much always had long hair. It's part of my personality. My hair was shortest when I was six years old."

■ "Yes, I have. I used to have short hair that was down to my shoulder when I was a new student at RISS. After exams, I colored my hair with highlights and my hair is now down up to my chest and it's the longest it's been since I was 11 years old."

Do you believe that hair is a form of self-expression?

■ "I think that, like clothing choices, for some people hair helps them to express themselves, their identity, and/or to identify with a particular community, such as for religious reasons, or other social groups."

■ "I believe that since hairstyles can come in various styles, it is a form of self-expression. People can be classified into different groups because of how their hair is styled or how it looks. On the other hand, hair also helps individuals present themselves, as the way they style it can contribute to their confidence."

How do you feel emotionally after making changes to your hair?

■ "I think that changing hairstyles can be exciting and give people confidence. For example, people can change 'who they are', or feel that they are following a particular fashion trend by having a certain hairstyle."

■ "It feels refreshing as it indicates sort of a new beginning to me. Sometimes I feel negative towards it because I am not used to the way it looks on me, but over time I am generally happy about the changes that I have made, because I feel confident."

Do you believe your hair plays a role in how others perceive you?

■ "I think that some people in our society can have bias towards certain hairstyles and make assumptions about people based on their hair style/color. This can be exemplified by the rules in some schools, such as hair must be tied back, no dyed hair, or no 'wild' hairstyles. I have heard of students being excluded from schools (not RISS!) because of their hair choices. I have also noticed a change in society and the media towards women embracing their grey hair and it becoming almost fashionable, rather than women always having to dye their hair."

■ "In a way, yes, since hair is one of the first things that people see when they see me. If my hair is messy or unorganized, I think it makes me less confident. Conversely, if I fix it or style it, it gives my self-esteem a boost. However, I also think that hair isn't noticed unless the change is obvious, so I think it depends as well."

Hearing from others in the community, I think we can say that hair does hold considerable power in how we're perceived by others, and how we perceive ourselves. Even if someone doesn't change their own hair often, we are inclined towards making snap judgments about others based on their hair, even going as far as to categorize people into particular groups based on their hairstyle. But what explains this phenomenon? After all, there are other physical aspects of others that also hold meaning, such as their clothing and accessories. So why is it that we are so drawn to hair?

In 1958, Dr. Edmund Ronald Leach, a British anthropologist, published his essay *Magical Hair*, which focused on the symbolic significance of hair. According to Dr. Leach, hair acts as a "means of communication" (148) between an individual and their community, in order to provide insight about the individual. He further proposed that people belonging to the same culture can use hair in order to convey information about an ongoing ritual, using the example that Trobriand Islanders, when in mourning, undergo a "complete shaving of the hair of the scalp" (152). The study goes on to analyze the significance of hair in different Eastern cultures and religions, specifically how stages of development within a particular system can be seen through changes in hair.

Therefore, according to anthropology, not only do changes in hair help us feel more confident and like we fit in, they also provide us with a means to communicate with those around us. It's no wonder that in modern society, we associate life changes with changes in hair, as it's embedded in our culture!

So the next time you're feeling blue, or feel the need for a confidence boost, don't hesitate to change up your hair. Not only will you feel better, those around you will know to expect a new, fresh version of you!

Hey, Look Out...

Baggy or skinny, boots or sandals, denim skirts or cargo pants?! It is okay if you feel as lost as I do. Fashion in 2024 has turned into a jungle of new trends, the Amazon rainforest of clothes. Every minute that passes we are bombarded by another new fashion style, such as 'Y2K', 'streetwear', 'classy style' or even 'grunge'. How do we find our way in such a changing world of fashion? Well, in order to do that we must explore the past for a moment and trace back our steps from the start. And to keep track of the change in fashion, it is fundamental to first understand how fashion trends evolved.

■ 1900-1910

As the Victorian era drew to a close, the beginning of the 19th century was full of elongated, detailed dresses and luxurious suits that varied according to the formality of the occasion.

MEN'S wear: Like most of the first half of the 20th century, men's fashion moved much slower than women's. There weren't great changes to the trends in men's wear, but rather subtle changes in details and accessories. A basic look would be composed of homburgs (a type of hat), suits, neckties (which had a pop of colour in informal occasions!), and coats.

WOMEN's wear: On the other hand, women's wear progressed much more quickly. With the objectification of women's bodies at the time, the clothing trends mainly followed the objective of having an 'S' silhouette, which connotated 'health'. This meant that a basic look was composed of tight corsets over layers of long skirts, and voluminous dresses decorated with ruffles, buttons and lace inserts.



■ 1920-1930

World War I was over; freedom, celebration, and frivolity ensued, and young people simply enjoyed being able to live their lives. People wanted to dress up again. Along with partying and dancing, fashion was rapidly evolving, marking the rise of consumerism.

MEN'S wear: With the rapidly changing market, men's wear started to take a more sophisticated turn. Suits accentuated the natural waist, and were mainly made of sheep's wool. The most popular hat was a fedora hat, which is still quite popular to this day. Moreover, neckties were no longer popular and removable shirt collars were more in.

WOMEN's wear: By the 1930s, women's clothing was leaning more towards a straight or even more natural silhouette, becoming more feminine – with cut dresses that showed off the feminine figure. Corsets were exchanged for hemlines, dresses were no longer voluminous, hat styles switched to more luxurious cloche hats, and pearls were frequently used.



Another Fashion Trend!

By Sofia Queiroga

THE HISTORIC TIMELINE OF FASHION TRENDS: 1900'S TO 2000'S

■ 1940-1950

The 1940-50s were an eventful time in history, not only because of World War II (and its end), but also significant changes in technology, pop culture, and society – all of which made a significant impact on clothing.

MEN'S wear: For men, the new fedora hat was replaced by the 'pork pie hat' although the 'homburg' hat was still quite popular. Eyewear was a new trend that was coming into style, where wide-frame spectacles were the more popular option. Stripped cotton shirts and suits were also in, with a boxier style and more shoulder padding.

WOMEN's wear: The 1940-50s were an era in which women celebrated their femininity and a ladylike elegance. Now, with a feminist upturning, dresses and skirts ended right below the knee. Pants with high waistlines and wide leg openings were also very popular, together with blouses also very popular, together with blouses. Pants with high waistlines and wide leg openings were also very popular, together with blouses with vibrant colours and floral patterns. Formal dresswear frequently had pointy shoulder pads.



■ 1960-1970

This era brought wars but also saw the rise of pop culture, great social movement, scientific discoveries (like the moon landing), and an emphasis on self-expression. So, as people increasingly wore what they wanted, this greatly affected the new upcoming fashion trends.

MEN'S wear: For men in the 1960-70s, there was essentially no set uniform. We see the rise of the Peacock Revolution, as the standard template of the tailored suit gave way to more flamboyant and fun styles, such as Hawaiian shirts (Bohemian style) and other bold, colourful designs. In addition, also other styles became more popular: Greasers (rockers), Skins (cheaper basic clothing), and obviously the previous formal suit wear.

WOMEN's wear: As for women, we see a great shift: Mod fashion. This style was all about bold colours, geometric prints, and short, structured silhouettes. The mini skirt, which had been introduced by designer Mary Quant, became a staple of Mod fashion and continues to be a popular style today. And it did not stop there: punk style, hippie style, glitter and glamour were all created during this time.



■ 1980-1990

In the 1980s and 1990s, men's fashion embraced a casual yet chic style. For women it was a decade typified by its 'power dressing'. The 1980-90s introduced stylish sportswear and the soft 'New Romantics' style.

MEN'S wear: At work, business casual men's wear became more prevalent. Designer baggy jeans became increasingly popular, and neon colours and logo designs became synonymous with the pop culture music uprising at the time, reflecting the rebellious and expressive nature of the music industry. From Ray-Ban Wayfarer sunglasses to leather bomber jackets and bandanas, men's wear was unstoppable.

WOMEN'S wear: This reflected a shift to women working in high-powered positions and using fashion to make sure they would be taken seriously. Health and exercise being seen as important, we saw colourful leggings and leg warmers being used. High-waisted denim jeans, in pastel colours and acid wash finishes. We also saw a rise in denim jackets, leather jackets, and blazer jackets layered over shirts and sweaters, and padded shoulder dresses.



■ 2020-2024

The time we are living in currently, is a constant bomb of change. A way to understand these years in the context of fashion, is to comprehend that the 2020s are a combination of all we have described till now. Now let's see how this has influenced current fashion.

MEN'S wear: From 2020 to 2024, men's fashion embraced both comfort and bold, expressive styles. The COVID-19 pandemic's influence brought a rise in casual wear, with athleisure and loungewear dominating wardrobes. Oversized hoodies, relaxed-fit pants, and tracksuits became staples, reflecting a preference for comfort-driven looks. However, as in-person events returned, so did interest in statement pieces and bolder aesthetics.

■ 2000-2010

As the new decade and millennium dawned, fashion largely continued along the same trajectory as the late 1990s. However, political, societal and technological changes caused fashion to go back to conservatism.

MEN'S wear: The 2000s was an era in which technology took a great turn. Media was now more accessible than ever. A variety of boy bands appeared in the music industry and greatly influenced men's styles. The new trend was a 'dystopian chic'; military jackets, ripped jeans, jerseys, distressed leather, repurposed accessories, and popified rock elements were very popular. Emo style was also very in (the new grunge).

WOMEN'S wear: In this era, women's fashion combined edgy and relaxed styles, with skinny jeans, oversized shirts, and leather jackets as staples. The boho-chic look, with flowy tops and maxi skirts, remained popular, while bright colours, floral prints, and neon accents added boldness. Structured blazers and fitted dresses offered a polished alternative, blending comfort with statement pieces.



Bright colours, playful patterns, and experimental silhouettes – such as wide-leg trousers and cropped jackets – emerged in casual and formal wear alike. Sustainable fashion also gained traction, with an increased focus on eco-friendly brands and materials, as well as vintage and upcycled items, mirroring a broader shift toward ethical consumerism.

WOMEN'S wear: From 2020 to 2024, women's fashion was marked by a blend of comfort, sustainability, and bold self-expression. Loungewear trends spiked during the pandemic, bringing cosy sets, oversized sweatshirts, and joggers to the forefront. As social life returned, the focus shifted to styles that combined ease with elevated designs – think matching sets, tailored yet relaxed blazers, and wide-leg trousers. Y2K fashion made a big comeback, with low-rise jeans, chunky sneakers, and crop tops becoming staples. Bright, playful colours and vintage-inspired pieces added a nostalgic vibe to many wardrobes.

Why Do Fashion Trends Change?

As we can see, fashion trends are heavily influenced by societal, political, and economic factors in our history. We cannot expect fashion to be anchored. Trends will flow and change, as humanity changes and develops. In other words, fashion trends reflect people's ability to express themselves in society, perhaps in an attempt to differentiate themselves from the big earth and society that they live in. For instance, we can see how societal factors influenced women's fashion: as women acquired more liberty due to the feminist movement, we can see a clear progress from the 1920s, where trends were limited to dresses, to the 1990s, where women had created their own 'power-dressing' style.

In men's fashion we saw an explosion of new trends and looks that differentiated drastically from the typical formal suits and wear – which illustrated a new form and liberty of self-expression.

Therefore, we can conclude that fashion trends change because we change, express and create. It is up to us to decide what is the 'new deal' in fashion!

By Glen Badyna



LONDON THEATRE TRIP

The October London IBDP Theatre trip provided our Grade 12 IBDP Theatre students with a transformative experience as they engaged in working intensively with four theatre professionals who specialised in creating original theatre, staging play texts, world theatre traditions, and theatre theory. The immersive environment of the ISTA TaPS Perspective programme allowed our students to collaborate with peers from different schools all over the globe, broadening their perspectives. The programme we attended provided a truly creative and safe space for our student theatre-makers; the experience was life-changing, and emphasised personal growth and a deeper understanding of theatre beyond the surface.



Here's what our students had to say about the London experience:

Reflecting on the overall experience, how did the combination of practical workshops and live performances deepen your appreciation for the collaborative nature of theatre-making?

"I understand better now that including different skills and perspectives is an important aspect of collaboration, and how although it can make the process more complicated, the overall ending and experience tends to be more engaging." – ANA

In what ways did the trip inspire you to apply new ideas or methods to your own creative process and performances?

"Connecting with other IBDP Theatre students was incredibly inspiring, as it created a sense of community rooted in a shared passion for theatre. Working together in ensembles during workshops pushed me to generate and assess new ideas on the spot, and challenged my ability to create quickly and effectively. One of the most memorable experiences was working with Helen Szymczak, the Diploma Programme specialist. We had to form random groups and create a piece based on a theatre practitioner in just 30 minutes, using the story of Little Red Riding Hood. My group was assigned Julie Taymor, whose work is known for its bold visu-

al storytelling, integration of various artistic forms and having the audience feel empathy and emotion for a story and its characters. I came up with the idea to modernise Little Red Riding Hood's story, aiming to make it relatable and to evoke empathy from the audience. This was done by taking different common societal issues and instead of the wolf eating the grandmother, the grandmother used both the same mannerisms and characteristics as the wolf to react to society's issues. This approach encouraged me to experiment with new ideas so as to connect theory with emotional impact. The TaPS experience pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me how essential it is to think and create, a skill I have brought to our Collaborative Piece and am excited to continue using for my solo piece for our theatre work." – BELLE

What were the most impactful moments from the live theatre productions you attended, and how did they influence your perception of professional theatre?

"The most impactful moment had to have been witnessing the Guys and Dolls production in its entirety. It was very immersive and extremely well put together, and it reminded me of the importance of engaging your audience. Not only in theatre but in other forms of art too. Being more abrasive in terms of how you project yourself can be very effective." – BRUNO

Reflecting on the overall experience, how did the combination of practical workshops and live performances deepen your appreciation for the collaborative nature of theatre-making?

"Everyone at the workshop was so enthusiastic about theatre and was not afraid to put themselves out there – it really rubbed off on me. All the workshops were so insightful as they allowed me to see people's different perspectives and takes on any task we were given. TaPS also taught me to receive really honest criticism from both the teachers and the students, which allowed me to make my performance better. Both live theatre performances were amazing in props, staging and acting. And the way in which the whole crew cooperated and knew every minute detail about what was to come in the play made everything flow smoothly." – EDEN

How did the practical workshops enhance your understanding of the performance styles and techniques you've been studying in your IBDP Theatre curriculum?

"Being one of the more senior groups in the workshop, we had already learnt or practised most of the performance styles and techniques that were mentioned in the workshop. So it was

interesting to hear those performance styles and techniques being explained in a slightly different perspective and learn new ways to apply them in our performance. It was also a perfect opportunity to help us refresh our knowledge about those performance styles and techniques." – MATTHEW

What were the most impactful moments from the live theatre productions you attended, and how did they influence your perception of professional theatre?

"The stark contrast between the two shows offered insight into the wide range of theatre that is out there. The first production, Guys and Dolls, was very fun and interactive, something that seemed like it wasn't even possible to do. It was very creative, and I have never seen anything like it. This in contrast to the more traditional theatre of Coriolanus showed that there is something out there for everyone. It further emphasised how there are so many different styles and techniques that even if you think it's not for you, there most likely is something that you will enjoy." – ANNE

All the workshops were so insightful as they allowed us to see people's different perspectives...

My Journey at RISS

By Faith Subi

When I first entered RISS, I felt excited but also nervous. The campus was big, colorful, and filled with students speaking many different languages. I saw faces from all over the world. It was a little overwhelming, but I also felt lucky to be part of something so unique.

This was not just a school. It was like a small world filled with people from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds coming together to learn and grow. I knew this would be a special experience.

Meeting People from Around the World

The first thing I noticed about my school was the diversity of the students. My classmates came from different parts of the world, countries that I had never heard of before. Each person brought their own culture, traditions, and stories to share.

At first, it felt strange to be surrounded by so many different languages and accents. During lunch, I could hear French on one side, Spanish on the other, and even a little Hindi. But soon, I realized how exciting it was to learn about other cultures. It felt amazing to share my culture while also learning about so many others. The school had a beautiful and supportive learning environment. The teachers would walk into class with passion and with a smile that was felt by most of the students. The teachers were also from different countries. They all brought their own teaching styles which made the classes interesting and fun.

Learning in a New Way

The way we study at the international school is very different from my old school. We follow the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, which focuses on asking questions, solving problems, and

working together. Instead of just memorizing facts, we have to think deeply and share our ideas. The learning involves critical thinking, open-mindedness and deep research.

Group projects are a big part of learning. At first, it was hard to work with classmates who had different ideas and ways of doing things. But over time, I learned that these differences make our projects stronger. Together, we make an amazing team.

Facing Challenges

Some of the challenges I faced when I moved to RISS were:

■ Homesickness

Moving from a Dutch school to an international school was not easy at first. I missed my old friends and felt homesick. Sometimes, I struggled to understand my classmates' accents or expressions.

■ Building Friendships

Meeting new people and making friends is not always easy, especially in a diverse environment where everyone has unique customs and communication styles. Sometimes I felt shy or unsure about how to connect with peers from different cultural backgrounds. Joining clubs, sports teams, or school events may be helpful when it comes to connecting and bonding with classmates. Being open-minded and showing genuine interest in other people's cultures can also help form lasting friendships.

■ Adjusting to a New Curriculum

The school offers an International Baccalaureate (IB). This system emphasizes different teaching styles, grading methods, or subjects than what you might be used to. The IB focuses on asking questions, solving problems, and working together. Instead of just memorizing facts, we have to think deeply and share our ideas. The learning involved critical thinking, open-mindedness and deep research.

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The IB demands and requires good time management and strong dedication. Balancing coursework, projects, and extracurricular activities can be challenging for students. However, the school provides support systems, including experienced teachers/tutors and structured schedules that guide and support the students throughout their learning journey.

Adapting to these new academic expectations can be challenging. For instance, a student might struggle with the program's focus on inquiry-based learning and extensive coursework. Seeking guidance from teachers, peers, and academic advisors can help bridge the gap.

A Life-Changing Experience

Joining RISS can be a life-changing experience. I learned about the world, not just through books, but through real people and their stories. I made friends from places I had never imagined, and I now see the world as one big, connected community.

This school taught me that even though we come from different countries and speak different languages, we have a lot in common. We all laugh, learn, and dream.

If you ever get the chance to study at Rotterdam International Secondary School, I would say: go for it. It might feel scary at first, but it will open your mind and heart. You will discover new cultures, make amazing friends, and grow into a more confident and understanding person.

At Rotterdam International Secondary School, the world becomes your classroom, and every person you meet teaches you that our differences are what truly unite us.

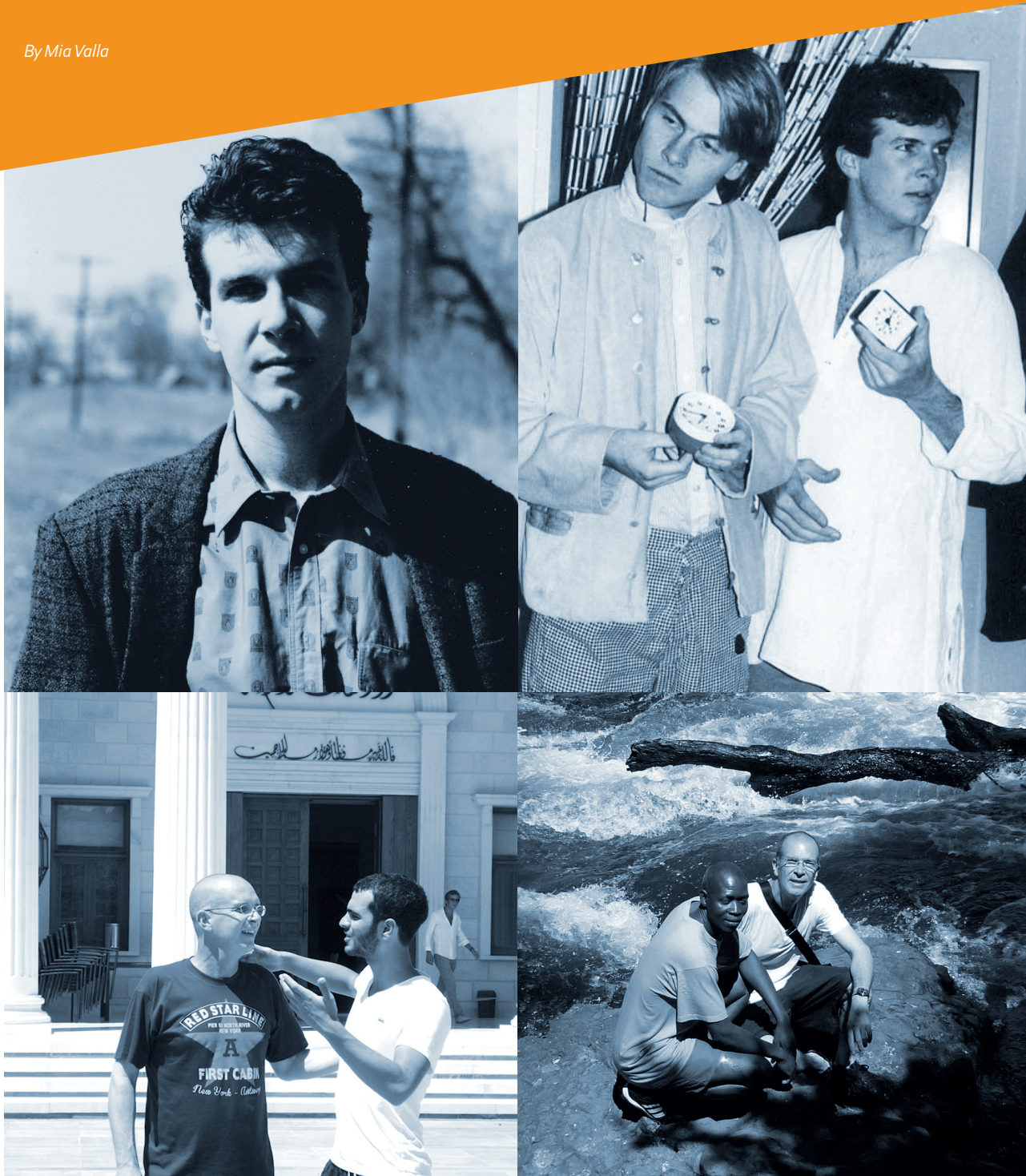


**ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL**

“Rotterdam International Secondary School is more than a place to learn, it’s a gateway to the world, where every culture is a teacher, very friendship is a bridge, and every day is a lesson in unity.”

Mr. Muller: A Life of Change

By Mia Valla



A Life of Exciting Adventures

No matter how long you've been at RISS – whether you're a teacher or a student – I'm sure you've heard of the man we students know as Mr. Muller. He plays a big role in teaching throughout all the grades; some of you may know him as your English teacher, your CAS coordinator, or maybe you've simply seen him around the school campuses. I personally was taught by Mr. Muller for two years. Every time I walked into his lessons, I was reminded that teachers do in fact have a life outside of the classroom, contrary to most students' beliefs. He always had a way of incorporating a personal anecdote about his life into his lessons. This intrigued me; whenever he shared something about himself, it always left me wanting to know more. This article therefore gave me the perfect opportunity to answer all my questions; the main one being, who is Mr. Muller really?

Where It All Began: Life Before RISS

Mr. Muller was born and raised in New Jersey, USA. He first worked for the English-Speaking Union US Headquarters and the Trump Organization in New York. He then decided to leave the US, and began his career as a teacher. Mr. Muller is a traveller, as stated by him: "I enjoy the calm, laid-back feel of any island, but I also thrive on the vibe of big cities". Before coming to RISS, he spent many years travelling all around the globe. He taught in Morocco, Zambia, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, and Puerto Rico. With all these changes of scenery, Mr. Muller has definitely seen a myriad of different cultures around the world, which must've been hard to adapt to sometimes, but could also have been a pleasant experience.

As Mr. Muller says: "I enjoyed working in Denmark, because students had so much freedom and even called teachers by their first names. The lack of authority hierarchy actually resulted in fewer disciplinary incidents and a higher degree of productivity. A really interesting experience."

Unforgettable Life Stories

Mr. Muller's story has always been interesting to me. To learn more about him, I asked him about two of his many life experiences which perfectly describe how much Mr. Muller had seen before coming to RISS.

On being kidnapped in Zambia, he tells: "Initially, I didn't have a firm grasp on the culture or on the degrees of poverty and inequity there. Therefore, I was helpful and generous with the school and compound staff, but it turns out that I was too overly generous, and this made me a ransom target. It was not a pleasant three days."

On meeting new people, he says: "I loved working in New York. The former Duke of Edinburgh was the head of the ESU, and I once attended a party in his honour. While working for him, I was able to spend time with many of the guest speakers, including the great Isaac Asimov."

Fragments of His Life Now

Mr. Muller has now settled here in Rotterdam. Although we all know him as a teacher or colleague, he is so much more than that. Anyone who was taught by Mr. Muller can agree that he is an incredibly generous person. He is always more than willing to help any student out with any work, and always channels his positivity into his lessons. He doesn't only do this in the classroom, however. Mr. Muller spends some of his free time cooking for his elderly neighbours who are on their own, and has also given in-school opportunities to students who wish to help others out by cooking for the homeless. He also enjoys reading, and has recently started making greeting cards out of recycled materials.

A Dive Into the Future

Mr. Muller's main plan for the next years of his life is to continue working here at RISS. "RISS is the best school I have ever worked at. Positive vibes permeate both campuses, and I look forward to coming to work every day," Mr. Muller said.

To Sum it All Up

Compressing Mr. Muller's entire life story into a two-page long article is simply impossible. Mr. Muller is one of the best teachers I've ever had. He taught me for two years; he brought positivity and humour to all of his lessons, making him an unforgettable figure during my time here at RISS. As much as I wish I were able to capture his entire story, unfortunately, no one can tell it better than Mr. Muller himself. I am more than grateful to have been able to bring some light to his fascinating stories, and to have spoken about one of the most loved figures in the RISS community.

From Harbour to the Ocean

“Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God! It’s 7 AM right now, and school starts at 8. I have to eat breakfast, I have to brush my teeth, I have to put on my clothes! There’s so much I have to do!”

By Vipra Ganjare

SOUND FAMILIAR? YES.

THAT WAS ME AT THE BEGINNING OF GRADE 6.

Getting ready for the first day of school was certainly hectic. It was a major change in my life, and surely in yours too, as you moved from primary school to secondary school. That was a big leap, wasn’t it? In my experience, this change was different. It was unique. This is what the average primary school experience was like: a peaceful and tranquil school day – involving countless hours of playtime and easy and laid-back maths questions. Ah, that was not too bad! **SOUNDS RELAXED, RIGHT?**

Now, cut to the average secondary school experience: a busy and distorted school day – involving countless hours of homework and hard and distressing maths questions. Ah, this is really bad! Although this daunting (and somewhat exciting) experience was a whopping five years ago, it involved a variety of feelings and mixed emotions. New school, new people, new environments, new everything. **However, this sentiment was not shared by a Grade 6 student who joined the RISS from HARBOUR INTERNATIONAL.**

To understand and compare my experiences to a new Grade 6 student later in the timeline, I spoke to them to capture their side of the story on this significant change:

■ What was the change from moving from primary to secondary school like?

“It was pretty good, but different. What I mean by good is that the change was not as drastic as some people made it out to be. This is because thankfully, I had my group of friends. However, it was different because we got exposed to new and fresh teaching styles, something I am thoroughly enjoying in this new experience.”

■ How did you feel about this change?

“At first, I was quite scared. Obviously, school won’t feel like fun and games anymore. A feeling I’m sure everyone shares. Nevertheless, this was short-term. I learned to adapt and understand that change is new. I came to terms with the fact that change is needed and is good for us, which helped me feel less scared.”

■ What is the difference in the environment between Harbour International and RISS?

“In terms of size, Harbour International was definitely larger, therefore we had open space to play. However, on the plus side, at RISS we have a very large gym with a trampoline! That is very exciting. The environment, overall, is positive. In terms of the social environment, I would argue that it is nice to talk to new people. I met a few new people, but it was hard at first. I was so used to my old friends, that talking to other people felt like quite a mission. There is a larger and more culturally diverse group present at the school, many with different values and beliefs. But we were able to bond over a shared experience; being in this vast place. A substantial change in all of our lives.”

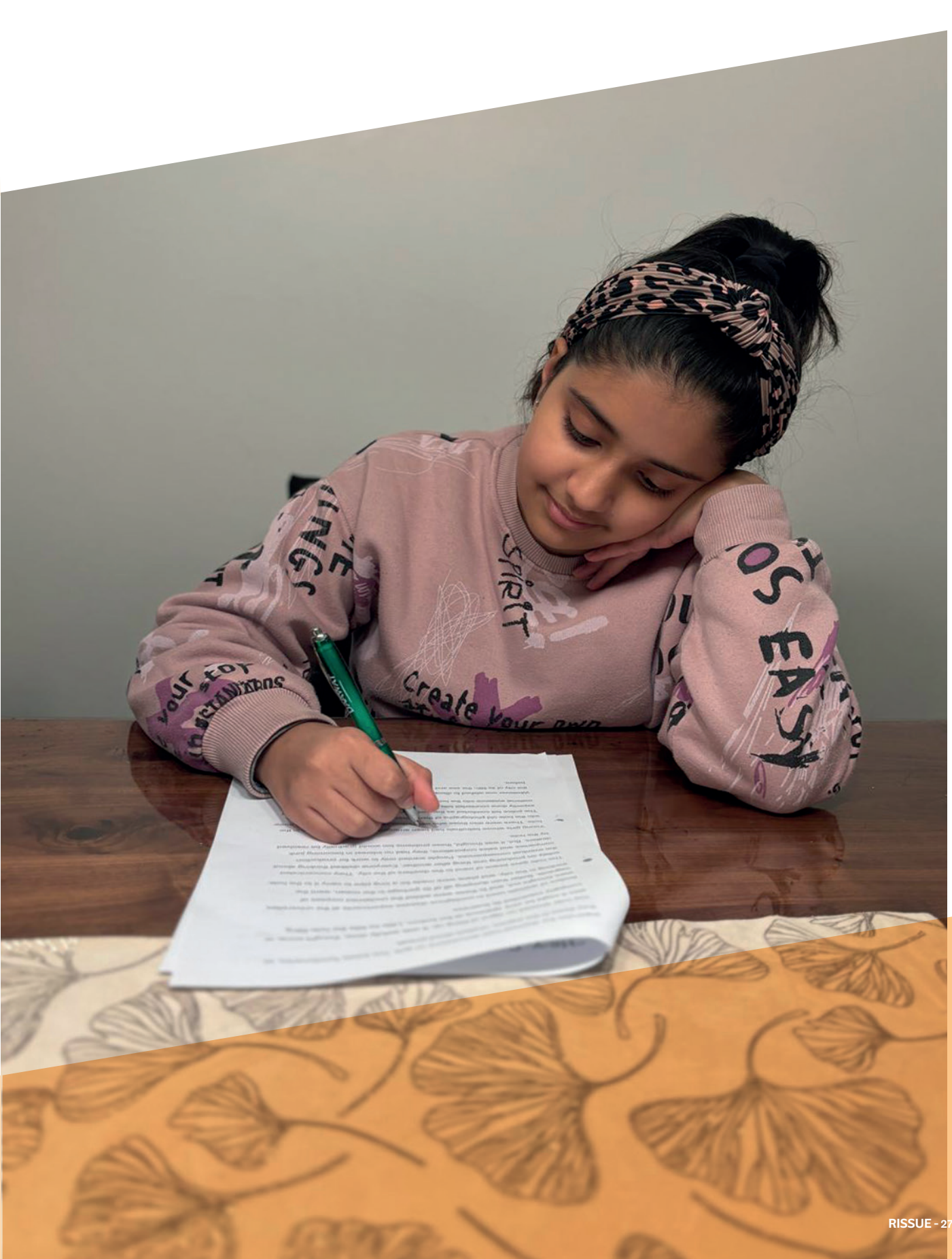
■ What is the teaching style and workload like?

“It’s hard to explain. I genuinely like the teaching style because I receive a lot of guidance with my work. I would say I feel a lot more independent and confident now, compared to my primary school days. The workload, however, is a lot more ambiguous to describe. Since I just started Grade 6, there isn’t a ton of work, as I expected. Nonetheless, I know as time goes on, the workload will increase. Something I must be prepared for.”

■ What advice would you give for the next Grade 6s?

“I would say that being organised is a must. This includes: using an agenda, comprehending the schedule, and minor things like that. Additionally, it is important to write notes and catch up with the class. It is crucial not to fall behind! Finally, a piece of advice to all the nervous ones: it’s going to be fine! Everyone steps out of their comfort zone once in a while, regardless of the situation and circumstances. It is essential to be open-minded and have the courage to adapt to the changes.”

Interviewing the new Grade 6 student gave me (and hopefully, you, the reader) an insightful perspective on the changes between primary and secondary school change. Change, in general, is something everyone experiences, be it once or twice or a couple of hundred times. When we face changes, it can be an exhilarating experience (in a good or bad way). Regardless of the type of change, we must learn to adapt and transform ourselves. This message is especially for the Grade 6 students who had the courage and bravery to take on this change. To them, I say: you got this!



Movies of 2024

By Jana Farrag

It's that time of the year again, 2025 is right around the corner and with it comes a chance to reflect on the year in film. The year 2024 brought an incredible line-up of movies, giving us everything from heart-stopping action to deep, emotional journeys and unforgettable characters. As we race towards the new year, why not take a moment to look back at some of the top movies of 2024? Here's a rundown of must-watch movies that are worth catching before the calendar flips.

Each movie on the list has made an impact this year, whether by pushing creative boundaries, being the spark of a conversation or simply by offering a fun escape. So grab your popcorn, settle into your favourite chair, and dive into these 2024 standouts. These movies will make sure you wrap up 2024 with a bang!

■ NAME: INSIDE OUT 2 (2024)

Genre: Animation

Duration: 1h 36m

Age recommendation: AL

Rating: 7.6/10

A sequel that features Riley entering puberty and experiencing brand-new, more complex emotions as a result. As Riley tries to adapt to her teenage years, her old emotions try to adapt to the possibility of being replaced. (Mann et al.)

■ NAME: BLINK TWICE

Genre: Thriller

Duration: 1h 42m

Age recommendation: R

Rating: 6.5/10

When tech billionaire Slater King meets cocktail waitress Frida at his fundraising gala, he invites her to join him and his friends on a dream vacation on his private island. As strange things start to happen, Frida questions her reality. (Kravitz and Feigenbaum)

■ NAME: IF

Genre: Comedy

Duration: 1h 44m

Age recommendation: PG

Rating: 6.5/10

A young girl who goes through a difficult experience begins to see everyone's imaginary friends who have been left behind as their real-life friends have grown up. (Krasinski)

■ NAME: DUNE – PART TWO

Genre: Adventure

Duration: 2h 46m

Age recommendation: PG-13

Rating: 8.5/10

Paul Atreides unites with the Fremen while on a warpath of revenge

against the conspirators who destroyed his family. Facing a choice between the love of his life and the fate of the universe, he endeavours to prevent a terrible future. (Villeneuve et al.)

■ NAME: DEADPOOL & WOLVERINE

Genre: Action

Duration: 2h 08m

Age recommendation: R

Rating: 7.7/10

Deadpool is offered a place in the Marvel Cinematic Universe by the Time Variance Authority, but instead recruits a variant of Wolverine to save his universe from extinction. (Reynolds et al.)

■ NAME: SMILE 2

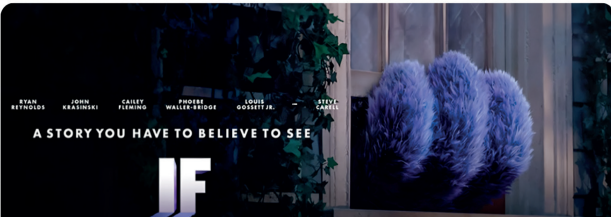
Genre: Horror

Duration: 2h 07m

Age recommendation: R

Rating: 7.2/10

About to embark on a world tour, global pop sensation Skye Riley begins experiencing increasingly terrifying and inexplicable events. Overwhelmed by the escalating horrors and the pressures of fame, Skye is forced to face her past. (Finn)



Baking for the Homeless

By Vanessa Chan

Background Information on the Pauluskerk

When we look at the city of Rotterdam, or even the Netherlands as a whole, homelessness isn't a problem we are directly exposed to. The number of homeless individuals is low compared to other countries, but not zero. That's where places like the Pauluskerk come in. They take in these individuals and give them shelter, food and resources to support them. These individuals aren't only homeless people, but also addicts who are struggling to quit, people who are vulnerable and require care, and/or people who don't have the proper residence permits. The Pauluskerk welcomes all and invites all to help as well. (www.pauluskerkrotterdam.nl/wat-wij-doen/)

How Did RISS Become Involved?

Mr. Muller, from our own RISS community, was the first to develop the idea to contribute to the community in some way, especially by continuing to give back to the world around us, as he had done at his previous schools. Something I'm not sure many of you know is that he actually taught in Germany before, where he would make gingerbread houses every year with the students. Then, while working in Africa, he did even more acts of service. As he wanted to continue doing this, he became the CAS coordinator at RISS where he was able to keep the tradition of making the gingerbread houses going – something he had done at other schools he had worked at, including Nord Anglia, when he had also helped the Pauluskerk.

Impact of Baking at the Pauluskerk

It's important to note that the baked goods are for the people who receive help at the Pauluskerk. While the Dutch government pays for coffee and tea in a program for homeless people, food is not provided. Part of Dutch culture is having a snack while having a drink, and Mr. Muller's idea was to do a good act for the community while interacting with the culture here. The Pauluskerk appreciates the goods that we make and "the volunteers are happy to see them", as Mr. Muller says.

Interestingly enough, the activity has changed over time. Mr. Muller says that they used to do tours at the Pauluskerk, however these have stopped. Although it was an informational tour on the inner workings of the shelter and the help they were able to provide for people in need, Mr. Muller believed that it felt like it was rather insensitive to the people and felt uncomfortable doing the tours. It felt like they were observing homeless people, and it didn't feel as though they were helping them by observing them.

Are the tours that are offered in Pauluskerk insensitive or actually good for the shelter? Should the government provide snacks to the Pauluskerk too? These are some questions that you can think about when considering how your own actions can benefit those around you, even in small ways.

Awareness about these organisations and their existence is what keeps these traditions alive and helps the community, just like Mr. Muller has done.

THE **DAD** OF RISS:

The Evolution of Our School Through a Teacher's Perspective

Around the world, teachers hold a significant role in society. Here at RISS, that is very evident. When I came to this school two years ago, I realised that what makes this school different from the ones I went to before, is the support that students get from teachers. It is a gift to have a strong group of teachers who support and guide their students, especially when they have a clear passion to inspire us to be the best we can. Despite that fact, this is something that us students often take for granted, so, to learn more about the origins of our school and our teachers, I interviewed the teacher who's worked the longest at RISS, Ms. van Adrichem.

By Gabriella Ching



Ms. van Adrichem, also known as DAD in your emails, has been at RISS since 1999. She used to teach English in the Foundation Years, Middle Years and in the IB, as well as English B for IB students and English First Language for IGCSEs. Now, she teaches World Literature for the Middle Years students, and Literature for the IB students.



Ms. van Adrichem
[Alias DAD]

"So, despite the fact that I did not really choose the profession of teaching, I like to think it chose me." – Ms. Van Adrichem
Ms. van Adrichem's journey was one of great coincidence. She was approaching the end of her English and Literature studies when she realised that she needed to consider what happens next. That is when she found a course called "Introduction to Teaching", which taught her pedagogy and also gave her the opportunity to intern at a local school. Thus her journey began. She signed up and was offered a student-teaching job and ever since then she has been a teacher.

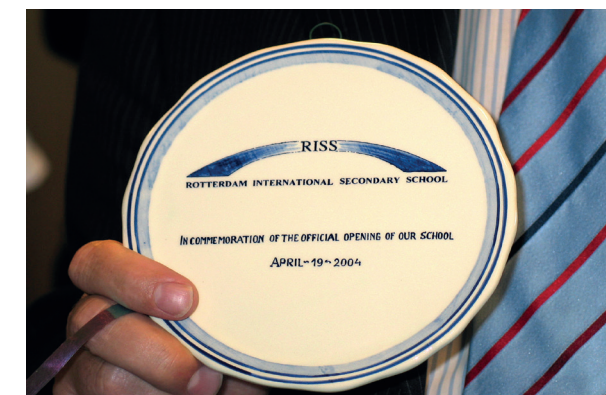
RISS began when it wasn't 'RISS' yet. In fact, it started with a small group of English teachers in the Wolfert Tweekalig school called "the English Stream", which Ms. Van Adrichem compared to a small island in a large sea of teachers from the Dutch school. From there, the school developed from 100 to 400 students, and from sharing a campus to having two campuses.



But teaching for this long surely hasn't been that easy. What keeps her so motivated to teach? Well, she replied that knowing about a student's situation inside and outside the classroom has truly helped her understand and connect with them even more. During Covid-19, she was amazed by the willingness and

dedication teachers had to educate their students. She wrote, reflecting on the resilience and commitment teachers have: "When I saw what happened during the Corona pandemic and how much good teachers were willing to do to continue the education of their students, I was humbled and even prouder to say I am a teacher". For Ms. van Adrichem, the greatest aspect of her job is being able to see the students that she taught cross the finish line and receive their diploma, as it gives her energy and motivates her to become a better teacher. Hearing this made me feel grateful that we have teachers like her.

During her 25 years as a teacher, Ms. van Adrichem has found that it isn't only her students who learn something, but also she herself. She describes how in the beginning, she had been milder and naiver, but that – after realising how clever students are – she saw she had to become less naive to do her job effectively. She has experienced the influences of growing modern technology, such as the effects of social media and the internet, and she has seen the advantages and benefits that come along with the growing digital age. However, it isn't all so good. Technology still comes with its drawbacks, as there are still fundamentals that children across various ages need to learn which have nothing to do with modern technology, making the role of teachers so vital. It's a profession that continues to evolve and adapt to the ongoing development of technology.



'And I suppose this is one of the reasons why RISS felt so different – it has grown from a small, humble group to this great community, made up of students with various nationalities. But behind those students stand teachers. Teachers who set a great example, inspiring us to be the best we can be.'

Imagine yourself in a forest, amidst the mountains. You have your best friends by your side and are ready to face the challenging hike ahead! That is the Duke of Edinburgh's trip, a programme that not only helps you build valuable life skills but also sets you apart in applications for universities and jobs. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) is a globally recognised program that empowers you to take on challenges, discover your strengths, and achieve more than you thought was possible.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Every year, the RISS community organises this award, where students have to complete a set of hours of creative, service and sports activities, chosen based on their own preference. In order to complete such a programme, students must embark on one of the most anticipated events, an adventurous trip!

An Overview of the Trip

The trip is composed of a three-day-long hike, where students set up camp at a fixed location, hike and explore for the day, then come back to their meeting point to be brought to the camping location for the night. Each day, students document their findings and complete small tasks. They are responsible for carrying their own equipment in their hiking backpacks, while they are also required to prepare and cook their own meals!

By Sofia Queiroga

“DOfE was an extremely fun experience that I will remember for a long time”

Anita Costello, participant of the 2023 trip

INTERNATIONAL AWARD

RISS started with the International Award for Young People, (Duke of Edinburgh) programme. This is a prestigious, global, program that will help you for the rest of your life. Once completed, you can add this on your resume; Universities, Colleges and employees will see that you are dedicated to your work and level of responsibility.

WHAT IS THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S INTERNATIONAL AWARD?

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is the world's leading youth achievement Award and equips young people for life in over 140 countries and territories across the Globe.

PERSONAL CHALLENGE, NOT A COMPETITION

The Award is available to all young people aged 14 - 24. Doing the Award is a personal challenge and not a competition against others; it pushes young people to their personal limits and recognises their achievements consistently. The Award encourages young people to design their own programme of activities, set their own goals and challenge themselves to achieve their aims. Since its launch 60 years ago, the Award has inspired millions of young people to transform their lives. Through non formal education, the Award can play a critical role in a young person's personal development.

**YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE HERE
WWW.INTAWARD.ORG.**



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**

INTERVIEW WITH STUDENT EFE CANES OF GRADE 11, WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2023 TRIP

■ What was your favourite part of doing the DofE trip?

According to Efe, his favourite part of the trip was being able to explore something that he had never previously done, and pushing himself to change, to find a new hobby or develop a new skill. He emphasises that by entering the programme you are able to gain skills from the physical tasks on the trip, and from the other activities, such as long walks, or from exploring different environments. But you also gain new useful abilities, such as how to read a map or use a compass. Efe claims: “The trip specifically encourages communication and teamwork”.

Another important benefit of this program can be summarised in one word: **FRIENDSHIP**.

Efe said: “Being able to communicate with other people outside of your friend circle allows you to make new friends along the way”. He finds that the trip allowed him to socialise with new classmates and made the friendship-making process, which can be hard sometimes, easy and fun.

■ What part of the trip was the most difficult?

Efe believes that the part he found most difficult about the trip was adjusting to the drastic change of a “regular comfortable lifestyle”, to a challenging one. He emphasises that this can be especially noticeable at the beginning of the trip, when carrying your equipment over a long distance, the cold weather during the night, and having the responsibility to prepare your own meals might turn out to be more challenging than it sounds. However, Efe also feels that after the first challenging day, those tasks became part of his routine and were easier to execute: “But don't take me wrong, this programme requires a strong, adventurous spirit!”. Are you willing to take on those challenges?

■ Would you recommend this trip to others and would you go on it again?

A rare opportunity to spend plenty of time with nature, enjoy time with your friends, change your routine, and challenge yourself are some of the few reasons why Efe thinks this trip is worth going on and why he would join again. “It's really one of the things where you have to be there to understand,” Efe said.

“Hiking with my friends in the woods is something I will treasure for years to come”

Dylan Alexander, participant of the 2023 trip

INTERVIEW WITH STUDENT GABRIELA ALFINGER OF GRADE 10, WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2024 TRIP

■ What was your favourite part of doing the DofE trip?

As a Grade 10 student, who just experienced this trip in October, Gabriela believes that her favourite part of the programme was that “it takes you outside your comfort zone”. I asked her to expand on what exactly she meant, and she answered: “It makes you know yourself better, what your limits are, and your strengths”. Gabriella feels that the programme adds more responsibility when you have a set of hours to complete each activity, such as volunteering and physical activity, which pushes you to become better and deal with upcoming challenges more effectively.

■ What part of the trip was the most difficult?

In agreement with Efe, Gabriela claims: “Personally, for me, it was carrying the bags with us, since they do add on a lot of weight that can make the hiking of long distances more challenging”. This proves that this trip and programme do require a lot of willpower and resilience. **ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE UP FOR THIS CHALLENGE?**

■ Would you recommend this trip to others and would you go on it again?

According to Gabriela, people who are fit for the programme are those who are up for the challenge: “If you want to challenge yourself and test your limits”. She concludes the interview by emphasising:

“I would recommend this trip, since I think it is an experience everyone should have at least once.”



MESSAGE FROM MISS ENGLAND

[one of the organisers]

“In early October, five adventurous 10th-grade students went on the Qualifying Journey for their Duke of Edinburgh International Award, setting out on a two-night hiking and camping expedition in the Belgian Ardennes. The students planned and executed every part of the journey themselves, from navigating their route to packing essential supplies. Each day, they carried heavy packs filled with tents, food, water, and other gear as they navigated their route to the designated checkpoints.

This Adventurous Journey is a key part of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award programme, an initiative recognised globally for its emphasis on personal growth outside the classroom. Through this journey, participants not only test their physical and mental endurance but also strengthen essential skills like teamwork, self-reliance, and problem-solving. It is often the hook that leads students to sign up for the award. However, there is more to it than that! Students are also required to complete a set number of hours across three categories: volunteering, learning a new skill, and participating in a sport, making the programme a well-rounded experience in personal development.



**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**



“The Ardennes adventure was demanding and rewarding for these students. Students should be very proud of themselves for successfully completing the journey and coming out smiling. But it wasn’t easy!” *Miss England*

Behind the Scenes of Change

Student Council Edition

Student leadership has been a principal part of RISS for a long time. During this time, it has changed and evolved in many ways, yet its main objective remains the same: to make our school a better place for everyone in it.

By Natalie Kandelaki



TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL A BETTER PLACE FOR EVERYONE

To understand more about these changes and what they mean for our school, I interviewed two key figures in this transformation: the President of the student council, Aarna Singh, and a Grade 11 representative, Gabriella Ching. Through these interesting conversations, I explored the vision, goals, and the challenges they anticipate in the coming year.

Here's what they had to share about their journey, their ambitions, and what we can all look forward to in this exciting new chapter of student leadership.

■ How has being part of the student council changed you personally, and what lessons have you learned from this role?

Leading a team requires embodying a balance between being approachable but also authoritative. Effective leadership means knowing when to step in and more importantly, when to step back to let other people take the lead. Even though I have only been president for a few weeks, I feel as though I handle many situations differently now. Sometimes I have to reject ideas, or choose one member's suggestion over another. It's hard to do this since I want to ensure everyone feels valued and heard. Each idea has value and the contributions of each member are incredibly precious, so I approach these conversations carefully. I've learned to explain why and emphasise the strengths of each suggestion, so no one is dismissed. Naturally, my planning and organisational skills have also improved massively.

■ What advice would you give to students who want to make a difference but feel hesitant about stepping forward?

There's no way to sugarcoat it, really. If you want to make a change, you need to get out of your comfort zone. If you can't get out of your comfort zone, that means you don't want to make a difference. I do understand that sometimes it can feel daunting, especially at a young age. However, let me tell you that there will always be a solution. No one else is going to make the changes you want to see. No one else will stand up for your beliefs. You have to stand up for what you believe in. You have to stand up for the changes you want to see happen. This holds true in every aspect of life. You need to stand up for yourself in every way – politically, academically, for your health, well-being and even socially, in your personal relationships.

■ What are some changes the student council is planning that you feel will have the most positive impact on students?

We are working towards projects focused on health-related themes. These will be holistically designed to not only focus on physical but also on mental health.

■ Can you tell me more about how you are planning to improve physical health?

One way will be to encourage a more vibrant, sporty atmosphere, which could potentially mean bringing back dodgeball matches, creating sports teams and acquiring more resources for recreational sports, especially basketball in both campuses and ping pong in the Senior Campus. Sports days will include not just competitive matches but also games with a chillier vibe for those who are not competitive. In general, increasing the accessibility of sport in the RISS community is our aim.

■ What are the biggest changes that students can look forward to this year?

This year's team is dedicated to going above and beyond. From our Grade 6 representative, Vera, to our Grade 11 representative, Gabby, each member brings a unique energy and passion. We aim to see this enthusiasm reflected in every event we plan. Every event will feature fresh ideas, exciting additions, and a renewed appeal. Take our upcoming Halloween Disco, for example. It will include brand-new activities such as mini game stalls and an interactive treasure hunt challenge.

■ Have you faced resistance to any of the changes you wanted to implement? How did you handle it?

The teachers and school staff have been amazingly supportive. However, the team is not unfamiliar with rejection. As students, we have the tendency to desire changes that might not always be possible. The reason for this could range from financial constraints to conflicts with the school policies. When faced with these, we negotiate a compromise that benefits the students while also being viable for the school. This is one of our essential roles as the StuLT. Additionally, once we get started on even bigger projects, rejection is going to be increasingly common.

■ How has the recent change of layout impacted the student leadership team?

I think it made it easier because the team involves the junior campus students as well, not only Grade 11 students. It has made communication much easier and efficient because the junior campus students are also represented.

■ How has being part of the student council changed you personally, and what lessons have you learned from this role?

Being a part of the student council has made me more aware of the problems in the school and the process of solving these issues. It has taught me that planning and organising is important when taking action because it takes a lot of effort to make an event and/or plan successful. In addition, I learned how effective communication can go a long way when it comes to being a student leader, because sometimes it really boils down to what and how we say things to students and teachers.



A Bridge Between RISS and Uni

INTERVIEW WITH ANUSHKA PATRA

By Prisha Chopra

Introduction to our RISS Alumna

My name is Anushka Patra. I left RISS in 2024 and am in my first year of Computer Science and Engineering at TU Delft. My subjects in the IBDP course were: Math AA (Analysis and Approaches), Physics and Chemistry at higher level, English Language & Literature, Dutch, and Geography at standard level.

Career Path

I knew I wanted to do something related to engineering, but I wasn't sure what. In the beginning, I was leaning more towards physics, like Mechanical Engineering or Aerospace Engineering. However, eventually, after the IBDP course, I realised I didn't enjoy Physics as much as I enjoyed Maths or computer-based subjects, so I decided to go with Computer Science and Engineering. I also briefly considered Architecture for my career, however it wasn't an active pursuit.

Shortlisting University

I knew that for my bachelor's, I wanted to stay in the Netherlands so that I could get used to university life before possibly moving to another country. I looked at all engineering universities and courses, and then I made a list of which ones I liked, and that's how I shortlisted TU Delft and TU Eindhoven. TU Delft is closer to where I live in Rotterdam, so that was my top pick. For TU Delft, I applied to Computer Science Engineering and to Earth Sciences and in TU Eindhoven, I applied to Computer Science and Engineering, and to Automotive Technology.

University Life

The Computer Science bachelor's degree is three years and each year is broken down into four quarters, each quarter consisting of three subjects. For example, in the first quarter of the first year, the three subjects were: Reasoning and Logic, Computer Organisation, and Intro to Programming. To pass the first year, I have to pass 75% of the subjects (i.e. 12 subjects per year), with each subject having a similar amount of content/depth to a single IB subject. **A typical day is as follows:**

8:45 - 10:45	[lecture 1]
10:45 - 12:45	[lecture 2]
12:45 - 1:45	[break]
1:45 - 5:45	[optional learning time for questions]

The students need to be proactive about their studies, as the lecturer/assistant lecturer won't be able to guide everyone at all times, since around 550 people are studying the same course. The RISS students will experience this type of independence during the Grade 12 IAs [Internal Assessment], as you will have to find and explore a topic on your own. There are academic counsellors, however – again – the students will have to take the initiative to contact them.

“Don't stress out too much. Have fun! Enjoy it!”

Memorable Moments at RISS

Looking back at my memories from RISS, I specifically think that transitioning from the junior campus to the senior campus felt quite special. The entire atmosphere was a lot different because in the junior campus they kind of treat you like children, but then in the senior campus you have a lot more liberty. Plus, I remember the stress of staying up until one minute before the deadline to submit an assignment. I also remember, for Geography, we went to Berlin for a four-day trip. It was really fun.

Global Pages & Screens

By Jana Farrag

Five different continents, 197 countries and 1 big community in RISS. Isn't it interesting how we all come from different places around the world yet we share a common foundation that unites us? No matter where you are from, there is at least one book or movie that has resonated with you to this day. Whether it's a story rooted in your own culture or one that has gained global recognition, these tales connect us, allowing us to find common ground. The only difference? The language, the letters, the subtitles.

Usually, people say that food brings people together, because there's nothing like a bunch of hungry people wanting to try out different cuisines. However, what is often forgotten are books and movies. They have a unique power to bridge divides, creating a universal language of emotions, experiences and dreams. Through them, we are introduced to characters and worlds that, despite their differences, feel remarkably familiar. A child in South Africa might grow up loving the book Jock of the Bushveld, while a student in England treasures The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Though different, the emotions these stories evoke – curiosity, joy, and inspiration – surpass cultural and geographic boundaries, creating shared experiences across the globe.

At the same time, the details of these stories remain deeply rooted in culture, offering a glimpse into the traditions, values, and uniqueness of different communities. A movie like Black Panther is not just an action-packed superhero tale; it's a celebration of African culture and heritage. Similarly, books like Grandma's Bag of Stories from India do more than entertain; they connect readers to the warmth and wisdom of generations past. These cultural elements, whether they are depictions of food, traditions, landscapes, or historical references, make stories deeply personal to their origin while simultaneously inviting others to explore and understand a new way of life.

Along with books, movies and series have had a great impact on our childhoods. For years, children around the world have tuned in to their favourite TV shows on channels that became iconic in their own right. Whether it was Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, or Disney Channel, these networks broadcast stories that united kids from vastly different places. A child in the USA might be laughing at the same episode of SpongeBob

SquarePants as a child in Brazil, who is watching it with subtitles. Additionally, Japan's anime industry gave the world iconic series like Naruto and Pokémon, bringing people together and giving rise to new friendships.

Doesn't it fascinate you how every Saturday morning, kids from all over the world would gather in front of their screens, eagerly waiting for their favourite cartoons or family shows to air? There's something magical about knowing that at the same time you were watching Tom and Jerry or Power Rangers, someone halfway across the globe had done the same. Despite speaking different languages or growing up in different cultures, you were somehow sharing the same childhood.

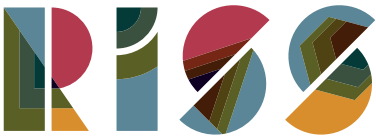
Beyond mere entertainment, books and movies serve as tools for growth, empathy, and understanding. Through them, we step into the shoes of others, experiencing the world through their eyes. We learn about their challenges, their triumphs, and their traditions, discovering how different yet similar we all are. They spark conversations, inspire creativity, and remind us of our shared humanity. Whether it's a local folktale passed down through generations or an internationally recognised film, stories teach us that despite the differences in our accents, languages, or traditions, we all long for the same things: connection, understanding, and a sense of belonging.

Asking students at RISS what their favourite book/movie from their country/culture was, turned into chaos. Everyone ran to tune in with memories from their childhood, including books they remember reading, such as Nono Descobre o Espelho (Nono Discovers the Mirror) from Brazil, Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not) from the Philippines and Juha's Adventures from Egypt. And movies they remember watching, such as Kung Fu Hustle from Hong Kong and Goodbye Julia from Sudan.

If I tried to list all the books and movies, I'd probably be able to complete the whole RISSUE with this one topic. From the pages we turn to the screens we watch, we are all one and we are all united into one big community at RISS.

“I find books to be a form of escapism from the monotony of the every day.” Anonymous

“Growing up, I would watch this movie endlessly while singing along. I can quote almost all of the famous lines, too.” Anonymous



ROTTERDAM
INTERNATIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOL



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