

## Fifth Form Trip Imperial War Museum and the Houses of Parliament

After a long journey we arrived in London. First stop: Imperial War Museum. Much to our amusement we were 'smuggled' in through the back entrance and told to deposit our bags into a huge dustbin! Following this, we were led by someone, whom we thought was our tour guide, to the lavatories where we were left to 'go it alone'.

We split into groups and chose one of the many staircases, hoping to land up in the right part of the exhibition. Instead, we landed in the midst of a Channel 4 film crew. After having dodged the line of 'camera-fire', we found ourselves face-to-face with another sort of fire: we had walked straight into 1914, trench-warfare! It was a brilliant reconstruction of life, and the appalling conditions experienced by the soldiers in the trenches. After having made our way back to 1995 and the main part of the museum, we attempted to see as many of the exhibits and displays as possible in the little time left before our departure for the Houses of Parliament.

We had a break for lunch on the lawn outside the museum before returning to the coach for the next part of the journey.

The Houses of Parliament were an exciting experience. Our tour guide was one of many students who give up their free time to take parties round and explain about the Houses. We were led through St Stephen's Hall to a room where we were met by a

Conservative MP, a junior minister for education. Another school joined us in a fairly heated discussion about educational issues. Interesting points arose and many of us left with a new interest in our education system.

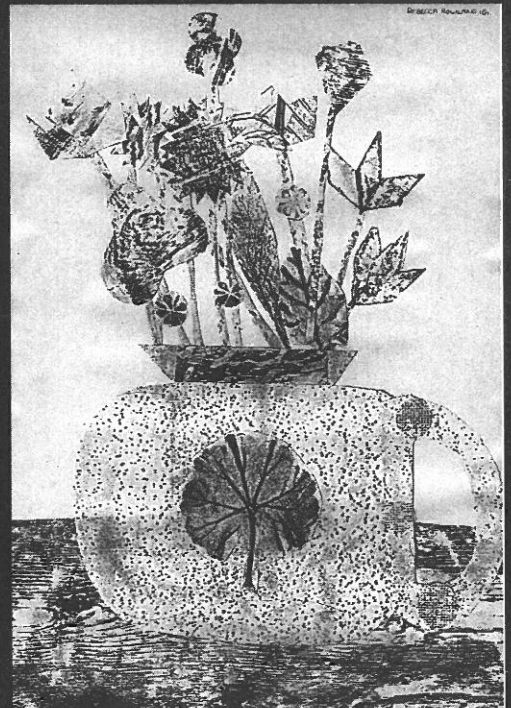
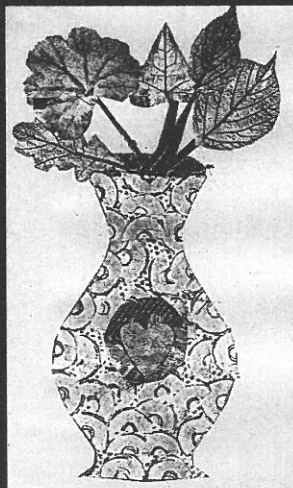
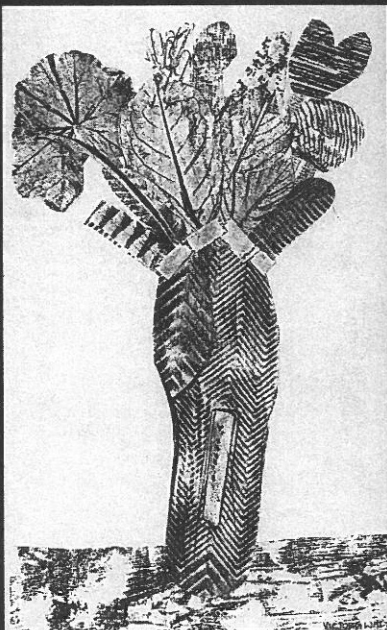
We were shown the House of Commons, which seemed far smaller than it does on television. We all were given a chance to lean on the boxes where Mr Major and Mr Blair stand during debates, and address the House. This seemed a great privilege and some of us imagined doing it for real one day. Our tour guide warned us that we were strictly forbidden from sitting on the benches as they were reserved for MPs. We learnt how to vote to pass laws, as the politicians do, in the Committee Corridor.

We were shown through the Queen's Chambers, which were beautiful, to the House of Lords. It is furnished in red, as opposed to green in the House of Commons, as this is a more expensive colour. We saw the throne where the Queen makes her speech when she opens Parliament, and the Woolsack where the Lord Chancellor sits as a reminder of the wealth of Britain in previous years. Above the House of Lords is a balcony where people are allowed to sit and watch the House in process. We were told the amusing story of how, during the 1960s, a curtain was placed around the balcony in an effort to preserve the modesty of the wives of the Lords who took to wearing rather short skirts!

There was a tremendous amount to take in, but even if only a fraction can be remembered, it was definitely a brilliant school trip.

*Amoret Abis & Vanessa Cuddeford, 5R*

FROTTAGE: by, left to right, Victoria Walters, Heide Mills, and Rebecca Rowland, 1G



## On the boards . . .

### Annie Get Your Gun

Irving Berlin's musical *Annie Get Your Gun* is based on an American legend. Annie Oakley was a real-life sharpshooter in the days when the 'old West' was giving way to the America of the big cities and the automobile. The myths of this time were more important than ever and 'Buffalo Bill' built them up in his famous Wild West show.

*Annie Get Your Gun* features these larger than life characters. Annie is a 'hill billy' who can outshoot anyone – even the famous Frank Butler, the star of the Wild West Show. But Annie finds true love and realizes that 'You Can't Get a Man with a Gun'. In a wildly 'politically incorrect' finale, she deliberately loses the shooting contest and plays the role of the helpless female to ensure that she wins Frank. The audience is, however, left in no doubt that it is Annie who will be in charge after the wedding.

This is an energetic and joyous show, full of life, and an ideal vehicle for young performers. We had a large cast ranging from first formers to upper sixth and a few brave members of staff to help out with the male chorus. Everyone took their roles seriously and there was a very good sense of teamwork. Musicals demand a great deal from all concerned: the staging is usually difficult; the dancing needs a lot of rehearsal and both singing and acting have to be fitted into a very tight rehearsal schedule.

The production team had full co-operation from the backstage crew and from the principals and chorus. Heather and Louise ran a tight ship backstage and did not hesitate to exert their proper authority. Wendy Whatling was a tower of strength as choreographer, and her numbers had vitality and imagination. Mr. Roser, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Hatherly and Mr. Johnson took part very sportingly and to good effect. Once again, Mrs. Lock and her helpers provided us with some brilliantly executed scenery and Mr. Grant gave generously of his time to set up the lights. Mr. Knight sacrificed a great deal of time and energy into promoting the show, selling tickets and organizing the whole business side and the front of house. My long suffering collaborator, Miss Best, brought her very practical experience of the theatre to bear on the show and was very helpful and supportive. Last, but not least, I should like to thank Mr. Jay for bringing his usual enthusiasm and good humour to the musical direction and for giving stirring support with the band and the whistle!

The girls who took part in the show performed with verve and confidence. They were a pleasure to act with and endured some long rehearsals with great patience. Olivia set

an excellent example to the cast by her calmness and the seeming ease with which she coped with a very demanding leading role. She is writing about the show from her side, but I should like to express my thanks to her and to the other principals for their commitment.

Finally, as this was the last show that Bill Melhuish, the school carpenter, worked on before his retirement, I must express my thanks for all he has done for school plays and musicals over the last eight years. No matter how unreasonable the demands, Bill has done his best to give us the stage construction we have needed.

School productions have a special atmosphere of their own and do much to encourage team spirit and care for others. I was delighted to have over 70 people involved in this production. I hope that many will go on enjoying theatre either as performers or members of an audience and that *Annie Get Your Gun* will be a happy memory for them. It will be for me . . . .

M.E.W.



### A personal point of view

As far back as I can remember, I have always wanted to become an actress. Call it what you will, a life-long ambition; enthusiasm towards the theatre; a longing for achievement; a hope of fame. Because of these feelings I have for the stage, it was a dream come true for me to play the part of 'Annie Oakley, the greatest sharpshooter of the Wild West'. The only problem that bothered me about this part was, I had no experience with a gun. From this moment, every time I went baby-sitting I found myself reciting my lines and firing with a child's toy gun. Little did I know what I had in store when I was to handle the real thing!

Probably over the whole of East Sussex, innocent babies were being serenaded to sleep by the seventy individual voices that made up the show people and stars of the Wild West shows. Fortunately, unless Mr Roser is a secret baby-sitter, my charges were the only ones to be soothed into slumberland by outbreaks of rifle and pistol fire.

Rehearsals began and whilst remembering my words, finding the right notes to sing and figuring out the dance steps, I had to keep a constant smile frozen on my face. Who said an actress has an easy life! It must have been the same for everyone, trying to get the right movements and the right expressions to carry the show

forward as a seamless production.

I had pretty much mastered this dancing and singing trick when along came the real rifle. Things started hotting up when I took hold of the gun. It was a lot heavier than my practice toy gun! I was instructed how to fire it whilst trying to look a natural. I fired the gun and then realised the gun was on the wrong side. Then the caps got stuck! How was I ever to manage in the real production? I never mastered the gun shooting business but the production went relatively smoothly, and, seemingly in a flash, *Annie Get Your Gun* was over and done with.

Now I needed to carry on with my normal life. But life did not carry on as normal! I was no longer Annie Oakley, my dream character, but Olivia Lipscombe of St Mary's Hall.

I think we must all feel the same way: that the few moments on stage are worth the endless hours of rehearsal and that there is something extraordinarily real about the unreal world of show business. Let's hope that we are all there again next year.

*Olivia Lipscombe, LVI*

*Another scene from Annie Get Your Gun*



A review of  
The Glass Menagerie

at The Donmar Warehouse

I have read several plays by Tennessee Williams, but in my opinion *The Glass Menagerie* is his greatest work. Therefore, when my mother was given four tickets to go and see it for her birthday, it was as much a present for me as it was for her.

Being a relative ignoramus when it comes to London theatres, I cannot say that the Donmar Warehouse was the only theatre for the job, but in my opinion it was absolutely perfect. As the name would suggest, the Donmar is a converted warehouse. It is a relatively small theatre seating only 252 people. It is not elaborate in design, and therefore it lends itself well to *The Glass Menagerie*, which is set in a rather dingy basement flat.

Elaborate props, common in other West End theatres, are wasted on me. I feel that all the 'razzamatazz' detracts from the quality of acting and the storyline, both of which, in this case, were superb.

The scenery consisted of a metal staircase, which led to a walkway that surrounded an atrium, which in turn connected with another staircase leading down to the stage on which was set the spartan 'drawing room' of the Wingfield residence. This construction conveyed very effectively Tennessee Williams' description of the basement flat where Tom, Laura, and Amanda Wingfield lived and which was only accessible by a fire escape. The actors and actresses would enter and exit through this fire escape, and to do so would pass very close to the audience who were seated around the atrium, also behind the walkway. This, to me, made the play all the more believable, as the metal construction was very realistic and would not have looked at all out of place in 1940's working-class America.

I have been to other plays before, but this one I enjoyed more than any other. I am fascinated by Tennessee Williams' play, and I loved the theatre and uncomplicated scenery, and the fact that you were so close to the actors you could have reached out and touched them. What really made it come alive for me, however, was the quality of acting.

Amanda Wingfield was played by Zoë Wanamaker, Tom Wingfield by Ben Chaplin, Laura Wingfield by Claire Skinner and 'The Gentleman Caller' by Mark Dexter, who was making his debut in the West End. They were all outstanding, but I think Ben Chaplin as Tom was the one whom I shall remember most. As a result of reading the play several times, I already had a preconceived idea of what the character of Tom should be like. Ben Chaplin fitted perfectly my image of the volatile, passionate young man who feels trapped by his mother and the life he is leading. However, he also conveyed the other, more gentle and caring side of Tom in his relationship with his sister. Chaplin seemed to submerge himself completely in the character he was playing, and I am not being melodramatic when I say that his every word had me transfixed! It was a truly

passionate performance on his part.

Claire Skinner, too, portrayed the shy, nervous and self-conscious Laura beautifully. The very tone of her voice portrayed Laura's nervous and delicate nature, as, while projecting her voice to the audience, Skinner still gave the impression of talking in a meek whisper.

Zoë Wanamaker, being a very experienced actress, seemed to be totally at ease playing the pushy Amanda Wingfield, and I had no difficulty in believing that she really was Tom and Laura's mother. All three actors portrayed the relationships between each of them very vividly.

Mark Dexter made a good gentleman caller, although I feel that maybe this part is somewhat less demanding than the other roles, and does not leave so much room for artistic expression as the other characters do!

All in all the play was superb. I would not have changed a thing about it as the atmosphere of the theatre was very much in keeping with the atmosphere which Tennessee Williams wanted to convey; and the passionate and believable performances all came together to make an excellent and moving performance of an excellent and moving piece of literature!

Vanessa Cuddeford, 5R

My experience dancing with  
The Kirov Ballet

When I first went for the audition I was really nervous but when I stepped into the audition room I became full of confidence. There were two people taking the audition. Their names were Ursula Hagley and Christopher Slaughter. We started off doing a full ballet class. It included pliés, développés and sautés. I really enjoyed doing the class, it was great fun! Then we went on to learn some steps from the actual ballet itself. The music was soft and calm so the dance was flowing with grace. When Christopher and Ursula had seen us all dance they sat us down and told us that we all danced really well but they could not use all of us. They read out the numbers that they wanted to stay behind and go through to the final audition. At that point in time I crossed my fingers and hoped for the best. Then I could not believe it – they called out my number. I walked downstairs to where my mum was waiting. When I told her she was really happy for me. But I had to keep calm for the final audition.

When they called us up for the final audition I took a deep breath and walked upstairs and into the audition room. We learnt more steps from the ballet and again danced them for Christopher and Ursula. I felt I danced the best that I could have danced. Then they lined us up and picked some girls out and told them that they could not take everyone but that the girls had done really well to get that far. I felt sorry for those girls. Again I could not believe it. We were told that we would be getting a letter in a few days time to tell us when we would be rehearsing. There were too many

girls there so when we went to rehearsals some girls would have to go.

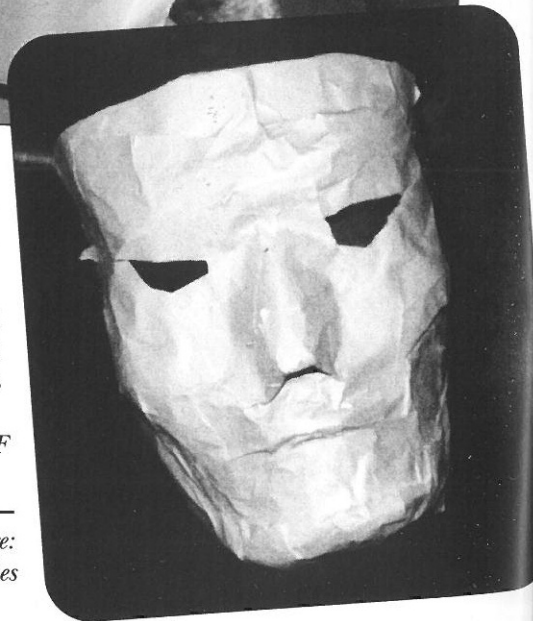
When I told my mum she could not believe it. That night at home I thought to myself: I actually beat over 200 girls. When we got the letter telling us when rehearsals were it told us that we would be rehearsing all week. But luckily my friend who also got in had a flat up in London – although I would not get to see my family for a week. When my mum dropped me off at my friend's house I cried because I have never been away from home before on my own.

On the first rehearsal we started to learn the dance. Some girls were too tall so they had to go. The Russian Meister got really angry with us and screamed at us in Russian. We had a translator there to translate for us. We were lined up in height order and given a partner. I was a boy to begin with but my partner could not do pointe work so I had to be a girl which meant I had to wear pointe shoes. It was agony the first day because I danced for three hours in pointe shoes. When I took them off I could not feel my toes at all. On the second day I was 10 minutes late and the Russian Meister was really angry. Later on that day my partner and I were asked to demonstrate a step and were told that we did it really well. At that moment I felt really proud. A couple of days later I was told that I was in the first group which meant dancing four out of six performances.

On the Friday morning we had a dress rehearsal at the London Coliseum. The stage was huge. On the Friday night I had my first performance and I was really nervous. I arrived at the Coliseum stage door at 7.30 pm. I was shown to my dressing room which I shared with six other girls. First I went to get my wig fitted. It was a blonde colour and it did not suit me at all. Then I got dressed into my dress and put my pointe shoes on, making sure that they were firmly tied. We were then lined up and led down to the wings of the stage. Then the introduction of the dance came on. I was the second girl in line. As I entered onto the stage I felt my confidence come back and I danced really well. For the whole of the dance I was at the front nearly all of the time. At the end of the dance we had to sit at the back of the stage for over 15 minutes and every one including me got a 'dead leg' which meant when we got up to go off stage no one could walk or feel her leg!

When I had finished all of my performances I was sad but I thought to myself how lucky I was to dance the *Sleeping Beauty* at the London Coliseum with the best in the world, the Kirov Ballet, and that is something that I will never forget.

Katherine Paddenburg, 2F



Pictures this page:  
Mask-making workshop in Theatre Studies

## Senior School Creative Work

### Gulliver's Shipwreck

I was on our large ship, the *Antelope*, as the ship's surgeon. We had been sailing on the ship for over six long, tiring months and we had already lost twelve young men from a storm. It was then that we heard the intimidating news that a raging storm many times worse than that which we had encountered recently, and only just survived, was about to occur. We were heading straight into it, and there was no easy escape.

The raging storm soon hit us, and the howling of the wind could be heard constantly in our ears. The torrential downpour came thickly, in great swamping sheets. Each towering, mounting crest pounded against the ship and sloshed across the drenched deck. The rough and stormy waves battered against the warped ship and sea-spray spattered up roughly, over everything, then trickled back to the angry seas, just to be tossed back up again, like a feather in a breeze. The ship was rocking dangerously about in the freezing waves, dripping wet. The gloomy sky loomed above, and between every massive raindrop, huge grey-black clouds could be seen with a fixed, sinister look.

Suddenly an awesome wave struck the ship, making it shudder violently, then the bow dipped right down under the waves and stayed there, so the ship began slowly and painfully to sink as the water filled up every available space. I sensed immediately that there was something wrong and so luckily I began to make my way up to the deck. On my way I saw a flood of water streaking down the steps. It was then that I just felt completely numb. It then hit me, hard, and I panicked. I don't remember exactly how I escaped but the next thing I knew was I was in the water and the ship was a way behind me. I was feeling completely miserable and dejected, but not cold. I had a numb feeling inside me and that stopped me from feeling cold. I felt determined to survive and although I had never learned to swim properly, I could just about manage to keep myself afloat. Many treacherous waves later, I became very tired and my whole body ached immensely. I began to give up hope.

Then a large, sturdy-looking piece of wood appeared – debris, a few feet away. I lunged out desperately for it, but missed. It disappeared from sight. I then saw my whole life flash by. Just then, after that, I saw the same piece of wood on the crest of a breaking wave. It rushed towards me on the wave and I grabbed on to it for dear life.

It seemed like hours I was stuck clinging desperately to that ragged piece of driftwood. I'm

sure I must have become unconscious at one point, for when I came back to the real world, I was only a little way from the shore. The sea had become peaceful, calm and tranquil as though all my worries had disappeared, although I knew they hadn't. In fact, my troubles had only just begun really. I splashed around in the still water, trying to get closer to the shore. When it was shallow enough, I waded in carefully to dry land. I staggered up the beach and got a safe way from the shore before I just let my weak, tired legs collapse under me. There I fell into a long, deep and troubled sleep . . .

Sarah Hatherly, 2E

### Treasure Island: an extract

It was not very long after this incident that there occurred the first of the mysterious events that rid us finally of the Captain.

It was a dull, stormy night and it was plain from the first that my poor father was little likely to see Spring. He sank in his chair and my mother and I kept ourselves busy with the inn, without thinking about the guest.

It was one January morning, very early and very cold. The Captain woke up earlier than usual, and got ready to go down to the beach, taking with him his cutlass, telescope and his hat. I still can remember his breath hanging like a line of string. The last sound I heard from him was that of a snort of indignation, as though he was still thinking of Dr Livesey.

Mother was upstairs with father, and I was laying out the breakfast table, ready for the Captain's return, when the parlour door opened. This man stepped in, whom I had never seen before. He was a very pale, tallowy creature, and though he wore a cutlass, he did not look like the sort of person to be a fighter. This man puzzled me as he was not sailorly, but had the look of the sea about him too.

He said he would care for some rum, so as I went to get it he sat on a chair and urged me to move towards him.

"Come here, sonny," he said, "come a bit nearer."

I walked nearer when he asked, "Is this the table set for my mate Bill?"

I told him I didn't know of a man named Bill, but, little did I know, Bill was the Captain.

"Well, " he said, and then carried on explaining who he was looking for. The Captain fitted with the description so I said, "He is out walking." Then the man replied, "Which way, sonny? Which way did he go?" . . .

Sara Toussi, 2E

## The Old Captain

The captain remained silent for two whole weeks. During the captain's vulnerable silence, I dared to ask for more money. This was a big mistake, which dragged me deeper into his sad story about his dealings with the one-legged pirate. After the captain finished crying on my shoulder I retired to my father's cheering inn. When I looked around the room I felt a shiver go up my spine: there was a cold wind coming from the doorway. As I turned my head to the door I realised there was a man in black standing there. This man was scruffily dressed in shabby black clothing with a scrawny, but yet fierce-looking, parrot on his shoulder. This seafaring man appeared to have the scars of a hundred battles engraved on his face. Worse than all this was the crutch he was holding in one hand. It could only mean one thing: my worst nightmare had arrived and was standing in my doorway, surrounded by swirling, crisp, autumn leaves.

I studied my situation. I was scared out of my skin and my head was screaming. In fact, the whole of me was screaming for help. I don't know how, I don't know why, but I treated him like any other customer. Then, at around nine-thirty, I ran to the captain's room and blurted out the bad news. He got up like a shot and ran to the window. I was shouting and screaming for him to run away: he wouldn't go. He just told me to calm down. I refused, so he gave me a double-barrelled glare. I asked him to tell me the whole story, but he wouldn't and just stormed out of the room.

A strange curiosity urged me to follow him downstairs to the bar. Neither the captain nor the peg-legged man was there. I rushed around the whole house looking for him. Eventually I gave up searching. Then, an invisible hand pulled me to the door. I looked out and saw the two men fighting.

The peg-legged man pulled a knife from his pocket and drove it deep into the captain's heart. As the captain lay dying he muttered the words, "You killed my daughter and now you have killed me." With that he took his last breath on earth and that was the last I ever heard of the peg-legged man.

*Dega Stephenson, 2E*

## Hong Kong

I remembered the ships in the harbour,  
they float like a ghost in the sea.  
The sea always shines,  
a crystal blue beam in our eyes,  
but changes into a beautiful gold dress  
when the sun sets.  
Ships are always busy  
to run round and across it,  
and hide in it,  
when the sky is in a bad temper.

*Theola Yuen, 3M1*

## The Sea Chest

### Chapter 4

I gave some more thought to the great sea chest. I think there could be something extremely valuable inside, and the man with the wooden leg is looking for it because it's been stolen from him. You see, the thing is no-one would dare ask about its presence, so it remains a secret.

Tonight the captain went too far, but it was my father who suffered. It was a quiet evening, and the captain had gathered us in silence again, for what I don't know. Then my father lost his temper: "I'm tired of this, ever since you came I've been losing money, because you scare customers away; and what is that stupid chest anyway?"

The captain blew through his nose, louder than ever before. He arose and drew a knife from his pocket. "If you ever mention the sea chest again, I swear you will die!" He slowly but steadily put the knife back in his pocket, blew through his nose once more, and walked out as if nothing had ever happened.

The next day was incredible. It started off as usual, until just after lunch. I was out to buy some eggs at the shop round the corner, when by chance I stopped by a hawker, to look at some trousers. There in the queue was an old man with a patch over his eye . . . and a wooden leg . . .

"Captain, captain, I've seen him." Surprisingly, he didn't blow through his nose. Instead a look of sheer terror spread across his face, and turned him white as snow. I'd never believed that the captain could be scared. He wasn't the type; you could only imagine him in a boat fighting a storm, and even then he wouldn't be scared. He arose, and grabbed my arm. "Are you sure, boy - where, when? for God's sake boy, can't you talk?"

"He was with a hawker down the road, about fifteen minutes ago."

"If he comes here, tell him you have never seen or heard of me in your life." He ran out of the room, and into his own. Then I heard a very odd click. I went into my father's room, and told him the whole story . . .

It's been two days now, and we haven't seen the captain yet. To be honest, though, I can't say that I'm sorry. My father can't bear the pressure of the recent happenings, and he is looking very frail.

It was only when I entered the captain's room, with all my courage, that I discovered any clue as to his whereabouts, and the reason for his odd visit. I was just sweeping out the fireplace when I noticed a piece of burnt paper on the grate. It was almost consumed so I couldn't really make it out. Actually, it didn't have any writing on it except something in another language. It was mostly pictures, but one mark interested me. I had seen it before somewhere. It was a gold circle with an elaborate cross in the centre . . .

I woke up suddenly in the middle of that night; something had come into my mind in a dream. I knew where I had seen that symbol - it was on the wooden leg

of the man I saw three days ago. I had also seen it in one more place. Of course! - it was on the lid of the great sea chest. This proved it. There was more to this than meets the eye. Also, after looking at the piece of paper more often, I found out what it could be: I have a feeling it is a map . . .

*Katherine Mathews, 2E*

### The Autumn Sinner

There she lies upon the frozen hill,  
Her body cold and lifeless,  
Tears once invaded her eyes,  
Now not a tinge of anger, nor of sadness she bears.

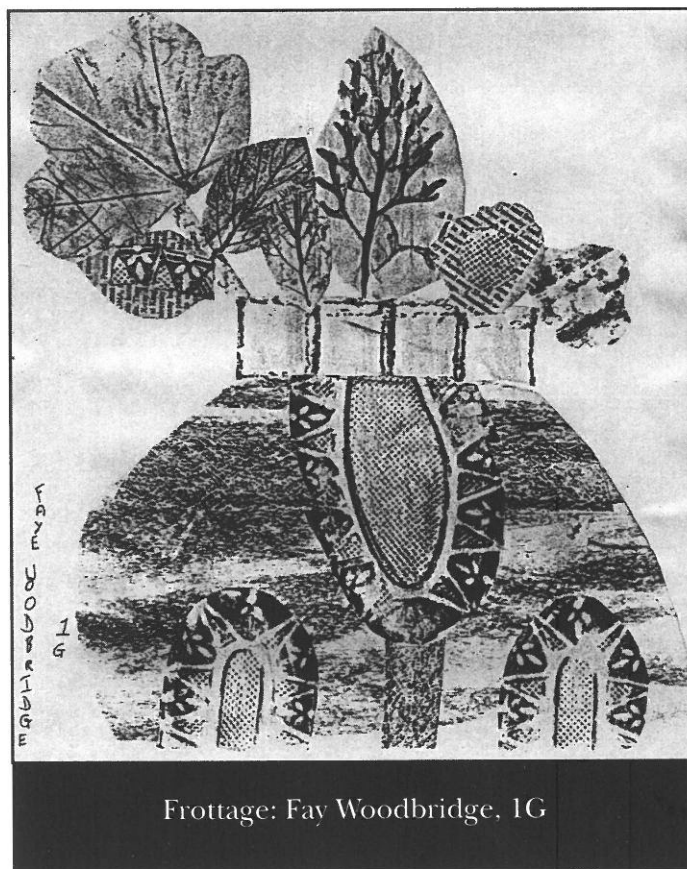
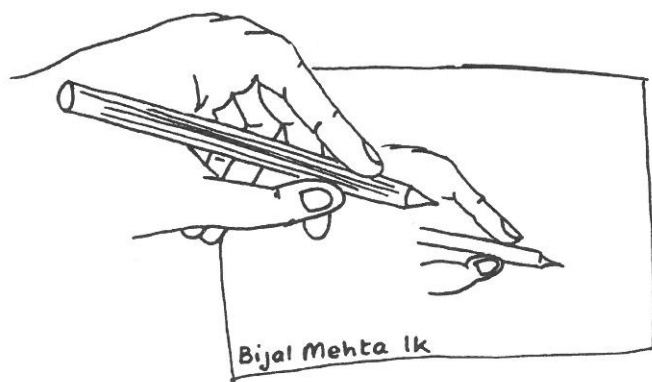
The autumn-coloured leaves,  
Fallen from the cold, pale sky,  
Have settled on her and round her.  
She is now almost unrecognisable,  
But we know she's there.

She has lost all her love,  
That precious love that took so many years to build up.  
It's gone in the painful flashing of a second,  
When a cruel, cold trap was drawn around her  
sorrowful heart.

As the whistling autumn wind,  
Blows through her fur,  
She heaves a last painful sigh,  
And her eyes start to close.

Her love for man has now descended,  
As she will be doing soon.  
With sorrow in her heart,  
She is drawn by some unseeable force.  
Up through those pale clouds,  
And into God's healing palm.

*Rebecca Rowland, 1G*



Frottage: Fay Woodbridge, 1G

### First Day At School

I remember my first day at school clearly. Mum was really nervous, and terribly flustered. I sat on the car seat, not able to see out of the window, firstly because I was then only knee-high to a grasshopper, and secondly because I had been wrapped up so tightly in bobble hats and scarves that only my eyes and a couple of freckles were visible.

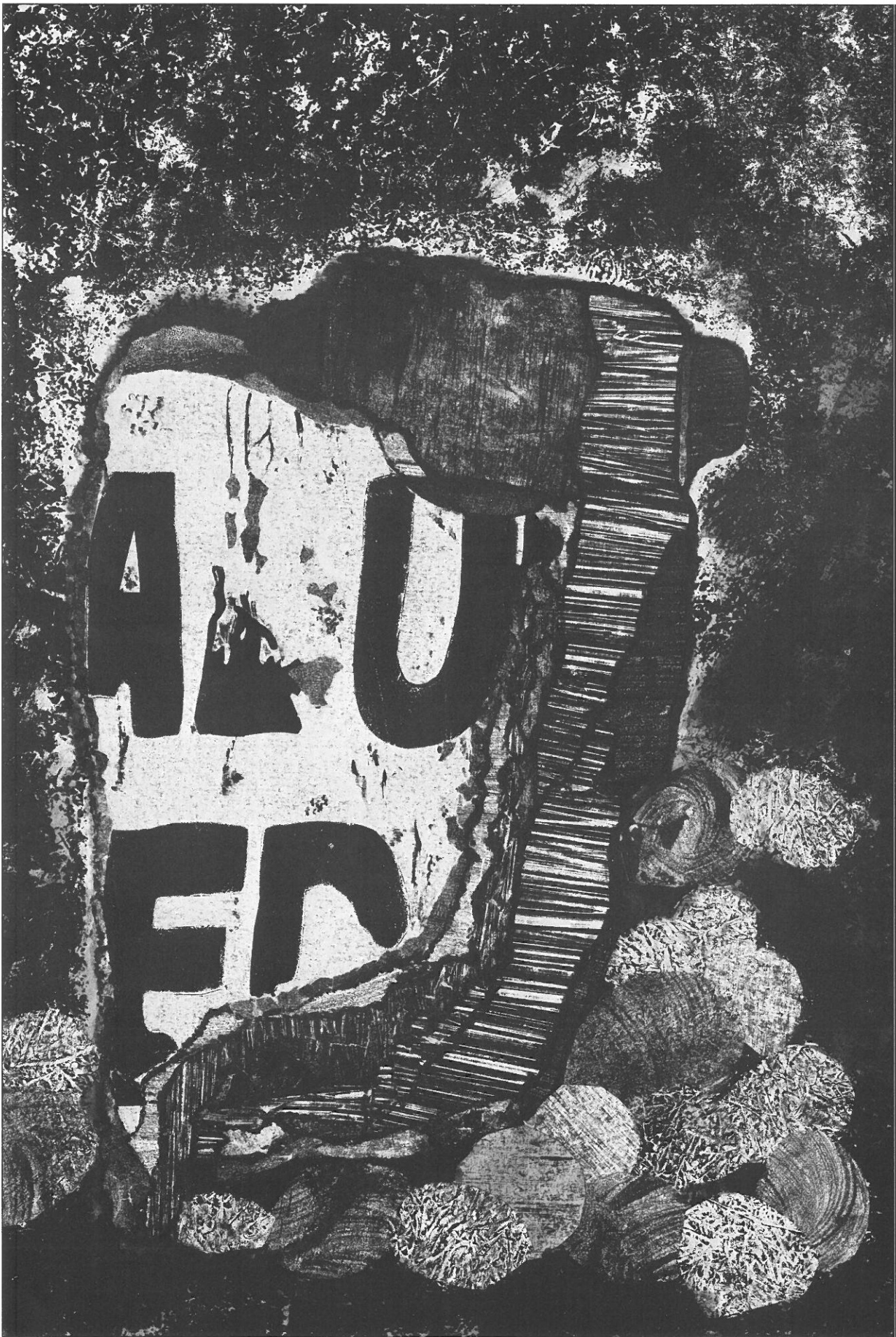
When we arrived I was teddy-bear hugged so tightly, that my little life flashed before my eyes. There and then in a playground of children all screaming for their mummies I was unable to even say goodbye, for all I could utter in a hoarse voice was 'Air'. Then the hug eased off, and the dull brass bell with polished mahogany handle was rung, and we were all marched into the plasticine smelling classroom, with clusters of spider plants scattered around the room, and an alphabet frieze, although at that time I had no knowledge of the world of words it could unfold.

I was handed a laminated card and was told it had my name written on it, but all I could see was a lot of curious squiggles. I thanked them anyway, not to hurt their feelings, and walked over to an unoccupied chair on the table nearest the gerbil cage.

This school lark was going to be fun !

*Charlotte Overton-Hart, 3M1*





Monoprint and collage by Rina Abdullah, L6

## Leaves

The crisp russet leaves dance,  
They swirl, torn from storm-tossed trees,  
They glide, graceful as ballerinas,  
gently to the ground,  
And crackle, crisp and crunchy beneath my feet.  
Shades of red, orange, brown and gold,  
Swept under the gardener's broom,  
Piled high for smoky bonfires in the mist.  
Smoke creeps and curls into the autumn dusk,  
And leaves are gone until the spring.

*Alexia Fleming, 1K*

## Autumn

Autumn leaves rustle in the wind,  
Blowing around the winding roads,  
Jumping, skipping and tumbling,  
As easily as any acrobat,  
Never do they rest.

Suddenly a gust of wind sends them flying  
Through the air,  
They fly gracefully,  
Like any bird,  
Never do they rest.

People walking through the park,  
Crunch, crunch, rustle, rustle  
Over the brown leaves of autumn,  
That NOW rest,  
Upon the dirty ground.

*Alex Viano, 1K*

## Autumn

Autumn is one of the most colourful seasons. The trees, one day, are blooming with oranges, yellows, browns, greens, reds and ambers. The trees then look like big balls of burning flames. With the next big gust of wind, the trees are bare. They have no colour, no beauty and the burning balls of flame have gone out. The trees then look like witches' long gnarled fingers. When the branches sway in the wind, it is the witches trying to catch everyone. So now the ground is plastered with a thick patchwork blanket full of colour. There is a great big gust of wind, every now and then, that sends the leaves flying across the garden. Some autumn mornings there is a cool breeze but on others there is practically a gale blowing.

*Laura Brooks, 1K*

## Autumn

My favourite time of the year, autumn walks, playing conkers, crunching leaves and the strong winds, taking the leaves with them. The most colourful time: red, yellow, orange, bronze, gold and brown.

Walls of scarlet and trees on fire. But the grass stays a bright and lush green. The garden ground, a carpet of leaves. All get raked up, but the next day new and fresh.

The sun as bright as ever, and yet still chilly and cold.

The clocks go back, dark evenings, and getting up in darkness.

Apples ripe, red and green nuts ready and being picked. Remains of blackberries, only a few left. Winds at night, but all cosy in bed, wrapped up.

*Felicity Carr, 1K*

## Autumn's Here

Autumn's here.  
The wind blows cold.  
The leaves are turning brown, red, gold.  
The smell of harvest across the road.  
The farmer gathers his crops to load.  
The hedgehog seeks a homely nest,  
To take his autumn rest.  
The days grow shorter, day by day,  
telling us winter is on its way.

*Charlene Evans, 1K*

## Autumn

The pitter patter of the rain,  
The whisper of the wind,  
The crunch of the leaves,  
The brown colour of the trees,  
The bare branches to be seen far and away.

The rabbits snuggle up into their burrows,  
with lots of leaves to sleep on.  
Hedgehogs are sleeping with autumn leaves,  
cosy as could be.

I make a great noise of rustling all day,  
through the leaves that go crisp, crash, crisp, crash.  
The tint to tell me autumn is here,  
The whisper to tell me there is going to be  
cold winds in autumn down here.

The chestnuts fall to the ground . . .  
the autumn's come.

*Jodie Rogers, 1G*



Monoprint and collage by Olivia Lipscombe, L6, based on 'Autoportrait' by Tamara de Lempicka

## Away!

She is riding,  
She is riding,  
across the waters  
of the bay.  
She is riding,  
She is riding  
in the daytime's  
bright sun rays.

On she goes to  
get away  
but her memories  
will always stay  
scared for life and  
troubled so  
by the way things  
tend to go.

Sits astride  
a bay stallion,  
heart and hooves beat  
together in time  
over heartland  
speed she gathers  
in her head she  
thinks in rhyme

She is riding,  
She is riding,  
across the waters  
of the bay.  
Doesn't know where  
she's going,  
only wants to  
get away.

Feeling empty  
cold inside  
all exposed  
nowhere to hide  
Devil moon up  
in the sky  
teardrops gather  
in her eyes.

She is riding  
all alone  
across the waters  
of the bay.  
She is riding  
all alone,  
only wants to  
get away.  
*Rebecca Chester, 2F*

## Mini Sagas

### Water is a poison

The water was fast flowing. It looked so cold. As I watched I remembered that tragedy in Canada . . .

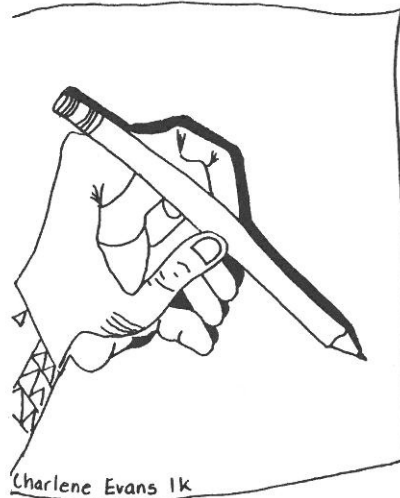
It was a particularly hot day so my brother and I went for a swim in the stream we had seen earlier. I was ten; he was six. The water was so refreshing. As I looked around, my brother had disappeared. I realised he had his foot wedged under some stones. I went down to get him. He had already turned blue: I was too late. The paramedics couldn't revive him. My family haven't really recovered. I blame myself for his death.

*Lucy Holt, 3M3*

### The World Beyond

They were alone with the door. It was made of old oak and had a gold handle which the children were longing to push down. They were frightened, but had a desire to know what was beyond it. Was it a peaceful world? They finally hid their fears, planted their hands on the golden curve of the handle and waited with no patience at all. They took a deep breath. The door was locked. They searched for the key and had luck. They turned the key right and they were there. The place they had been afraid of. Their world.

*Sandra Greve, 3M1*



### Dramatic Death

My mind sat to rest after the long day and my thoughts were totally blank. Suddenly a feeling came over me. I walked to the window ledge. I could not believe what I saw. I was outside. What was I doing outside if I was inside? There was a door outside which was floating. As I watched the door an arm came out and grabbed me. I could feel myself being pulled but going nowhere. The hand took me through the door. Then I fell down dead.

*Louise Paddenburg, 3M1*

### High above Paris in a loft room

High above Paris, yes even higher than the Eiffel Tower, is a loft. You might think what is so special about a loft? This was the most precious loft in the world for two young people.

The two young people were called Karin and Christopher. Their families had been hating each other ever since the sun rose for the first time upon this earth. Their families were business rivals and never wanted to have anything to do with the other family. Karin and Christopher fell in love. They met every Tuesday at nightfall in this loft to tell each other of their great love.

What a wonderful fate . . .

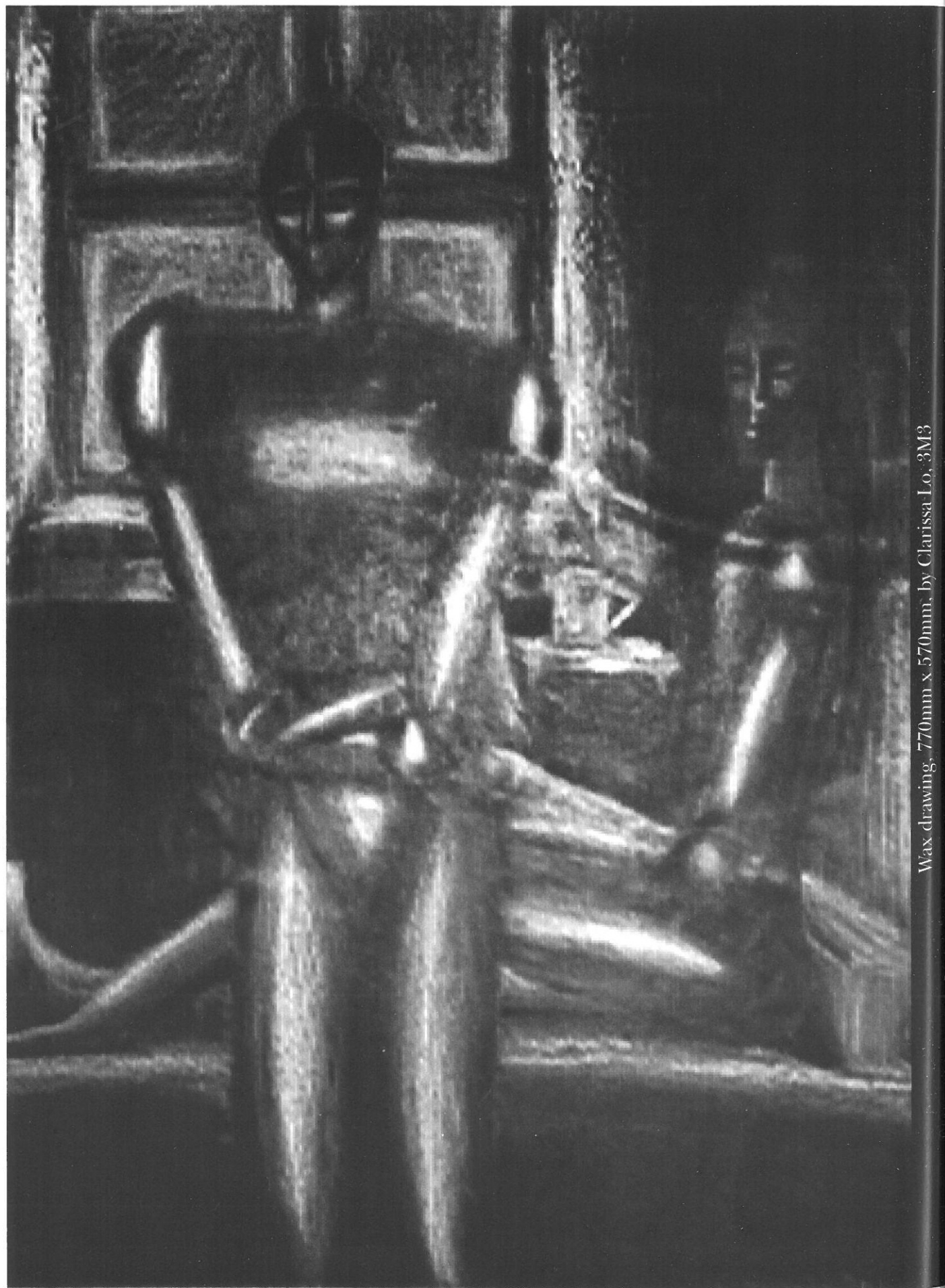
*Anna Vigerland, 3M1*

### Lightning never strikes twice

Long ago before the time of the wolves, my mother was cooking a rabbit stew. My father was chopping wood outside. The sharp axe slammed down onto the cutting block; we could smell the pine of the forest.

One morning we woke with our ears ringing with terror. Father ran outside and was struck by lightning. We did not dare to go outside. A bear was running down the hill: roaring, he grabbed my father and shook him, hitting his body against the ground with more force than thunder. My mother fell to the floor shaking in agony,

*Caroline Owen, 3M1*



Wax drawing, 770mm x 570mm, by Clarissa Lo, 3M3

## Drifting in Space

Lost and alone,  
Drifting in space,  
With no-one around,  
No friendly face.  
Then I drift past  
An orbiting moon;  
Which planet it orbits,  
I'll know very soon.

Stars and rocks  
Are all I see,  
There's nothing much out there,  
Nothing for me.  
Then I see a planet,  
With colours rarely seen,  
Bright pinks and purples,  
Yellows and greens.

I'm lost and alone,  
With no friendly face.  
There's no-one around,  
When you're drifting,  
In space.

*Lauren Lansdowne, 1G*

## Ode to Tom Thumb

There is no light or sun upon this day,  
or if there was I would not fain to know,  
for all my hopes of love were gone astray,  
and cruel winds came to blow my man away.

His mother bore him twenty years ago,  
and since that day we were betrothed for life,  
but when the hurricane sprung up today,  
the cruel winds came to blow my love away.

Oh Lord, I wish I had not let him go,  
had I held on he would be with me now,  
my life is nothing without him, I know,  
I would that I could join him where he is,  
But as I weep, I realise my life  
is dead, as I will be when I raise this knife.

*Nicola Mansell, 4Y*

## Daydream

The sea was calm as death,  
But still the miniature vessel glided slowly along the  
horizon.  
Its cranberry sail flapped in the warm breeze,  
And its bow smoothly sliced the ice cold shimmers  
Of the blue-green depth of oysters and mermaids.  
As the rolling, marl-grey cotton wool clouds parted,  
Sunbeams from heaven streaked the endless ocean.

*Charlotte Overton-Hart, 3M1*

## Our Secret Garden

I was looking out of my window, and counting how many buses were going by. The sky was grey and the rain was drizzling down my window. I was freezing cold and the house my parents and I were living in had no central heating. It was an old town house with four storeys. It was grey from the outside and on the inside all the walls were painted white. It was great in the summer because it was nice and near the beach but in the winter it was an awful place to live. It was about two hundred years old and at night it was very spooky. My parents had lived there for about twelve years.

The clock in my room struck six and at six o'clock I had my dinner. I was starving so I quickly ran out of my bedroom and down the stairs. In my haste I tripped over and banged my head. My mum came out of the kitchen in a hurry to see what all the commotion was about. She picked me up and took me into the dining room. She sat down with me while I had my dinner and gave me a letter which was addressed to me. I opened it and looked who it was from. It was from my best overseas friend called Lissette. She was asking if she could come and stay for a couple of weeks while her mum and dad went through their divorce. I showed it to my mum. She examined it carefully. She said she would ask my dad when he got home from work.

When my dad came home I asked him and he said he was sure she could. Ten thirty that evening my mum phoned Lissette's mum to confirm it. When my mum got off the phone she told me that Lissette was getting the late night flight so she would be arriving at six o'clock tomorrow morning.

Lissette arrived at six o'clock as planned; she had loads of bags. I showed her to my room and she really liked it. I got dressed while Lissette started unpacking. We spent an hour finding out more about each other and then we went downstairs to have breakfast. After breakfast Lissette asked if she could see the garden, so I asked my mum and she said yes. We put on our boots and went out. We decided to play hide-and-seek and I was on. I started to count but I only got to six and she told me to stop counting. She told me to come quickly, so I did. There were lots of bushes at the bottom of our garden and nobody knew what was behind them. She asked me what was behind the bushes and I told her I didn't know. She asked if we could have a look and I agreed. There were loads of bushes and trees. On the ground there were a lot of brambles. The ground was sodden and the water was seeping into our shoes. Luckily I had my penknife in my pocket to cut back the brambles. We could see a beautiful pinky colour straight ahead, so we ran to see what it was. As we got closer the colour got brighter and clearer. At last we arrived at a beautiful garden. It was round, with yellow, pink and red bushes round the edges. The grass was blue and the soil was gold – it was a spectacular sight. We sat down on a silver bench which was in the middle of the garden and we talked about all the things we