

# Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 34 | 2023-2024



**inter-community  
school zurich**

EST. 1960



- The Inter-Community School is committed to providing a supportive and enabling learning environment in which all members of the community are challenged to achieve their individual potential, encouraged to pursue their passions, and expected to fulfil their responsibilities.

# Welcome to Connections

The ICS School Magazine • Issue 34 | 2023-2024

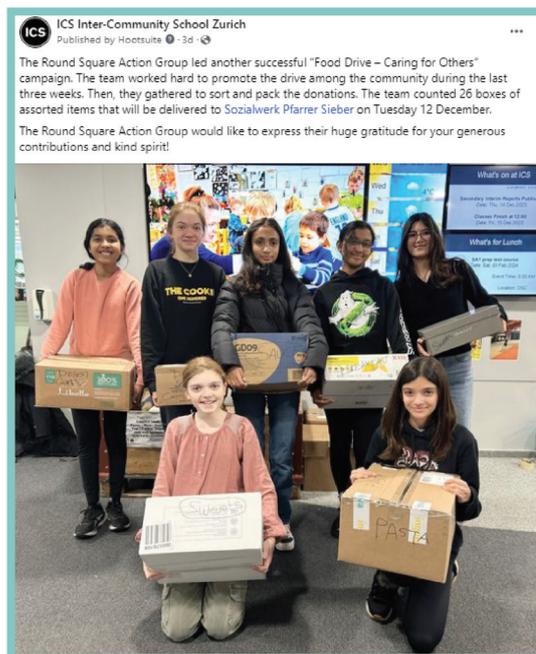
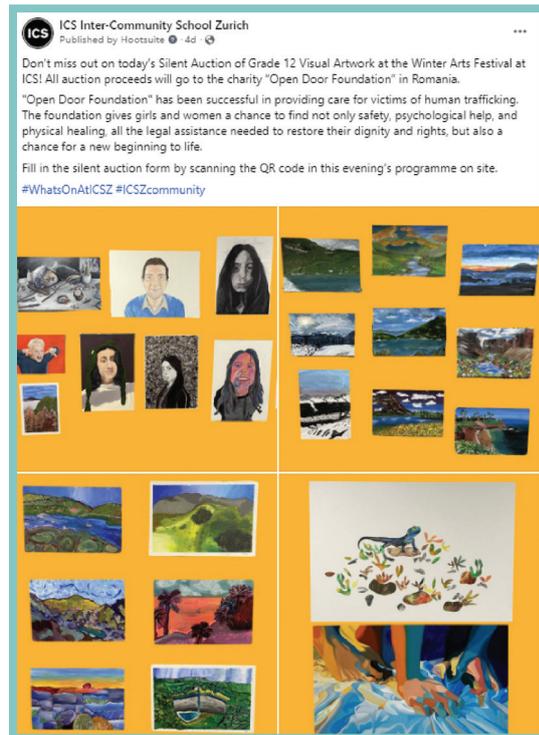
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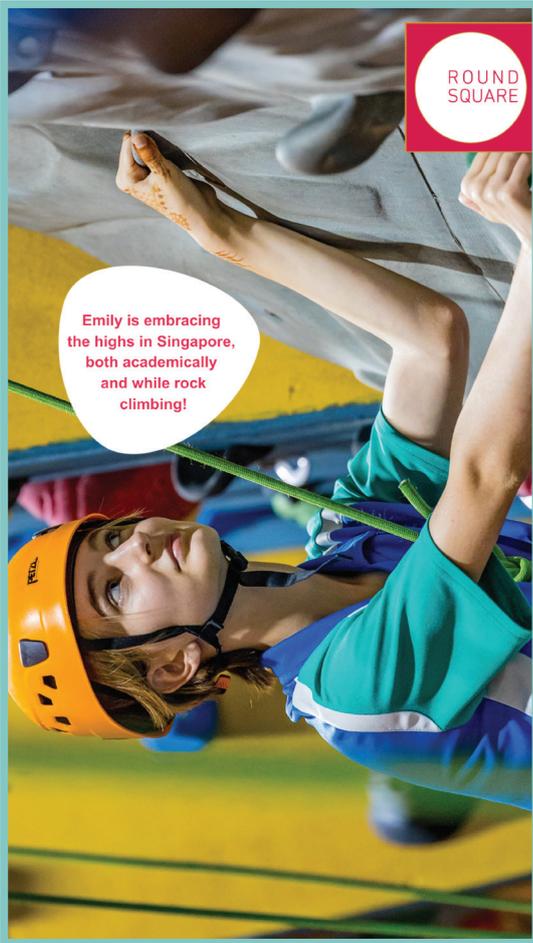
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# Snapshots

## Looking back over the last few months at ICS

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ROUND SQUARE

Emily is embracing the highs in Singapore, both academically and while rock climbing!

ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hootsuite · November 9

We love hearing your memories and experiences; if you ever want to share a piece of your journey with us, we are all ears! Drop us a message, and let's keep those connections alive. #ICSczcommunity #LifeAfterICSZ #ICSZalumni

“ Catching up with our ICS history teacher, Mr. Peter Mackenzie, who's enjoying retirement in Windhoek, Namibia. We both took a trip down memory lane as I shared my journey from being part of the first IGCSE cohort at ICS to now working as a Clinical Psychologist and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist in Cape Town. Time flies, but the memories last forever! ”

ICS Alumni Francois Rabie, ICS Student 1989 - 1992

ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hootsuite · November 24 at 11:30 AM

HOW WE EXPRESS OURSELVES – Grade 3 has been inquiring into cultural identities through the Arts and Design. We proudly present our collection of artefacts and films representing our individual identities, family and school cultures.

"Swedish and Japanese Fusion: This piece is a fusion of my family culture and Japanese because my Mom and Dad are Swedish and we speak Swedish together. I love Japan looks so that is why I picked Japan." – Paper Mache Mask by Tom

"Mexican and Hong Kong Fusion: This piece is a fusion of my family culture and Hong Kong culture because I'm Mexican but I was born in Hong Kong. My last memory of that place was a blur but my Asian side still glows." – Necklace by Frida

"Dutch and Japanese Fusion: This piece is a fusion of my family culture and another because I am Dutch and the Netherlands are famous for their windmills. I fused it with Japan because there are a lot of Japanese things. The patterns, sunshade and shoes are all Japanese." – Badge by Olivia

ICS Inter-Community School Zurich  
Published by Hootsuite · November 1

🎉🎭 The thrill of a live performance! The Performing Arts Department's "Secondary ARTS ALIVE #1" was a true celebration of talent from the melodious notes to the dramatic pauses. Let's keep the applause going! 🎵👏 #WhatsOnAtICSZ #StudentLifeICSZ #PerformingArts #LivePerformance

# ICS Shines in SCIS Tournaments

A Celebration of Sport and Community

by **James Penstone**, Secondary Principal

At ICS, we're proud of our long-standing tradition in sports, deeply woven into the fabric of our community. As a founding member of the reimagined Sports Council of International Schools (SCIS), we continue to cherish our athletic prowess, dating back decades. SCIS, established in the 1980s, and recently reformed to adapt to the post-pandemic sports landscape, stands as a testament to our commitment to using sport as a medium for cultural immersion and building champion people, not just champion sportspeople.



Our Middle School teams recently showcased their talents in SCIS tournaments across Europe, with remarkable results. The Middle School Girls Football team clinched second place in Prague, while the Middle School Boys team Football emerged victorious in Budapest. Our Cross Country teams excelled in Bucharest, with the boys securing the overall first place. In tennis, both boys' and girls' teams made us proud with their commendable rankings. These achievements are a reflection of our students' dedication and the robust sports culture at ICS.

At the heart of SCIS and ICS lies a fundamental belief: through sport, students gain invaluable experiences, learning resilience, teamwork, and cultural appreciation. We're not just participating in sports tournaments; we're fostering a global community connected through sports. The Homestay Programmes and cultural tours offered during these tournaments enhance this experience, allowing our students to build lifelong connections.

As we continue our journey with SCIS, we are excited about the future. These tournaments are not just about winning; they are about growing, learning, and connecting. Here's to the success of our sports teams and the bright future of SCIS.

**Go Tigers!**



# Continuing the Conversation About Technology

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By **Lucy M. Gowdie**, Head of School

As we came to the end of Allison Ochs's visit, there was time for our community to give thought to the contribution that she made to our school during her visit.

It is true that the content of her conversations can be confronting, and can make us all uncomfortable, but these are necessary conversations we must have, for the betterment of our young people and their sense of belonging at our school.

I was long ago taught, you cannot fix what you don't acknowledge, and so it is that we stand and listen to the voices of our young people in their struggles with social media, with social content, and the impact of both on their self-esteem.

Ours is a school that is ardent in our belief that we work together with our families in partnership, aligned in our values and understanding, in our expectations of what we want for our young people – nowhere is this more important than the space that is technology.

There is no doubt that education sits at the coal face of this work – that our values must stand at the fore of the decisions we make regarding what technology is used for, when it is used, and most importantly of all – why we use it.

I spoke with parents about the lifting of the lid on social media in our school, not in the broader society around us, but in our school, for this is where we can have the greatest impact, and we will.

“I stated that it is unsurprising to me that our young people are so challenged by notions of self, of right and of wrong, of belonging and of place, when so much misinformation rests within the palm of their hands, so readily available, yet without providing them the context or a curriculum to explain what it all means.”

Across the week, be it in our ICT meetings, our School Executive, or our Grade Level conversations, we took heed of the exposure of our young people in the online world, and through robust conversation with Allison, come to a position where it is imperative that we confront the brutal facts of the place we inhabit, and act upon those facts for the safety of our children.

Our community can anticipate further information pertaining to the points raised over the course of conversations had. They include but are not limited to:

When social media use outside of school impacts students within it  
E-safety at school and the mechanisms for protection of learning at ICS  
Sharing of struggles on social media and the impact on self-esteem

We look forward to continuing the conversation, and advancing our curriculum in a space that enables our students to feel confident in who they are, and to feel safe in their school.



*“I stated that it is unsurprising to me that our young people are so challenged by notions of self, of right and of wrong, of belonging and of place, when so much misinformation rests within the palm of their hands, so readily available, yet without providing them the context or a curriculum to explain what it all means.”*

Learning Happens  
Everywhere



# A Glimpse Into the Model United Nations Club at ICS

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By **Eliot Taylor**, Secondary German Language Acquisition and Global Futures Teacher

In the preamble to the United Nations Charter stands a universal commitment to tolerance, peace, co-existence and the advancement of all peoples. In these uncertain days, it can be reassuring to cast an eye over the spirit of optimism which pervaded and reverberated around the world in the aftermath of the Second World War. It can, however, be transformational to witness students embodying and living these values as part of the Model United Nations (MUN).

MUN helps foster and give an appropriate voice and space to students who wish to come up with solutions to real-world problems and work through them collaboratively and in a spirit of genuine internationalism. As a teacher in an international school, it is therefore a privilege to see our values and principles in action and demonstrated by remarkable young people.

A year in preparation, from 27-29 October 2023, eight ICS Secondary students attended the Institut Montana Zugerberg's annual MUN conference. It was their first experience, and a first for ICS for a number of years. The students' initial nervous excitement morphed into a determination to work together with others and to fully gain from the experience. Whether speaking publicly, preparing and researching to represent the positions of as diverse a set of delegations as Fiji to Peru, or negotiating and interacting with students from a range of schools and other countries, our students embraced the challenge with admirable stoicism and zeal, all the while still maintaining a sense of humour and developing friendships. Of course, there were tears, frustrations and nerves, but the enduring image was one of immense enjoyment and intense engagement. All our students spoke publicly and collaborated with others and were a credit to themselves. For me, the best sign of this was fevered anticipation on the bus in the mornings and evenings as the students prepared for another day of debating and diplomacy.

The success of our trip earlier this term has served as a catalyst for the expansion of the school's MUN club. It is entirely student led, providing opportunities for students to support one another and learn more about the key practices of MUN. Moreover, it has galvanised and motivated a number of the students to consider career pathways in international relations. MUN may be a simulation, but its benefits are very real. It puts students out of their comfort zone and encourages risk and creativity. Most importantly, it is self-perpetuating and all the students who attended the Zugerberg conference remain eager for similar experiences.



There is a neat symmetry between the missions and values of an international school and the United Nations. Indeed, living in Switzerland and being part of a community within which 'the principles of understanding and respect between individuals, communities, cultures and nations are promoted' <sup>1</sup> derives from an internationalism that transcends our context and is derived from a spirit of internationalism and peace which can be traced back to the Locarno conference of the 1920s and the creation of the League of Nations. By participating in the MUN programme, our students become more aware and responsive to these underlying principles and become ambassadors for the values we stand for. What more could we ask for from the leaders of tomorrow?

# Design Technology Students Showcase Innovation and Learning

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by **Daniel Bush**, Secondary Head of Design

In an exploration of design concepts, Grade 11 Design & Technology students have recently immersed themselves in their modelling projects. The focus of this initiative has been to delve into the realm of iterative design, allowing students to hone their skills through hands-on experiences.

The primary objective of the project was the development of modern and stylistic lamps, employing a wide range of modelling techniques, including 3D modelling in foam and computer-aided design. The students also experimented with materials such as foamboard, cardboard, and paper, pushing the boundaries and discovering the limitations of each material. Integral to the project was the cultivation of effective communication skills, with an emphasis on competencies in sketching and annotation. These skills are seen as crucial preparation for the students' upcoming internal assessments, a key component of their qualification at the diploma level.



As part of their project, students developed skills such as time management, 3D printing logistics, and the user's perspective in product design. The project encouraged an inquiry-based approach, fostering resilience and requiring students to engage their critical thinking skills to achieve optimal outcomes for the intended user.

“The beauty of the whole project and indeed the course is that it prepares students for problems in life and equips them with the ability to take different approaches to solve them,” says Daniel Bush, emphasising the real-world applicability of the curriculum.

Working collaboratively, students learned to leverage feedback from their peers, embracing failure as an integral aspect of the design process. This iterative approach, though challenging initially, is recognised as paramount in achieving high-quality outcomes.

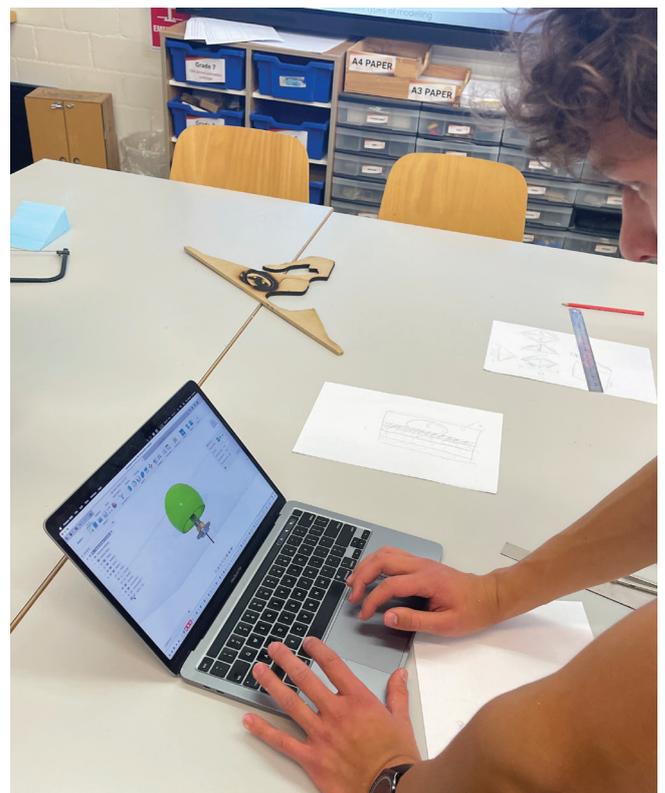
The culmination of the project involves not only the production of a prototype model in foam but also a

3D-printed version designed through computer-aided design. This challenge demands meticulous planning and a considerable investment of time.

To showcase their achievements, students will present their finished products in both physical and digital formats, including posters, technical drawings, and exploded drawings. This comprehensive portfolio will serve as a valuable asset for future university interviews.

The students have shown great enthusiasm, with each lesson providing valuable insights into their design preferences and the challenges faced by designers on a daily basis. Through these projects, students are not only acquiring technical skills but are also being prepared for the intricacies of the real world, where adaptability and innovative thinking are essential.

The design programme goes beyond the traditional classroom setting, offering students a holistic education that goes far beyond textbooks and exams. As these young designers continue to evolve, their experiences in these workshops will undoubtedly shape how they approach internal assessments and future design projects, ensuring they are well-prepared for the dynamic and ever-changing landscape of design.



# A Day of Inspiration and Aspiration

Reflecting on the ICS Career Fair 2023

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by James Penstone, Secondary Principal

As we look back on our highly successful ICS Career Fair, it is hard not to be filled with a sense of pride and optimism for the future. In December, our classrooms in the Diploma Studies Centre buzzed with the calm energy and focused interest of our Grade 10 and 11 students. Together, they embraced the opportunity to connect with a diverse group of professionals at our 11th Annual Career Fair, resonating all the while with this year's theme, "Success Is Not A Straight Line."



A series of panel discussions covered a wide array of fields from Engineering and Technology to Non-Profit and Health, Finance to Communications and Marketing. The Q&A sessions generated a comfortable environment for students to ask candid questions, allowing them to explore the realities, challenges and rewards of various professions. The stories shared by our panellists served as a powerful reminder that success with any career can be measured in many ways and often involves navigating unexpected twists and turns, as reflected by this year's theme.

The notion of a simple A to B route with a given career has been called into question by today's increasingly complex world. However, as was clear in many of the sessions, traits such as resilience, adaptability, creativity, and intercultural understanding, as well as ethical and emotional intelligence, should serve our students very well as they enter a fast-changing landscape of employment.



The afternoon was also significant for our Grade 10 students, who were introduced to the diverse array of Diploma Programme (DP) choices available at ICS. Through presentations by the Heads of Departments and individual sessions with DP teachers, students gained in-depth knowledge about each subject, helping them make informed decisions for their academic futures.

As we look back at the day, it is clear that the Career Fair and Options afternoon serves as a platform not just for gathering information, but also for igniting interest and envisioning future possibilities. To our students, the day gave a glimpse into their possible futures, filled as they are with opportunities and countless paths to explore. And to us, it was a reaffirmation of our commitment to empowering our students to take ownership of their learning and to connect this to the real world.





# Celebrating the Enigmatic World of Art: Arcana

By **Andrew Bell**, Primary Design Teacher

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In November, the Primary Arts team hosted an exhibition titled Arcana, which showcased the transformative power of art and artists at ICS. The Main Hall and surrounding arts classrooms were transformed into different spectacles, inviting students and their families to immerse themselves in the world of creativity. Our theme, “Arcana,” was chosen as it resonated with the enigmatic nature of art, asking students and visitors to explore their ability to transform ordinary ideas into extraordinary expressions.

Walking through the school, attendees found themselves amidst various art installations and activities. The Grade 3 students created an installation piece titled “Midnight City,” which imagined a magical city at night featuring bat-themed buildings and expansive bridges connecting neon islands. The Grade 5 design students explored graphic design by making their own tarot cards. They used generative AI tools like Midjourney to help brainstorm card ideas and then an app called Vectr to bring these ideas to life.

Other parts of the event were set up to engage attendees actively. Our Visual Arts team invited guests to explore printmaking with an unusual medium: Legos. Students created designs with flat Lego pieces and hand printed different designs on heavyweight paper. We were also joined by visiting guests, illustrator Barbara Nigg and artist Clare Goodwin. We worked together with the community to create otherworldly illustrations and contemporary art installations. These activities allowed our participants to create and take home a piece of the evening's magic.





The enchantment continued with a captivating performance called “The Lost Students.” This theatrical presentation, brought to life by the Primary Drama Club, served as a stage for narratives to unfold and imaginations to soar.

The exhibition demonstrated the ability of art to transform not only the physical world, but also the minds and hearts of those who experience it. Attendees were captivated by the immersive experience, reflecting on the profound impact art can have on perceptions and emotions. Arcana sparked discussions and reflections within the school community, prompting deeper appreciation for the limitless possibilities of art. The exhibition aimed not only to celebrate the talents of the students, but also igniting a renewed passion for creativity and artistic exploration. Arcana served as a testament to the transformative power of art, inspiring us to embrace its magic and explore the mysteries that lie within its expressions, and we look forward to many iterations in the coming years.



# The SGIS Symphony Orchestra

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By **Laura Challoner**, Secondary Performing Arts

As a growing Music Department at ICS, we are continually looking for opportunities to challenge our students, develop their learning and explore the world of ensemble performance. In September 2022, the Swiss Group of International Schools (SGIS) Arts Committee was established, strengthening the network of Music teachers across Switzerland and giving rise to the first SGIS Symphony Orchestra Festival, an opportunity for senior students to perform challenging orchestra repertoire together. Aligning with our school mission, ICS were keen to participate and ‘challenge our musicians to achieve their individual potential and pursue their passions.’

The 2023 SGIS Symphony Orchestra Festival was hosted by International School Basel on Thursday 02 November – Saturday 04 November 2023. With a well established ICS strings programme, string players from Grades 9-12 (with a minimum Grade 4 ABRSM experience) were invited to participate. Expectations were high with students required to learn and prepare 8 pieces, prior to the festival. Twice weekly rehearsals supported preparations and our ICS participants rose to the challenge wonderfully, learning and refining their independent knowledge about rehearsal technique, bowing, fingering, piece analysis, periodical style, and instrument role. Our students' preparation was exemplary and demonstrated the true meaning of resilience and perseverance, completing all preparations in just 7 weeks.

The final SGIS Symphony Orchestra consisted of 62 members selected from International Schools throughout Switzerland. Participating schools included: Aiglon College, Institut Le Rosey, Ecole Internationale de Genève, ICS Inter-Community School Zurich, International School of Zug and Luzern, and International School Basel (the host school). During the festival, students had the unique experience of working with no fewer than 6 different conductors, a representative music teacher from every participating school. Each brought their own unique conducting style and rehearsal technique. Intensive rehearsals were scheduled across three days of the festival, culminating with a final concert showcasing their work on Saturday 04 November 2023. The event made for an unforgettable musical experience for all involved.

*“I had the most wonderful experience getting to know fellow musicians, engaging with various conductors, and connecting with a variety of pieces as an orchestra. The variation of conductors was immensely beneficial to my development as it prevented the pieces from blurring together, and I had the opportunity to see how different conductors engaged with the orchestra.... I would, without a doubt, participate in this event again.”*

Amaya G.

*“I really enjoyed coming together for the final performance. It really showed the hard work that we put in as a group, and it was great to hear the pieces in all their might. I learned quite a bit, ranging from the importance of bowing to how the dynamics of a piece can change the atmosphere. I was surprised at how “responsive” we were to the conductor, I thought it would have taken a while before we mastered dynamics. I would definitely like to participate in this event again!”*

Alexandra T.





Musicianship is a continual learning journey and once they returned to school, our ICS representatives participated in a String Workshop, led by Peter McGuire (lead violinist) and Mattia Zappa (cellist) from the Tonhalle Orchestra, Zurich. This wonderful experience was organised by Li Molla (a member of our P.Arts Booster Club) and supported by the Parents Association; we thank them for their support.

The workshop was scheduled to support our SGIS Symphony musicians as they adjust and prepare to showcase their work at the Winter Arts Festival as a String Ensemble. Peter and Mattia gave excellent advice and insights into orchestral playing in addition to performing with and coaching the students. A very positive experience for all.

*“It was a real pleasure to work with your students on Thursday. Thank you for the openness and enthusiasm, which really set the tone for a lovely session.”*

Peter McGuire

*“It’s been a pleasure working together today at your school. It was a very nice atmosphere, with fantastic attention from the young musicians.”*

Mattia Zappa

Congratulations to our ICS student music representatives! We look forward to building on this experience.

# Moments of Connection, Celebration and Cheer

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By **Nathaniel Atherton**, Primary Principal

Starting at the end of November, ICS fully embraced the festive season with open arms. From a bustling Winter Market to melodious musical performances, the school's array of festive events brought together the entire community in a celebration of arts and holiday cheer.



On Saturday 02 December 2023, the Parents' Association hosted a spectacular Winter Market, transforming the school into a Winter wonderland. With over 30 vendors offering a kaleidoscope of goods and gifts, the Market was a shopper's paradise. Providing some extra holiday sparkle was the variety of performances in the Primary Atrium, creating a backdrop of festive tunes and dance. Yet, likely the most glorious highlight for many a youngster, was the opportunity to connect with jolly old Saint Nic!

Wednesday 06 December marked this year's appearance of the ICS Singers at the Zurich Singing Christmas Tree. The 20-metre tree at Werdmühleplatz, which is celebrating its 25th Jubilee, has become an ICS annual tradition that never ceases to amaze. Our talented students performed an array of holiday classics, from the jubilant "Let It Snow", to the toe-tapping "Rocking Around the Christmas Tree." The crowd favourite was undoubtedly "Blitzen's Boogie," a song that has become a hallmark of ICS Singers. The two performances, witnessed by over 500 attendees at each show, warmed all in attendance.

The following night, ICS hosted The Winter Arts Festival, a showcase of musical talent that resonated with the warmth of the season. Choirs, bands, poets, and soloists came together in a symphony of festive melodies. Each performance, from harmonious choral numbers to soulful solo acts, echoed the school's commitment to students sharing their passions, fostering creativity and building connections. The Silent Art Auction, featuring beautiful artwork from our Grade 7-12 visual artists enhanced the evening, with proceeds going to the "Open Door Foundation". We also thank performance artist, writer, and educator Kat François and composer Richard Free for their on campus residencies and their support of our performing arts students leading up to this year's Winter Arts Festival!

As we wrapped up another successful series of holiday events, the sense of community and joy these festivities bring to ICS is palpable. These events are more than just celebrations; they are a reflection of the vibrant and inclusive spirit that defines our school.



# Parents' Association

by **Christel Ahlawat**, PA Communications

We are wishing a fantastic 2024 to the whole ICS Community and we are so excited about what's coming up for this New Year!

But for now, before looking forward, let's look back a little at what has been accomplished in the last few months. There is so much to celebrate and remember.

As the Parents' Association, our main objective is to build a sense of community within the ICS families. To achieve this, events are key, as they bring us together, outside of school hours, to connect and share unforgettable moments. The end of 2023 was marked by two unmissable milestones in the PA event calendar: the Halloween Trunk or Treat Party and the Winter Market.

At the end of October, our school turned "spooky" and we were so impressed by the creativity deployed by the parents to decorate their trunks and the program put together by the organisation committee: treasure hunt, haunted house, dance party, a photo booth and so much more.

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In December, our school turned “sparkly” as we transformed it into a winter wonderland for the Winter Market. We even had a snow storm that day to complete the theme!!! Around 30 vendors were present offering many unique gifts. Our Primary Atrium hosted a cosy, communal lunch before welcoming more than 20 performances given by students of all ages and even some parents. And that’s not all, as there were also many fun activities for our kids. Santa paid us a visit and this year, once again, we had our toy tombola and a superb arts and craft station.

Both times, our community was at the rendezvous, not only because so many families turned up on the day, but because so many parents volunteered to support these two fantastic events. This is the great spirit that defines us as a community. It’s a lot of work and we all live very busy lives, but each time, around 80 parents donated their time to help organise these events and build our community. So once again, thank you all because it truly does take a village!

And now, let’s get excited with what’s coming up. On 20 April, we are hosting our all new Spring Party to kick off the warm and sunny season. In its first year, it will be Brazilian themed and will take place at LakeSide restaurant. At the end of May, the International Festival will close the PA event calendar for the school year to celebrate the numerous nationalities and cultures that make us, US. See you there.







# inter-community school zurich

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