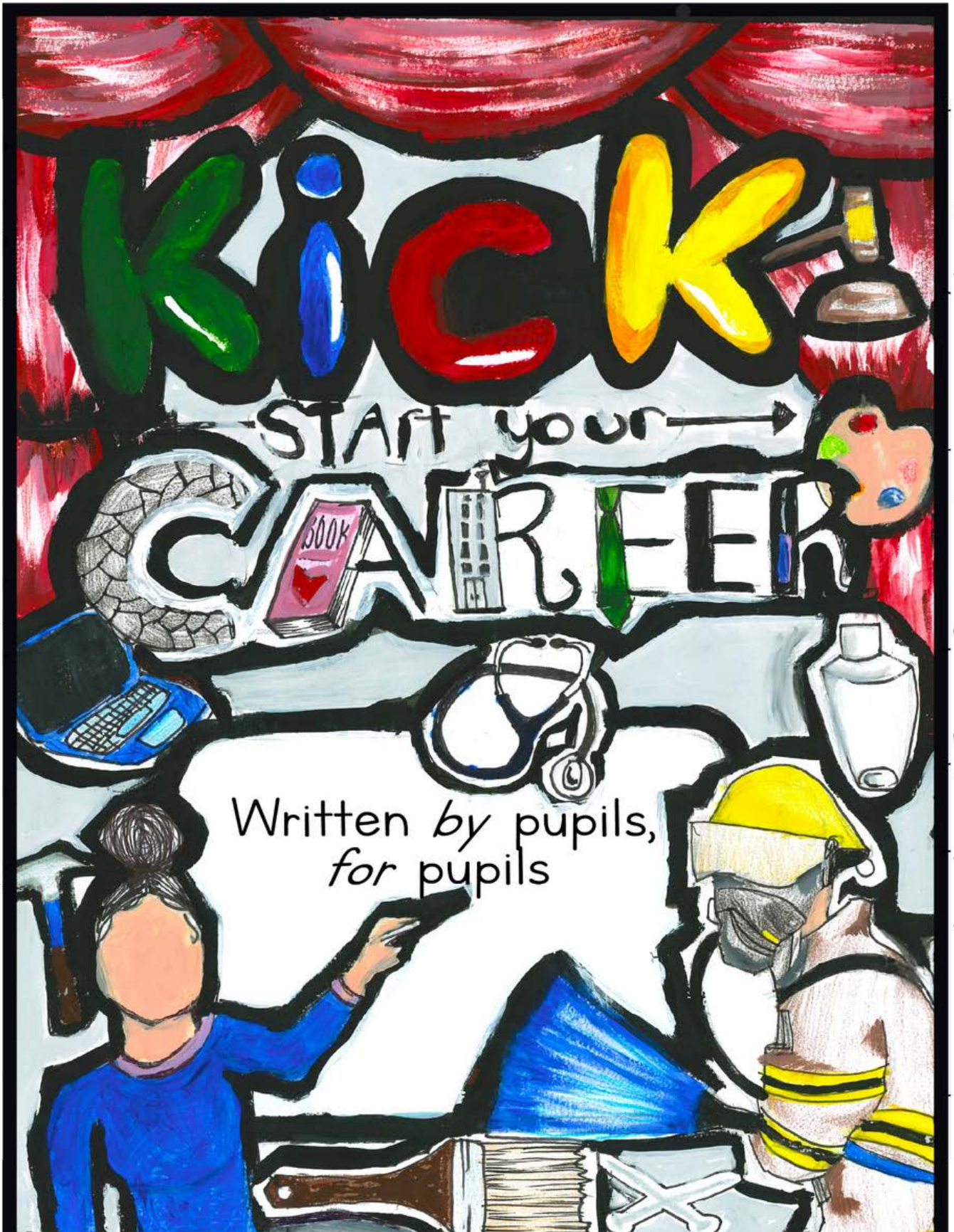


# PLATANOS COLLEGE

| Office Of Opinion | Community Corner | Crime & Conspiracy |

| Inspiration Station | Learning Lounge | Cacophony Of Colours |



## KS4 NEWSLETTER

"Attitude Determines Altitude"



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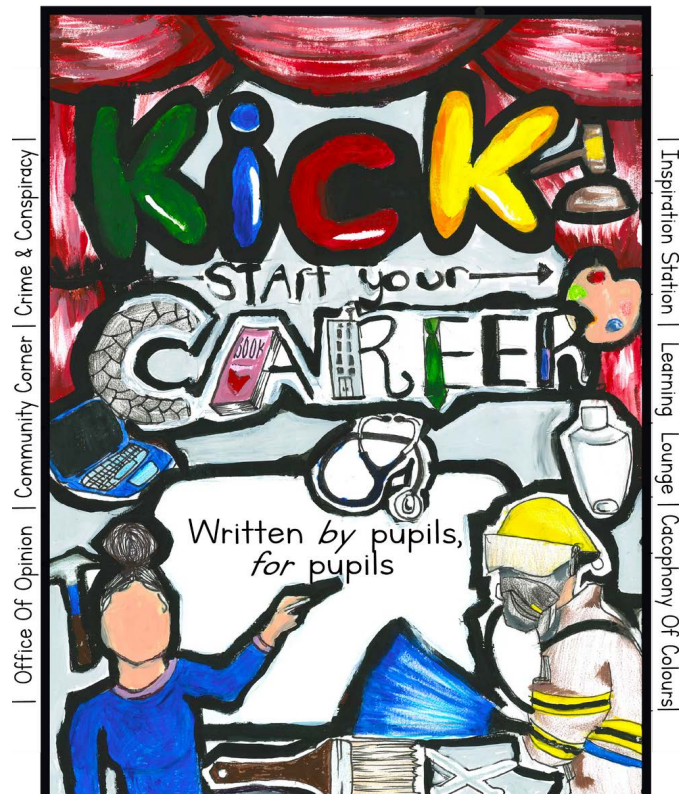
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***Back cover poem by Uhunoma Obayangbona***  
***Cover by Ashlee Kamagate***





# EDITOR'S WELCOME

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI

Hello and welcome to the 13th edition of the Platanos College KS4 Newsletter. The end of the academic year is quickly approaching and once again, our team have come together to form a collection of articles that entertain and inform.

This term's Special Edition is entitled *Kickstart Your Career*, and our team have interviewed a range of individuals in different careers, from two Hollywood Movie makers to a trainee Pilot to a Civil Servant.

As usual, we also discuss a range of different topics, including celebrity culture, AI and fashion.

We hope that the sheer range of topics covered mean that everyone will find something they will enjoy amongst these pages.

On behalf of the KS4 Newsletter Team, we wish you an enjoyable 6 weeks off as we now pass the baton on to the 2023-24 Newsletter Team.

*Crystal Joy Azzopardi [Editor-in-Chief]*





# learning lounge

## POST-PLATANOS PATHWAYS

WRITTEN BY CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN



Have you started to think about what you want to do once your time at Platanos College comes to an end? Thinking about the future - *your* future - can be daunting and intimidating: this is entirely normal! It can feel really confusing working out what the best option is, but that's the beauty of future pathways for KS4 pupils today - there are literally loads of options! Let's take a look at a few of them...

### A-Levels

Upon finishing school, if you want to continue with full-time education after Secondary, you can apply to do a range of subjects that lead to many qualifications. You could try doing A levels, which is a continuation of 3-4 subjects you've studied at



Secondary school. But you don't only have the option of studying traditional subjects - many Colleges and schools offer other options such as Law, Economics and Psychology.



### T-Levels

T levels are a similar option to A levels, except that they combine classroom work with practical, real work placement with companies. Additionally, 1 T level is equivalent to 3 A levels, and you get at least 45 days of work in your industry placement. Like A Levels, T Levels take 2 years to do and lead to work, Higher and Degree level Apprenticeships and college and university courses.

### Apprenticeship and Traineeships

A traineeship is a unique course that helps you to prepare for an apprenticeship or a job. This course allows you to gain work experience and you can also improve your



Maths and English skills. It usually takes 6 weeks to 1 year to do and can lead to an apprenticeship, Further Education and work.

When it comes to Apprenticeships, there are 4 different types: Intermediate, Advanced, Higher and Degree levels. These levels correspond to the level of experience you will have as an Apprentice. An intermediate (Level 2) Apprenticeship is an Entry-level Apprenticeship. They allow the learners to develop their employability skills and do on-the-job experience alongside qualifications parallel to 5 GCSEs. They take approximately 12-18 months to complete and you get paid a full-time wage too.





A Level 3, Advanced Apprenticeship is similar to an intermediate Apprenticeship, however, they usually take around 2 years to finish. The qualifications you gain while doing this Apprenticeship are equivalent to two A-levels. Higher-level Apprenticeships are intended for ages 18+ and are Levels 4 or 5. They are focused on expanding Management-based skills and are an amazing option for school leavers with a Level 3 Apprenticeship or 2 A-Levels. Usually, they last for 3-4 years. The academic portions of Apprenticeships are normally done at a Further or Higher Educational Institute, while the rest is spent working for a company. Higher-level Apprenticeships have qualifications that are equal to a Foundation level degree, Higher National Diploma (HND), or a Higher National Certificate (HNC).

Finally, there are Degree Level Apprenticeships, the most exclusive level of apprenticeship programmes, and equal to Bachelor's to a Master's Degree. This Apprenticeship is a Level 6 or 7, depending on the course. Unlike university, Apprenticeships (at any level), are free! They normally take 3-6 years to complete.

So, whatever options you decide to embark on after Key Stage 4, be reassured that there is an array of options out there for your post-Platanos Pathway!



**Did you know?**  
 A levels are the most popular qualification for 16 to 19 year olds in the UK, but they are not right for everyone, make sure you know what they involve and that they will work for you.





# A SUMMER OF STRIKES

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



Over the past few months, the UK workforce has been marred by a plethora of strikes from virtually all major sectors of the UK's working body. So perhaps the natural question to ask is why *is* there a sudden string of strikes occurring in the UK?

Well, the primary reason for all the strikes comes down to pay and conditions. With Britain facing the highest inflation rates in over 40 years, public pay offers simply do not meet up to the demands of rising prices for basic necessities, leading to some people having to resort to food banks to keep themselves afloat. The devastating repercussions of the Covid pandemic have also affected the economy and people's personal finances, whilst exponentially high energy prices have had a dramatic impact on household bills.

One of the major sectors that strikes have affected is the Education sector. The strike

on 2nd May saw less than half of schools in the nation being fully opened. After the strikes in February, the government offered a pay offer which the DfE stated was "*fair and reasonable*". However, the Unions rejected the offer, stating that schools would have to make cuts elsewhere in their budgets. Whilst Unions argue that due to the inflation rate being 8.7%, wages have not kept up with the cost of living, the Department for Education has stated that any more strike action will cause "*real damage*" to children's learning. However, the largest Teaching Union, the NEU, has stated "*Time and again the National Education Union, alongside its sister unions, have called for the Education Secretary to get around the negotiation table to settle this dispute for a fully-funded teacher pay increase. Time and again our calls have fallen on stony ground,*" arguing that teachers currently suffer from a "*toxic mix of low pay and excessive workload*" that is causing a recruitment crisis that will further affect pupils in the future. One thing that is



clear is that an agreement between the Trade Unions and the government need to be reached, as the continuation of strike action will only affect school pupils further.

Another sector where strikes have occurred is the Transport sector. After the pandemic the Rail industry suffered a major blow to its finances, pressuring railway companies to save money. As a result of this, Unions state that pay should reflect the growing cost of living and bosses state that reforms are necessary in order to afford pay increases. However, the frequent strikes have seeped into commuters' day-to-day lives, as a survey conducted by the Department for Transport found that 47% of respondents who had planned to travel on a strike week had experienced disruption to work and 27% of respondents who intended to travel on a strike week had experienced disruption to their social plans. Maybe your journey to and from school was affected too?

Another major UK sector that has experienced strikes is the Medical field. Whilst the



primary reason for Nurses going on strike was due to lack of sufficient pay, the nature of Nurses' strikes is much more multifaceted. The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) argues that low pay is the major catalyst for “*chronic understaffing*”, as one in nine NHS nurses is said to have left the profession in 2022, putting patients at risk and leaving remaining nurses overworked. Furthermore, a survey conducted by the RCN has shown that nurses feel undervalued and exhausted - two major driving forces leading to nurses leaving the profession.

Let's not forget Junior Doctors' strikes that have rejected the Government's 5% pay rise offer, resulting in patients' operations and procedures being cancelled and an exodus of doctors to places like Australia.

Overall, it is clear that a lack of sufficient pay when coupled with the rising cost of living crisis, plus unsatisfactory working conditions, are causing a major negative ripple effect across the UK. Whilst there has been some progress in negotiations, there is still a long way to go for many of the critical services and sectors upon which the UK is built.

So, do we have a summer of strikes ahead of us or will further negotiations be reached? Only time will tell.





# THE KING'S CORONATION

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI



You will no doubt remember a momentous historical occasion just a couple of months ago - The Coronation of King Charles III. Taking place on the 6th May 2023, following the death of the late Queen Elizabeth II, the Coronation was a grand event attended by many key global figures.

King Charles III and Queen Consort Camilla, ascended their 1.3-mile journey from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey at 10:20 am. This was in keeping with tradition as it is the location where 38 previous monarchs were crowned, dating back to 1066!



The Coronation was largely themed on the importance of service. During the first prayer after reaching Westminster Abbey, the new King declared that *"I come not to be served, but to serve"*. King Charles III was proclaimed the *"undoubted King"* in the first stage of the ceremony. Showing their homage and their service, the congregation shouted *"God Save the King"*. Among the music and oaths, there were moments of complete silence as each stage of the ceremony took place. Consistent with tradition, the orb, sceptre and gilded Sword of State were prominent objects used in the ceremony. In a poignant moment, future King Prince William, swore his allegiance to his father and King.

At 12.02 pm, the crown was officially placed upon King Charles III's head, marking him as the first new monarch of Great Britain in seven decades. The King was crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury with the St. Edward's crown, which was originally designed for King Charles II in 1661. Shouts of *"God Save the King"* were heard inside and outside the Abbey, as well as gun salutes being made across the UK.

Amongst the pomp and ceremony, there were also

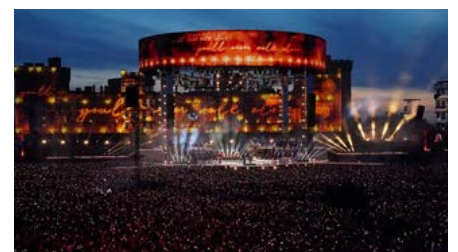


some light-hearted moments, which included Katy Perry struggling to find her seat in the Abbey, the many faces of Prince Louis and Penny Morduant's ostentatious sword-carrying skills!

Following the Coronation, the Royal family stepped out onto the balcony of Buckingham Palace, where crowds of people cheered their new monarch. The Prince and Princess of Wales tweeted a video of the event: *"What. A. Day. Thank you to everyone who made it happen."*

The following day, Coronation celebrations took place, including the Coronation concert, where the likes of Katy Perry, Lionel Richie and Andrea Bocelli performed.

However, the Coronation was not without controversy. Many criticised the eye-watering amount of







approximately £100 million that seemed to many people to be distasteful in the current cost of living crisis.

In addition, dozens of arrests were made, with anti-monarchy groups protesting near Trafalgar Square and holding placards saying "Not my king." Many criticised the stifling of freedom of speech, whilst others critiqued the protestors for trying to ruin this historic day. And let's not forget the controversy surrounding British history and the brutal past of colonisation – for this reason alone, many did not support the Coronatio, despite Charles III's previous promise that *"we must acknowledge the wrongs which have shaped our past if we are to unlock the power of our common future."*

Whatever your views on the British Monarchy, few can argue that the Coronation was not a momentous occasion - one that will be remembered for years to come.





# INTERVIEW WITH AN EX-PLATANOS PUPIL

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI



*We interviewed ex-pupil Rebecca Obadina-Adebowale who was awarded a place at Oxford in January.*

*Tell us about your learning journey since leaving Platanos College.*

**Rebecca:** After completing my secondary school career at Platanos College, I decided to further my studies at Harris Westminster Sixth Form, studying Mathematics, Chemistry Biology and Physics. Settling into the school was easy for me as I found myself familiar with the high attainment and standards of my new school, as the academic excellence and high achieving spirit were similar to the qualities I developed during my time at Platanos College.

*How did you prepare for your interview for Oxford University?*

**Rebecca:** Preparing for my interview was quite stressful,

as no one is ever sure what type of questions the interviewers will ask. Sometimes it's more subject-based, so they ask questions heavily related to the course you've decided to study, and other times they try to test your critical thinking skills, where essentially, they try to figure out how agile you are as a thinker by asking an unrelated question and seeing how you make sense out of something that initially would startle you.

To prepare for this, I watched many Oxford mock interviews and I asked my teachers at school to interview me. One reoccurring piece of advice I received was to constantly explain my train of thought when answering a question and not just simply give an answer to the question asked. It is important to explain how you came to an answer and you should evaluate if the train of thought that led you to the answer was completely foolproof, thinking about what assumptions you have made and what aspects you haven't considered when arriving at your answer.

*What did you learn from your time at Platanos College and how did it prepare you for your next steps?*

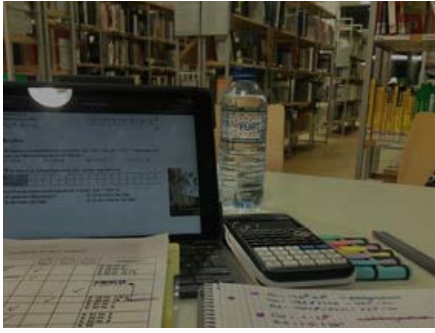
**Rebecca:** During my time at

Platanos College, I learnt many valuable skills and life lessons. I do really believe that my secondary school experience shaped my character and made me the person I am today. I experienced many triumphs and victories there; there were many good days indeed.

However, undoubtedly there were a few disheartening outcomes and setbacks. One example of this was when I applied to be Head Girl. From a young age I had always aspired to be Head Girl and it was a goal that I was extremely focused on for a very long time. After the whole application process, it had been decided that I wasn't going to be given the role of Head Girl and I was going to be Deputy Head Girl instead. Initially, I was upset, annoyed and disheartened; I felt as though my whole life's effort was leading up to this moment – and I failed.

However, talking to my teachers about my disappointment made me realise how ridiculous I was





being. I realised I was focusing on the title of the role, rather than the opportunity it had given me, which made me forget how proud of myself I should be for coming this far.

In life, it is very easy to get so worked up and fixated on one specific goal, that you miss the satisfaction and happiness of the other great things you do along the way. This experience emphasised to me that things may not always go our way, but when you know that you gave your all and you did all you could do, the outcome is always something you should take pride in.

**When you think of your time at Platanos College, what comes to mind?**

**Rebecca:** Thinking of my time at Platanos College genuinely puts a smile on my face. I loved every single bit of my secondary school career; being in the Platanos community really shaped me and taught me many things about myself. All of my teachers and my friends impacted my experience at the school significantly. Naturally, I love to learn, but learning at Platanos College always felt exciting and



challenging, which I really enjoyed. Every single teacher I had always went above and beyond to congratulate and encourage me when need be, but they also advised and corrected me when I was wrong, which I am really appreciative of. My English teacher Ms Thompson in particular continuously encouraged me to pursue my dreams of going to Oxford University and always advised me to give my best in all that I do and keep working hard.

**What advice would you give to current Platanos College pupils who would like to apply to world-class universities such as Oxford?**

**Rebecca:** My most important piece of advice for current Platanos College pupils would be to give your all in everything that you do. Whether big or small, academic or extracurricular, do everything to the best of your abilities so that whatever the outcome may be, you can be proud of what you did. This helps to cultivate a winner's attitude as it will become second nature to you to work hard and aim for the best. When you aim high, you can never fall too short of great things, so always try your best! Another piece of advice I

would give to current pupils is to ask others for help when you need it. If it was not for all the amazing people who helped me and advised me along the way, I wouldn't have achieved half of the things I have achieved today. People say this all the time, but it really is true! You won't get as far on your own as you would with people who can help you, teach you, advise you or even just be there for you. So be there for each other and help each other when you can!

Lastly, I would like to encourage all pupils to develop an affinity for whatever Degree/Career path you decide to go down. Being good at what you do is much easier when you love what you do, so find what you're interested in and develop your skills in it as universities love candidates with enthusiasm for their subjects.





# CAN WE CO-EXIST WITH AI?

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



We've all in one way or another encountered AI in our day-to-day lives, whether it be through ChatGPT or the recent AI bots being interwoven within our social media sites. With AI development, it is clear that we are only at the genesis of this innovative technology, with the near future guaranteeing us more advancements within the field.

However, with such advancement, could we also be facing a future in which human beings are interpolated by AI? Traditional human mediums of expression such as music and art have already been achieved by AI, and so perhaps the question that we should ask is *'could AI potentially have the power to take our jobs?'*



According to Investment Bank Goldman Sachs, Artificial Intelligence could replace about 300 million full-time jobs, with those such as retail services and translators potentially being at the highest risk of being replaced. With this being said, it is undeniable that many people may be displaced from their jobs, simply because we deem technology as being better equipped for the task.

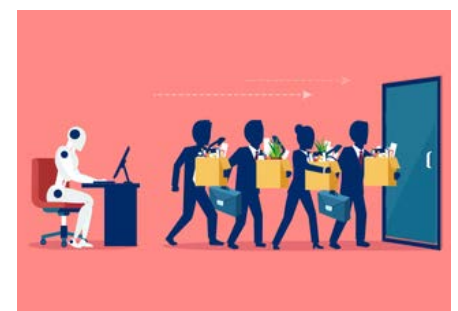
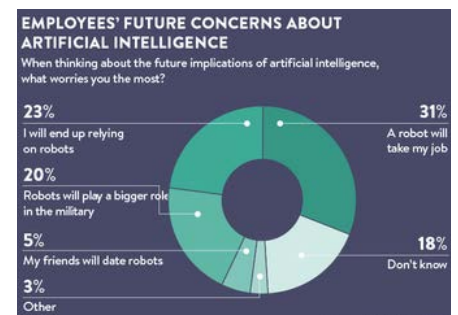
However, rather than merely opposing AI replacing jobs, we should also consider the fact that with the advancement of AI, there may well be further innovation and jobs. These jobs include - but are not limited to - engineers who can facilitate the technology needed for further AI advancements, AI hardware specialists who build hardware such as GPU chips and data scientists and data labelling professionals.

It is clear looking forward, that AI will certainly take charge of certain jobs. However, we should rest assured that other essential jobs such as being a Psychologist, Doctor or Teacher cannot and will not be completely replaced by Artificial Intelligence.

There will likely be dismay however amongst those in Banking, Media and Marketing

and Legal services, as these are the industries that Forbes states to be the most likely to be adversely affected when it comes to the takeover of human jobs.

Although AI has made great strides, one thing that is clear is that it will never be able to fully emulate human thoughts and emotions. Perhaps we need to view AI not as a malign entity out to steal our jobs, but rather as just another product of human ingenuity. One thing is for sure - when it comes to AI, we are only at the beginning of exploring what is possible.





# community corner

## YOUNG PEOPLE AND VIOLENCE

WRITTEN BY RHIYAAD CHOWDHURY

We have all heard of real-life stories of young people getting involved in violence. Sadly, the news and social media often show tragic stories of people our age becoming victims of violence or being perpetrators of crime themselves.

Here are some key issues when it comes to youth violence...

- Being the victim of physical abuse or sexual abuse can increase the risk of violent behaviour.
- Violence has a long-term effect on young people's physical, mental and social health, leading to poor decision-making, broken social relationships and a lack of ability to deal with stress.
- Research has shown that children who are exposed to violence are more likely to be involved in violence when they're older.
- Being rejected by peers and getting involved in gangs increase the risk of violence amongst young people.
- Young people in the UK who turn to crime, are more likely to do so if substance abuse, easy access to weapons, peer pressure, lack of parental guidance or lack of

education and support services are issues.

- Key factors that put young people at risk of violence include poverty, dropping out of school, teen pregnancy, abuse and mental health issues.
- A young person can be involved with youth violence as a victim, offender or witness.
- Youth reoffending in London has increased at a higher rate than nationally and is significantly higher than in the rest of England & Wales.

### *Some help lines:*

- Mind
- Action for Children
- Barnardo's
- Childline
- NHS Every Mind Matters
- YoungMinds
- Me and My Mind
- Calm Harm
- Shout



### Youth violence



**Youth Violence**

Youth Violence is the **4th leading cause of death** in young people worldwide.

**200,000 die** each year.

The Health Sector Role in Prevention and Response

World Health Organization





# THE COMMUNITIES THAT MAKE UP LONDON

WRITTEN BY LUCIA WHITTINGTON



London has always been inhabited by immigrants from around the world. These communities have made London into what it is today and are vital to London's sense of identity as the most diverse city in the world.

So, what are the different communities making up our nation's Capital? Well, let's start in our very own local borough Lambeth, where there is a large Black-Caribbean population, as well as a large Portuguese population. Many of us know about Brixton's vast Jamaican community, due to the Windrush Generation coming to England on ships to help rebuild London after World War Two. Some even refer to it as 'Little Jamaica' or 'Little Caribbean'. But let's not forget that Caribbean migrants also built communities in Hackney, Tottenham and Notting Hill, which is famous for the world-famous Notting Hill Carnival every summer.

Down the road from Brixton is

Stockwell where our school is located, but also where a lot of Portuguese people live due to many families arriving in the '60s and '70s. Many know Stockwell as 'Little Portugal', as Stockwell is home to the largest Portuguese community outside Portugal.

Moving slightly further south, there is also a large Asian community in Tooting, which is filled with many residents and restaurants from across the continent, including Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India. Further from us is Southall, which is known to have a huge Punjabi population and is often referred to as 'Little Punjab' or 'Little India', due to the fact that it has the largest population of Punjabi people outside of India. Many members of this community also immigrated to England after World War Two.

More centrally located is Chinatown, which is filled with many Chinese restaurants, shops and businesses that are marked with Chinese art and architecture. Every Lunar New Year (also known as Chinese New Year) is celebrated throughout Chinatown, but the Chinese community also has deep roots within Tower Hamlets, East London, which has one of the largest Chinese populations in England.



Hackney, Enfield, Islington are a few areas in North London are home to the Turkish/Kurdish community. These areas are filled with kebab shops and ethnic cafes and supermarkets. The area is referred to as 'Little Istanbul.'

## Did you know?

London was founded by 'immigrant' Romans who settled on the banks of the river Thames.

London has always attracted immigrants who are looking for a better quality of life and economic opportunities.

Over the course of time, some people have fled to London for their own safety. A most recent example of this is the migration of Ukrainians who have had to flee their homeland for safe refuge.



The growth of the British Empire and development during Industrialisation, led to lots of trading in the 1800s and a surge in population growth.

The Port of London was the first place where trading ships disembarked. Here, There's you will still find a Norwegian church and a Finnish church.

Did you know that the East End has attracted migrants since the 16th century? The word 'refugee' was first used to describe the French Huguenots leaving oppression in France.

Following the Huguenots, many Jewish people came to London to escape the pogroms (massacre of an ethnic group) in Spain and then later in Russia.

Towards the end of the 19th century, a number of immigrants were able to escape the slums of the East End and move to newly developed areas, where the working classes had new terraced housing built for them.

Irish and Italian settlers trying to escape poverty also settled in the East End.

WW1 and WW2 resulted in the population of London decreasing.

From the 1950s, people from around the Commonwealth were invited to come to rebuild post-war Britain. Migrants came from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Caribbean.

The more recent wars in Bosnia, Serbia, Africa and the Middle East, have caused an influx of people wanting to settle in London.

When we were in the European Union, free trade movement allowed the free flow of people across the continent, with many people from countries such as Poland choosing to settle in London.

London is a global financial centre and therefore attracts international investors.

According to a 2022 Guardian report, 43,000 EU citizens received visas for work, family, study or other purposes in 2021, compared with 230,000 to 430,000 EU citizens coming to the UK a year from 2014-2020.





# SUMMER IN LONDON

WRITTEN BY CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN

London, the vibrant capital of the United Kingdom, is known for its rich history, diverse culture and remarkable museums. While some museums in London require an entrance fee, there are several other exhibits where you can explore art, history, and science without spending a penny. Here we share with you London's free museums, where you can indulge in knowledge, creativity and discovery.



**National Gallery**

Located in Trafalgar Square, the National Gallery is home to over 2,000 paintings from many different time periods. Ranging from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century, the Gallery has secured many renowned painters, such as Van Gogh, Da Vinci and Monet. As well as paintings, it houses different mosaics and sculptures. Most of these mosaics can be viewed at the first landing of the Gallery's Portico. As well as the fascinating artworks, the museum also offers

workshops, free talks and live performances.



**Natural History Museum**

The Natural History Museum is a world-renowned centre of scientific excellence and holds an immense collection of skeletons and fossils. Based in South Kensington, this museum allows you to explore interactive exhibits, showcasing the diversity of our natural world. Upon entrance, you're greeted by the magnificent skeleton of Hope, a giant blue whale, hanging from the ceiling. Although the museum is free, you can also pay to go to the specific, temporary exhibits. For example, "*Titanosaur. Life as the Biggest Dinosaur*" is all about the life of a titanosaur, from birth to adulthood. The *Patagotitan mayorum* going on display for the first time ever in Europe is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



**National Maritime Museum**

Inside the National Maritime Museum, you'll be able to find out about inspirational stories of exploration and endeavours at sea. Opened in 1937, this museum is a part of Royal Museums Greenwich, a network of museums in the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site. The National Maritime Museum uncovers Britain's naval history, offering knowledge on ancient maps and ship models, like the Fijian canoe. Additionally, outside of the Museums café, you can take a photo of the Ship in a Bottle. Created by the skilled Yinka Shonibare, this art piece is a replica of Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson's ship HMS Victory. As for exhibitions, there are many happening throughout the year. While most are free, some do need to be paid for. For instance, the *Astronomy Photographer of the Year* exhibit shows the world's greatest space photography.





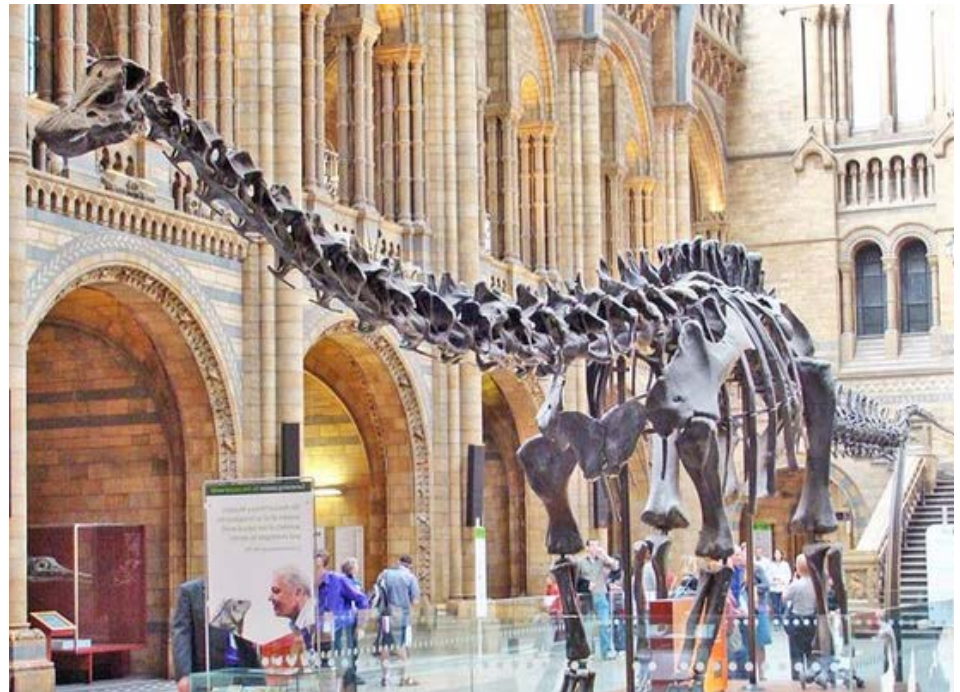


**Imperial War Museum**

The IWM located just down the road from us in Kennington offers a unique and poignant perspective on warfare and its impact on society. You can discover the interesting displays that guide you through the stories and interactive exhibits that span from WW1 to the present day. Walking through the museum, you will experience a whirlwind of emotions, exploring the personal experiences of soldiers, civilians and the profound changes that war brings to communities. A must-see exhibit at this museum is the Holocaust Exhibition, a powerful and thought-provoking space that commemorates the victims of Nazi persecution during WW2. From personal testimonies, photographs and artefacts, this exhibition serves as a stark reminder of the horrors of genocide and the importance of learning from history.

London's free museums offer an incredible opportunity to explore the vast array of human history, art, and scientific achievements. Whether you're a history buff, an art lover or a curious mind seeking knowledge, these museums provide an enriching and accessible experience. So, plan your visit, embrace the wonders of London's free museums, and go on a journey of discovery that will leave

you inspired and enlightened this summer!



# Kick Start Your Career

We interviewed a range of people in different jobs via Zoom, in person and online. Check out what they have to say about their work and the top tips they have for us!

## INTERVIEW WITH UAE BUSINESSMAN

INTERVIEWED BY ALI OSMAN + YUSUF ELMI + ARMAN HUSSAIN



*Kick start Your Career is all about delving into different careers to have a better understanding about what you may want to do in the future.*

*As Platanos College has Business and Enterprise Specialism, we were excited to interview Monsurudeen Alasi, a UK-born Businessman based in the United Arab Emirates, who has been working in the UAE for 3 years.*

*Can you tell us what company you currently work for?*

**Monsuru:** The company I work for now is the Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism. I work as an Internal Consultant for the tourism aspect. An example of this is currently they want to attract

people like yourselves and your parents to Abu Dhabi; the reason for this is that everyone wants to go to Dubai, but Abu Dhabi doesn't have that same popular reputation. There are ways to increase tourism: one way is to build landmarks such as the Burj Khalifa and the other way is to bring events to the country such as the FA Cup Final. These events bring loads of tourism to countries and as a Consultant, my goal for the past 6 months has been to increase tourism.

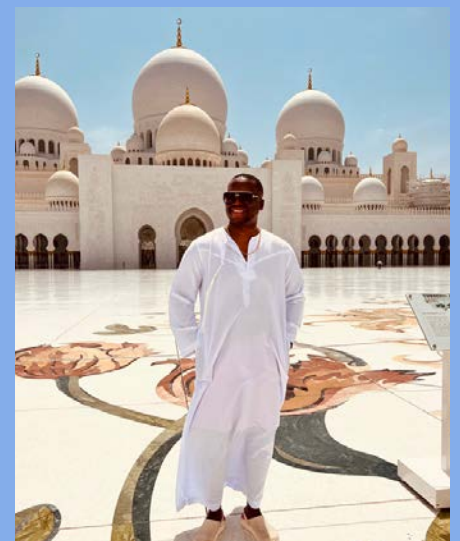
*When you have completed a project, does your company you work at allow you time off for the next couple of days?*

**Monsuru:** I used to do project-based work beforehand, where the company I worked at would essentially loan me out to other companies and I would help them fix their problems, but as of a couple of months ago, I have moved to now working internally and only do projects for one company. This means that I no longer have those days off after a project and now go on to working on the next project straight away.

*What motivated you to become a Business Consultant?*

**Monsuru:** When I was growing up and about your age, I really, really wanted to be a Lawyer. My grandad was a really big Lawyer in Nigeria, and so in my head that was what I wanted to do, but then when I went to Sixth Form I realised I didn't want to study Law; what I really enjoyed was problem-solving as I'm really logically minded. I studied Politics at University because I enjoy Current Affairs and what's happening in the world. Whilst I was at University, I was going around to different companies who offered to let me work for them. Consultancy companies are really great because they offer the ability to work for any industry for short-term or long-term periods.

*What Further Education do you have to complete to*





**become a Business Consultant?**

**Monsuru:** In terms of Further Education, what I studied at A level was Economics and Business, and at University I studied Politics. You can do anything with a University Degree, but I also happened to do a Master’s Degree in Business Management. You can do any Degree and become a Business Consultant as long as you have the transferrable skills to get in the industry, like problem-solving skills.

**Can you tell us about a current / most recent project you've worked on?**

**Monsuru:** Something I have been working on is to do with Sports. We want to look at which sports should be brought to Abu Dhabi. What should we invest in? What is interesting? What attracts people and big numbers? It could be getting friendly with Manchester City or starting a pre-season tournament. Could we host the World Cup? Those kinds of things. We have to make sure it makes sense in terms of attracting the right people and consider whether we have the right tools.

**Did you face any challenges working in Abu Dhabi and why**

**did you choose to work there?**

**Monsuru:** I haven't faced any challenges working here - it's very different to working in the UK though. In the UK, the market is pretty much laid out in a way that most people know how it works and everything is established, whereas in the UAE, not everything is in place. New and exciting things are always happening. It's an opportunity for me – I was given a lot more responsibility when I came here. When I was in the UK, I was doing small things and reporting to somebody above me, whereas here I report directly to the Director or Senior workers. Because it is so new, you're given a lot of face time with the higher, more important people.

**How long did it take to get a job as a Business Consultant?**

**Monsuru:** I got the job soon after I graduated. I did the Graduate Internship at Excenture, which is a Technology Consultant company. I applied for the Graduate Internship and did a series of interviews. Then I got the job.

**How much can you potentially earn as a Business Consultant?**

**Monsuru:** It really just depends



on your level and seniority. It also depends on where you work. In the UAE you don't have to pay income tax, so even though the UAE is quite expensive, it works out.

**What happens to underperforming workers in your company?**

**Monsuru:** Consultant companies are usually up and out - they can't afford to present them in front of companies if they do not have any work to deliver, as it looks bad on the company. Therefore, underperforming workers are likely to have their contract suspended. What could happen is that instead of speaking to clients, they might work in the background. However, some companies are strict and if you don't meet their expectations, they'll let you go.

**Was moving to the UAE a culture shock?**

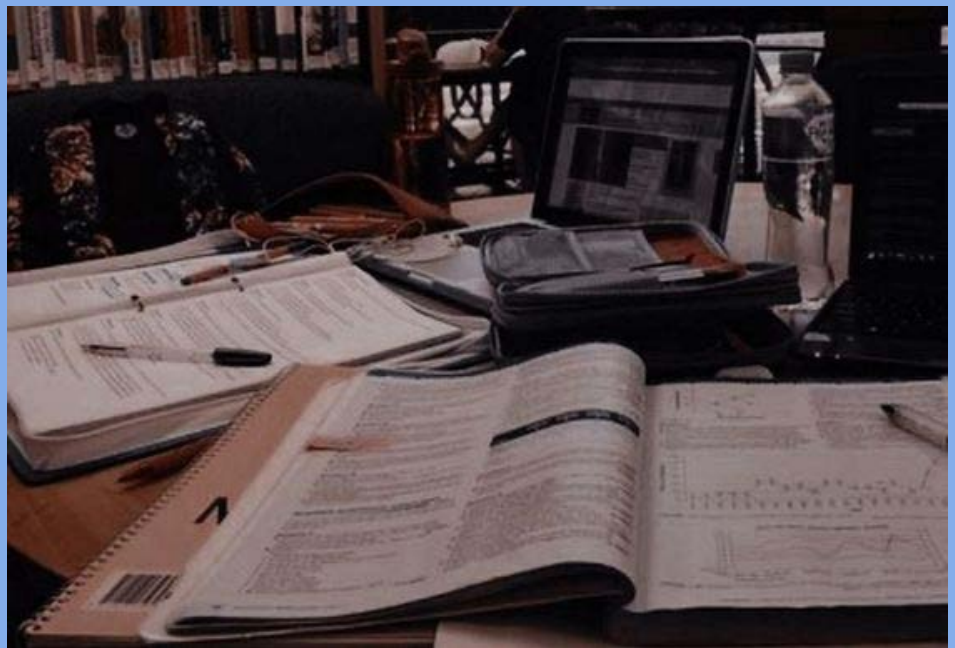
**Monsuru:** I grew up in London. I've never worked abroad before and have never been to the UAE before. Then I was asked by a company to work in Dubai. I've never considered going there but I didn't mind



working there. That was the main motivation to move there. In terms of a culture shock, it was very different to England. Weekends were different - they were Friday and Saturday. It's a Muslim country, so Ramadan was celebrated nationally; we didn't eat at the office when it was Ramadan. Being away from your friends and family was difficult as I had to make new friends and acquaintances. I had to basically start from scratch.

***As a Business Consultant, do you have any advice for any Platanos College pupils who want to get into the same field as you?***

**Monsuru:** Become engaged in what's happening in the world of Business. When I was at University, I tried to keep up with what's happening in Business. If there's a certain industry or sector you're interested in, you should read up about it. Even if it's just something about video games, there's a huge industry behind that and there's a lot you can read about it such as the Microsoft and Activision merger or X box vs PlayStation. If you look up the business behind the things you enjoy, you will be more interested in learning about it. Also, a key thing is thinking about how to analyse problems and produce solutions for them – how to get from step A, where the problem starts, to step B, the solution.



# INTERVIEW WITH A CIVIL SERVANT

INTERVIEWED BY MELANIA SKOTARENKO-SPICER

**We interviewed a Platanos College parent about her job in the Civil Service.**

**What is a Civil Servant?**

**Civil Servant:** Civil Servants serve the government of the day, meaning they work for government departments and this does not change when elections happen.

**What do you do specifically?**

**Civil Servant:** Currently, I head up the drugs and alcohol policy team. I lead a team of people who design and deliver policies to reduce drug and alcohol use in England and help people with addictions.

**How did you get into this career?**

**Civil Servant:** In 2007 I came to England to do a Masters Degree in Public Health. I had a good career in Ukraine in the control of infectious diseases. After finishing my studies, I saw an advert in a newspaper for the Department of Health which I applied for, and have been working in the Civil Service ever since.

**How does your work have an impact in the UK?**

**Civil Servant:** My current job helps get more people into drug and alcohol treatment and improves treatment quality. This is really important as it helps people who struggle with mental

health and addiction to keep working and leads them away from crime. It also restores their health.

**How long have you been in this field?**

**Civil Servant:** Roughly fourteen years - over that time I have worked in ten different jobs and areas.

**Did you know you would take this career path when you were younger? If not, what route were you planning?**

**Civil Servant:** I didn't dream of becoming a Civil Servant when I was your age! To start with, I wanted to be a translator, but once I had done a lot of translating work when I was at University to pay for my education, I very quickly realised that I would rather have my own voice - so then I wanted to become a journalist. Unfortunately, it was too dangerous to be a really good journalist and to write the truth in Ukraine. Eventually, I saw an interesting job on HIV prevention and I really loved working in Public Health, which led me to where I am now.

**What is the most rewarding aspect of your career?**

**Civil Servant:** I like making a difference to people's lives. For example, I worked on the sugar tax, which helped improve children's health. Last year, I helped reunite a

Ukrainian boy who was having cancer treatment in the UK, with his family.

**What are the challenges of your role?**

**Civil Servant:** Working for the government of the day means that sometimes I have to deliver policies that I don't necessarily agree with and lead my team to work on policies they sometimes don't agree with. Sometimes having to negotiate with other people can be a difficult task.

**What advice would you give to KS4 pupils who may be interested in working in the Civil Service?**

**Civil Servant:** Obviously, make sure you study hard for your GCSEs, as getting good grades opens more opportunities for you. Learn to work well with others - even if you don't agree with everything they say. Listen to other people's experiences and learn from their life experiences. For me personally, it is important to always question if I am doing the right thing - developing my critical thinking. Finally, make sure to try different things and see what you enjoy the most.



# INTERVIEW WITH A PROPERTY LAWYER

INTERVIEWED BY KHIMON FRIDAY

**Have you ever wanted a career in Law? Well, we interviewed a Property Lawyer who also happens to be a Platanos College parent.**

**How long have you practised law?**

**Lawyer:** Since I qualified, I have been working for 6 years.

**What is it like working as a Property Lawyer?**

**Lawyer:** It is a really enjoyable thing to do as you meet many new people and it feels good when you successfully complete a case.

**How many years did you have to spend in Law School?**

**Lawyer:** I spent 3 years in Law School, as I studied part-time due to having a child.

**What is your advice for Platanos College pupils who might like to pursue a career in Law?**

**Lawyer:** You have to be very focused and very determined as there is a lot of work and you spend a lot of time



reading, so it isn't something you should do if you dislike reading. Also you have to be prepared to spend a lot of time on your job and take time out of your day to complete tasks.

**Besides your Law Degree, do you have any kind of special training or insight that may apply when handling cases?**

**Lawyer:** Yes. Before the qualifications, I worked in the industry alongside solicitors who have been qualified for many years and I learnt a lot of them. I also studied Psychology at A-Level and I did a Criminology class in College.

**How long can a case take to complete?**

**Lawyer:** There is no specific time frame; however, it usually takes up to 3 months to complete a case.

**What key qualities would you say are needed to be a successful Property Lawyer?**

**Lawyer:** Patience is key, having good attention to detail and good investigation skills.

**What challenges have you faced as a Property Lawyer?**

**Lawyer:** Making sure that I am diligent when doing my job so that I am following Law Society rules to prevent fraud and money laundering.

**Why are you interested in your job?**

**Lawyer:** I didn't originally want to be a property lawyer; I worked at an Immigration Firm for 2 years until I lost my job and I couldn't find any other job until I found an advertisement and they were willing to take me on with no experience in Property Law. They even provided me with training and a good chance at a promotion. During my training, I realised that I really enjoyed Property Law so I worked full time and continued going to Law school part time.

**What inspired you to become a Lawyer?**

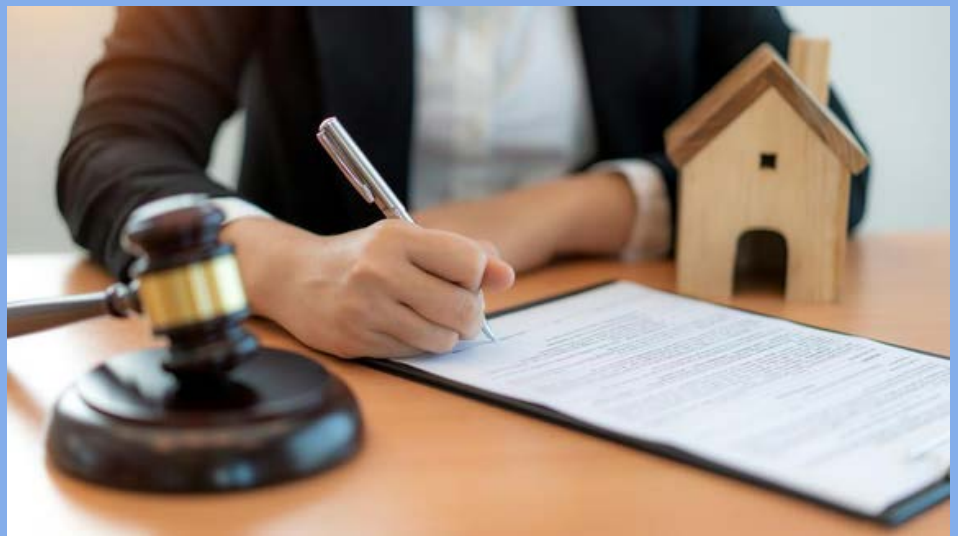
**Lawyer:** My English teacher at Secondary school agreed that I would make a good lawyer as



he and I would always debate the topics presented in class. I was always at the forefront during debates. I was also the President of the Youth Forum in my Borough at 16, and that really helped me to develop some of the skills that I use in my job today.

***What was your journey to becoming a Lawyer?***

**Lawyer:** While I was at university doing my law degree(LLB), I had a child during the 3rd year of my studies. When I finished my Degree, I unfortunately did not have enough money to go to Law school as it was expensive, so I had to work and try to save money to pay for my studies. I worked as a hairdresser and a receptionist, until I managed to convince a Lawyer to take me on as his assistant in Immigration Law. After 3 years, I had enough money to go to Law School part-time. After that, I managed to get a full time job in Law and continued going to Law school part-time until I finished my qualification. After that, I got promoted at work. I've been working as a qualified Lawyer for 6 years.



# INTERVIEW WITH PLATANOS COLLEGE WRITER IN RESIDENCE

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI + SURI DAGI + REGINA FONSECA + ASHLEE KAMAGATE



*Back at the start of the Summer term, a few lucky Year 10 pupils had the wonderful opportunity to interview Platanos College's very own Writer in Residence Cecilia Knapp, who has worked tirelessly with KS3 pupils on their brilliant anthology *The Open Window*.*

*In your debut called *Peach Pig* you explore issues women face and the theme of motherlessness. Can you explain what inspired you to write about such issues?*

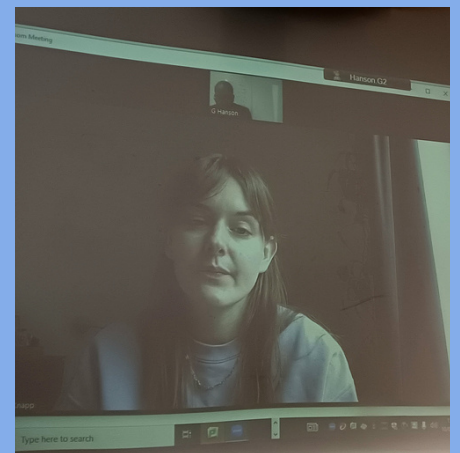
**Cecilia Knapp:** I suppose I was writing from a woman's perspective because that's my experience of the world. When I was younger I found books and poetry quite helpful in terms of navigating my experience as a woman. Part of writing was about wanting to contribute to that conversation around the realities and challenges and brilliant things about being a woman. Also, I wanted to kind of express myself through writing. Personally, I lost my

mum when I was younger and I know a lot of people who have also experienced either that loss or at least some kind of loss in their life. I think it's important to write about these things and put those things out into the world so that people feel that it's okay to talk about them. But also, people can find a way to express their own experiences or connect with their own experiences too. It was very much about writing from my own personal perspective and hoping to figure some stuff out along the way myself. Also, to kind of share that with other people who are similar, but I suppose I wanted to share it with people who are different. I would think it's important for a man to read the book as well, because it's important for us to understand where people are coming from. Hopefully, it's about representing those - not all experiences, because I don't speak for all women obviously - but those specific experiences: growing up as a woman and navigating the world without a mum, which I think will hopefully resonate with people who have suffered the same.

*When did you realise you had a talent for writing?*

**Cecilia Knapp:** I suppose I didn't really realise I had a

talent for quite a while. I just really enjoyed it. Actually, when I first started writing, I don't know if I was a natural. I think I'm quite an observant person and I think writers have to be quite good at noticing the details in the world because that can help us to create our work. But I don't think I was necessarily a great writer when I first started. And I'm still learning so much every single day through reading and through practising and through writing. I really enjoyed it; it has to start with a feeling of really enjoying something. So, because I enjoyed it so much and worked really hard at it, I went to a lot of workshops and creative writing classes, clubs, read lots and watched lots of people performing their work too. I think my confidence grew from that point onwards. I don't think it was really until I was in my early 20s that I was like *'oh actually, maybe this is*





*something that I can do!* At school we didn't do much creative writing - we just did a lot of analysis because of poetry and stuff. I didn't really have anyone say that I could do creative writing as a career, so I sort of had to meet the right people and grow in confidence and then feel that I could maybe do that. But it took a few years.

***As an author do you ever get stressed with planning to meet deadlines?***

**Cecilia Knapp:** Yeah I do get really stressed because you can't always meet deadlines. Sometimes I get commissions like a brand or something will come to you and say *'can you write this poem about [.....] The deadline is next week'* and sometimes you don't always feel very inspired or things aren't going well with the writing and you feel like that deadline is kind of coming. So yeah, it can be really stressful. I try to just go for a walk or read something that might be similar to the themes and hopefully that inspires me in some way. It is a tricky part of it for sure.

***Did you face any challenges or negative experiences in attempting to publish your book?***

**Cecilia Knapp:** Definitely. I



think a big part of being a writer or a creator in general - whether you're an actor or writer - is that there is a lot of rejection involved. There's lots of artists in the world and probably too few opportunities for them. So, I think I got rejected from a few publishers before I found the right publisher for my books. Some of them said they didn't really like the story or some of them said it didn't really have much of a story because my book is more about the characters and how they feel and think. A few publishers seemed like they didn't have enough time or space to publish me - *'We've already published lots of people this year.'* A lot of it is either to do with how they're just not the right fit for you or they don't really like your work, which can obviously feel quite upsetting sometimes. But some of that rejection is about the business of publishing and some publishers are only allowed to publish a few books per year. You have to learn that everyone has different tastes and you just have to understand that some people don't like your work but some people do. Some days it's very easy to just brush it off and be like *'that's the world'* and some days you might be a bit sensitive. That's why it's good to have friends; I have lovely friends who are also writers who have obviously been through the same challenges.

***How did it feel to be awarded the Young People's Laureate?***



**Cecilia Knapp:** Yeah, it was great because it was combining the two things that I really love doing. I really like writing obviously, and I really like working with younger people. I work in your school and several others. And the Young People's Laureate was about combining those two things together and bringing writing to more people, because I think that not everyone thinks that they can write or they haven't been given the right opportunity to make them feel confident to write. But I think that writing is for everybody so there should be every type of writer and every type of story. So, being Young People's Laureate meant that I got to meet thousands of young people over the course of one year and just chat to them about their stories and to encourage them to write because I think that sometimes in the writing world there's not enough diversity and not enough celebration of different types of stories. So I think it's about encouraging more people that they can write and they should write, even if they don't feel very confident. So I loved it - it was a real gift to be able to do that for a year. It was also a bit of a surprise really because you don't apply

for it yourself - you get nominated. So someone out there obviously thinks I would be a good fit to take on that role for a year. It was a really nice confidence boost.

**What advice do you have for people who want to take up writing as a hobby and to pursue it as a career option?**

**Cecilia Knapp:** At Platanos College there are a lot of amazing writing opportunities like the anthologies that were created during Lockdown. I would say talk to your English teachers and kind of get involved in that way. I would say the first thing is to develop your relationship with writing yourself. Even if it's just like getting yourself your own notebook and just writing - even if it's just for 5 minutes of your day: something that you've noticed; something that you feel; something you want to say - and developing a habit. It doesn't even have to be a notebook; some people like to write on their notes app on their phone. I think that strengthening that relationship with that writing is important. The second thing is finding a community. It's a cool thing that you are all coming together in this shared interest and shared love. You can support each other and motivate each other. I'm still friends with writers now who I met when I first started learning at 17-18 years old. So I think that finding those opportunities - whether in school or out of school - to get

involved in creative writing is important. It can improve your writing and also brings a community as well.

**You're currently Platanos' College's Writer In Residence with the First Story programme. How have you found working with our younger people?**

**Cecilia Knapp:** It's been so amazing, I've loved it. I've just finished working on the anthology and when I showed it to my colleagues they couldn't believe the book was written by Year 7s and 8s because it was so impressive. Yeah, I think it's been a complete joy getting to know the students and also seeing them grow from lacking confidence, not thinking they could write, to being so enthusiastic at the end of it and wanting to publish their brilliant work in a book. Also, wanting to share their work out loud- so yeah, it was a wonderful window into other people's lives and into the lives of the group at Platanos College. It's been a real honour to share those stories with people and I've loved it!

**Who helped you on your journey to get to where you are now?**

**Cecilia Knapp:** When I was 17, I went somewhere that I thought was a drama workshop; it was in this theatre in Camden called the Roundhouse. In truth, it was actually a writing workshop, so I sort of went accidentally! So I

went to this workshop and it was run by this guy called Steven Camden who is a poet and a storyteller, but he also did a lot of work with young people and helped them to write. He just made it so unintimidating; I didn't feel like anything you said would be seen as silly and it felt like you could just explore what you wanted to say through creative writing in your own voice. I think I would always go back to that moment because that was when I thought maybe this is possible and it wasn't a kind of scary intimidating professor. He was just a young normal guy and not like the writers I got shown at school who were older and more intimidating. I want to make people feel like that; I want to make people feel that writing is fun and it is for them. You can write whatever you want and no one is ever going to tell you that you are stupid or silly. I think that I could say he was a big influence on me.



# INTERVIEW WITH A CHILDMINDER

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI



**We interviewed a Platanos College parent about her job as a Childminder.**

**What is a typical day like being a Childminder?**

**Childminder:** The children normally arrive by 9 am. Every day I plan different morning outdoor activities, such as going to the playground, playgroups, the library and the farm, so the children can interact with peers and understand the world around them. Then, we come home and have lunch. Most of the children have their nap between 1 pm and 2:30 pm and then in the afternoon we do indoor activities such as singing, crafts and puzzles that link to the topic I have planned for the coming weeks. Afterwards, I give them tea and it's home time.



**What do you enjoy the most?**

**Childminder:** I enjoy seeing the children develop from such a young age until they go to nursery.

**What do you find challenging?**

**Childminder:** The most challenging thing is when the children are learning to speak, however, it can be difficult to understand what their needs are. Also, between the age of 2 and 3, they begin to have tantrums; with patience and reassurance, they get through this phase.

**What was at the root of you wanting to be a childminder?**

**Childminder:** One person advised me to try childminding as she saw me caring for my daughter at the time. She believed that I would be a good childminder so I began to look into it with Lambeth Council, who advised me to do the Childcare Level 3 Diploma and other training, which I did.

**What advice would you give to any Platanos College pupils interested in becoming a childminder?**

**Childminder:** It's a rewarding job, however, it can be challenging at times; you just

have to persevere.

**Was your job affected by COVID and if so, how?**

**Childminder:** Yes, most of the children didn't come to me at my setting due to the Lockdowns. However, one child's parents worked in the Education sector and was a Key Worker, so I had to care for her daughter during that period. Once the restrictions were lifted, the other children returned.



# INTERVIEW WITH A FORMER MILITARY SOLDIER

INTERVIEWED BY KS4 NEWSLETTER JOURNALISTS AND YEAR 9 CADETS

*Back in May, Year 10 pupils Khimon Friday and Rushda Ahmad, alongside Key Stage 3 Platanos College Cadets, Liam Hopkins and Asma Mohammed-Ali, interviewed former military soldier Peter about his experience in the Army.*



*Interviewing Peter at school*

***At what age did you first get involved with the Army?***

**Peter:** I was 16 and 6 months when I ‘signed the dotted line’ as they would say. I remember attending the careers office and completing the initial BARB test and completing all the administration paperwork. After this you sign your Oath of Allegiance, which is pretty much you are signing a contract with Her Majesty the Queen - now the King. This is a way of saying that you will obey orders from Heirs, Successors, Generals and Officers. I was a young kid I suppose. I then left when I was 29, nearly 30.

***What regiment did you belong to?***

**Peter:** I served in the Blues & Royals Regiment – that’s the soldiers on the horses in London and the plumes and swords. I served with them and was based in Windsor. It is a dual-role regiment: the ceremonial role, which is in Knightsbridge,

Whitehall. The second half of the Regiment is an armoured role, which includes light tanks, armoured vehicles, and reconnaissance. The Blues & Royals Regiment is a very prestigious Regiment, and part of one of the 7 Household Division Guards Regiments. So, you have 5 Foot Guards regiments, for example, the guards outside Buckingham Palace, Grenadier Guards and then you have 2 Horseback Regiments, which are the Life Guards and my regiment, the Blue & Royals.

***Why did you choose to be part of that regiment?***

**Peter:** I’ll be honest with you; it wasn’t my original intention to join the Blues & Royals. I had wanted to join the Grenadier Guards, but I suffered a bad knee injury during my phase 2 training. So, at that time, I had to choose whether I would continue in a less strenuous regiment or leave. I chose the Light Armoured route, which,

to my surprise, was more strenuous in the long run. But in between the transition, I managed to recover and I’m glad that I did as it gave me more of an educational direction. I ended up becoming an Armoured Recognisance Vehicle Commander and I was commanding armoured vehicles, so going down that avenue within the army gave me a lot more educational experience than I required. This then helped me to develop my career and get me to where I am today.

***How long did you serve in the Army?***

**Peter:** I was in the army for 12 years. At that point, I had to decide if I wanted to stay to do the full 22 years or leave at 12 years to take a step further into my current career, which is what I did. So, I left at 12 years and have now been working at my current job for 10 years. These last 10 years have gone by quickly if I’m being honest. If I had decided to do the full 22 years, I would still be in it now and my friends, who did stay in, are senior and are rising to Captain level. Some of them really want to get out now, but you can get caught in the pension trap. But I’m glad that I got out at 12 years - it was a good career change for me.



***What was your favourite subject at school?***

**Peter:** I would say it was PE because I've always been active, so I trained from the age of 14 and started with cross-country and progressed on from there. 2 years ago, I participated in the Manchester Marathon, and I was very active in the military fitness-wise, so I would say my favourite subject was PE. But I also really enjoyed English, and I still do now, however, Maths was my weakest subject.

***What qualifications did you gain in the Army and how have these helped your career development?***

**Peter:** I gained a Level 4 in teaching – it's called CTLLS, which is the first step into your teaching role, which really helped in my career. Then I went on to Senior Management courses, then I did numerous other courses, which were more military based such as my JCCs which are the Junior Command Courses and then my Senior Command Courses. But the one for me that has been the most iconic for my career now, is my teaching, and the reason for that is because I trained people to be soldiers, so that was probably one of

the biggest highlights of my career. When you have 44 trainee soldiers new to the army, you must really work hard to make sure that everyone is on the same level. When they pass-out 14 weeks later, some of them make it and some don't, the ones that did have great pride in their achievements and that reflects on you as their instructor. To have that experience in teaching with a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures was challenging but very rewarding.

***What does it take to succeed in the army?***

**Peter:** Truthfully, it's hard work, but also, I think it comes down to the person as an individual. If you want to succeed in something, then you do just that - it's as simple as that. For me, the reason why I did well in my career and on my career courses, wasn't because I was the best academically, because I wasn't; it was the fact that I didn't give up. I did want to be the best I could be for me, but not in an arrogant way. I wanted to achieve and set my own goals, so at the end of my career I can look back and tell myself I did everything I could to the best of my abilities to get the best out of the time spent in the military. But it's not easy as there is a lot of adjustment, like leaving your family and then the operational pressures of going away then not seeing your family for a prolonged period

of time. Then you've got the academic aspect of it, learning new things that can be quite difficult. Being under pressure and tired as well. If you can balance all of that, then you'll have a good career in the army. When you initially start basic training, if you are struggling in one aspect and you can't handle it - especially the training aspect of things - you will be required to conduct more training, and if you can't handle that, then you would be let go; unfortunately, that's how things are. So, from the very beginning to the very end, the army can be very demanding in many aspects.

***How did you maintain your fitness?***

**Peter:** You've got no choice. Believe it or not, there are still unfit people in the military. I suppose it's up to you as an individual, but you also have 4 PT (personal training) sessions a week at least, sometimes twice a day. If you do intense courses like I did, you could do PT sessions 3 times a day. So, to maintain that you have got



to eat well, preferably not smoke (which I don't), don't drink much and eat healthily, but a lot of people do smoke and like a drink which is their prerogative; don't get me wrong, you do have a few drinks whilst you are in the military, but it is down to you as an individual to discipline yourself. I have got some really fit friends who are fitter than I am, but that just comes down to their training goals. Overall, I would say eat healthily as you will naturally get stronger as you get older.

***Where would you like to be in your career 5 years from now?***

**Peter:** That's a good question. When I left the military, I started in an environment where I was comfortable. I remained in a security/risk background, so I could help in keeping people safe. I would most likely want to get to Director level. I am also considering Facility Management or Property Management. As long as I am happy, that's the main thing to be honest.

***What are the challenges of being in the army?***

**Peter:** Sleep deprivation I would say is one of them, especially if you go on certain courses or tours. It's hard as I'm trying to think back to when I did it. It was tough going away for long periods of time; sometimes I was gone for 7 months and would only come home for 2 weeks out of the 7 months, so you do have



to get used to that and you do eventually get used to it. But you do have the unlucky few who don't get used to it, which no one can blame them for. I eventually became quite comfortable with it, but then you have to factor in if you have a partner or your own family. I've got a little boy and if I had had him earlier in my career, I wouldn't have been able to do it, whereas I have got friends who are stationed abroad currently who are away for 6 months, so they can only see their kids 2 weeks out of 6 months - and that's really challenging for a lot of people. I wasn't in the situation where I had had my boy at that point, and if I had, my story would have been completely different.

Other challenges are doing what is asked of you, demands on which may affect your career from a geopolitical point of view and issues globally that put a lot of pressure onto you. Putting that into perspective, when I was 16, I had just signed the dotted line on 2nd September

2001, and a few days later 9/11 happened. I knew that my career would be extremely different from that point onwards. So, I had a different and I guess challenging start to my career, but there are good points about the military - it's not all doom and gloom.

***What advice would you give to your younger self about joining the Army?***

**Peter:** Most probably to be more open about joining a different Regiment. Don't get me wrong, I do love my Regiment and enjoyed my time with the Blues & Royals, but I didn't know what other Regiments were out there; a prime example would be the Royal Engineers who are fantastic and the Royal Signals who deal with Communications. So, if you were to compare now to when I joined the Army in 2001, communications and technology have pretty much taken over; many of the big jobs in London now incorporate some kind of cybersecurity or high-level technology. Looking back, I would have preferred to join something along those lines, but I can't turn back time and I enjoyed it regardless.

My advice to someone who is joining now is to look into the Regiments in more depth than I did. My brother was in the Military before me and we come from quite an unprivileged estate in the Midlands, so for me, when he



so it wasn't too bad to be honest.

If you are thinking of joining the military, I just wanted to let you know that it's a good life; you just need to weigh up whether it will be the life that you want or not, so don't write it off and research well. If you need any advice, you can always ask your teachers to get back in touch with me - I'm always available to give advice where required.

joined, I just saw him come back with money and I thought *'that's great'* but I didn't really know what I was getting into. Do a bit of research into what you are getting into, as there are some fantastic Regiments out there and of course the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force, which are all fantastic - so do your research!

***And finally, what impact did the Army have on your family life?***

**Peter:** To be honest, if you were to ask me back then, you would have got a totally different answer. It didn't really have a massive impact on my family life, as I was a young lad who was based in Windsor for 12 years, minus the two and a half years I spent in Cambridge as an instructor. It didn't really have a massive effect on my family life, as my parents my friends and other relatives were used to me being away a lot of the time anyway. Now, if I was still in it, it would have a bad effect on myself personally, as I wouldn't be able to go away for long periods of time as I have a family of my own. So, back then I was a young lad and was told to go to places and I would do as I was told,



# INTERVIEW WITH A FILM AND TV VFX SUPERVISOR

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI + CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN + RUSHDA AHMAD



*We were super excited to interview Stuart Bullen, who works as a VFX Supervisor in Film and TV. During the interview, Stuart showed us various footage of Blockbuster movies he has worked on like the Marvels franchise.*

Hi, my name is Stuart and I'm a VFX supervisor in Film and TV; that means anything computer generated. I will go on set and supervise and advise the Director on what can and can't be done, whether it's financially possible or humanly possible, as well as possible to achieve with a computer. It all starts with reading a script before we start filming and from that script I figure out what could be visual effects and what they can achieve on camera. So for example, we worked on *Guardians of the Galaxy 3* and a lot of that of course, you can't really do in real life since there are no aliens and no Groot, and so we need to advise on what can be done and what we will do later on. What I do is once we've filmed

everything on set, I then come back to what is here in the studio and look after a team of artists that then make all of this stuff that ends up being what we see on our TV screens.

*Stuart then started describing how the final scenes of Guardians of the Galaxy were made.*

**Stuart Bullen:** There was this actor called Austin, who on set played Groot, but of course he doesn't do his voice - that was done by Vin Diesel. But generally, they will have an actor to represent the CG character because the actors want to know where to look, where the characters are looking and so the camera can also focus on something; so what we end up doing is taking him and sometimes we need to paint him out, but thankfully a lot of the time, Groot is quite big so he covers where Austin is. There are a few stages Groot will go through in order to achieve the final product. There's also a lot of work that goes into creating the environment the characters are standing in because there's no point building things on set that don't need to be built, because VFX can step in later and make it happen. For Mantis, we had Pom Klementieff; we had to change her eyes, fix her makeup and make all the antennae and add

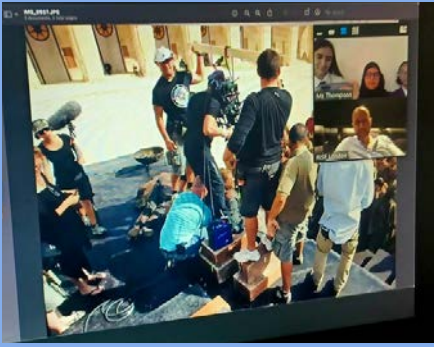
a little bit of breath. So, all of these things come back after filming on set and you talk to the team and you start planning how you will approach things to get these results. The VFX for this movie took about 7 months. There are thousands of specialist artists who focus on different aspects. One of the best things about VFX is that there's a whole array of different jobs that can be done. My job is to do some of this work but also look to out for the team. There's a whole bunch of different layers. There's a whole range of people that have gone through university and those that have not. Sometimes there are courses that teach this. I personally didn't use my Uni degrees that I had studied, and just made my way up from being a Runner. There are so many different routes into this field. It's great; they're always looking for Interns and people who just want to learn things on the job.

**How long does it roughly take to edit one scene?**

**Stuart Bullen:** It does depend on what is involved. For







Stuart showed us behind the scenes of Season 1 Episode 9 of GOT

example, a shot of Groot can be one of the longer processes as there's a lot involved. So within that, there's that actor who's on set, Austin. I could have an artist working on removing him and that itself could take a couple days, but Groot in one shot could take a couple of months to do - purely because you have to animate it and make it look photorealistic; just because you think it looks good, doesn't mean that the Director will think it looks good because they might have a different idea of how the character might say something, and many times you might think it's quite simple to animate their speech but there's certain actions the director might want - for example, how they purse their lips or how the corner of their mouth moves. So it can be a huge range - it could take a few months or merely a few hours on another. Sometimes you have to redesign whole cities but sometimes you just have to touch up a few makeup bits. For example, if an actor wakes up with bags under their eyes,

that would be VFX's job to remove in order for continuity along the whole show.

***How many people have to work together in order to reach the final product?***

**Stuart Bullen:** There are thousands of people. It's always amazing to think about how anything can be made with that many people. Some might think, how can people be bothered with that much organisation and that many people? It must be exhausting. In *Guardians of the Galaxy*, there are thousands of people, whether it be the writers or people building the sets, camera crew, lights, makeup, costumes and then the VFX and editors. In our team here, we have 39 people so we have a relatively small team, which is nice. You can go to other teams that have an upwards of 400 people.

***Could you tell us what a typical day at work looks like for you?***

**Stuart Bullen:** A day in the studio starts off with a morning call in order to make sure everyone's good, doing well and healthy, especially since Covid when some people weren't doing so well. After that, we speak as a team and discuss the incoming requests from the clients, usually from LA since a lot of stuff is done in Hollywood, so when we're asleep, they work and vice versa, so when we wake up we'll get notes from what they've done overnight. So I'll

talk to the artist and feed back the information from the clients and give directions for where the clients want to go with bits of work. Then we leave the artist to start working through those notes and throughout the day we end up just doing reviews of people's work. We have a big screen where we project people's work and watch it together while giving advice and feedback. We then finalise it and send it to the clients; if they're not happy, we make some tweaks and then we review again later on. Sometimes I'll have to hop on calls with Producers and Directors just to present our final work. Throughout the day I'll also be walking past people, ensuring they are doing well and then attend some meetings and scheduling work.

***What movies and TV shows have you worked on?***

**Stuart Bullen:** In my role now, I've worked on 32 movies and TV shows, but overall I've done about 70. The first on-set show I did was Game of Thrones Season 1. I've done 4 James Bond movies, 3 Harry Potter movies, and 3 Marvel movies (*Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Miss Marvel* and *The*





Marvels, which is coming out soon). There's a zombie movie I worked on as well right before Lockdown. The idea of working on set seems like it will be all glamorous and high-tech, but sometimes it's not so much! When I did this zombie movie called His House, there's this moment when the zombie has just come out of the lake and we needed to put the lake in, so we just buy a little paddling pool and the actor just dunks himself in. Sometimes it's a 'make do' thing where you just make it work. I think one of my favourite shows I've worked on is The Imitation Game and Long Walk to Freedom.

***What's involved in making VFX and how has it evolved over time?***

**Stuart Bullen:** It's changing all the time, even now, especially since Artificial Intelligence, whose role is getting bigger. If we go back to when I first started, AI was good, but it just didn't give you the same results as it does now: it's always changing and it's always getting better. It's giving us fast results to get realistic images, but it's also a little more intuitive now. With Artificial Intelligence, the idea

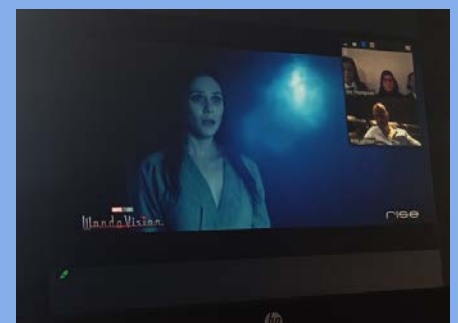
with some of those things is that we have a character and we have to track something in the background, so we end up marking some of the things that we want to track with little red markers such as red crosses or little dots, and that's so we can get the camera to track the sort of movement. It's kind of boring stuff, but that's not the point; the point is that an artist has to paint out every single dot all the time, which is quite laborious. But with Artificial Intelligence you can do it once and tell the software that you want to remove those whenever you see them in the future and it will get it done for you. So, technology is getting used in that way, which is great, but we also have animating characters. With Groot, you can now wear suits, which you've probably seen over the years where an actor can move around and that information is then put onto a digital character later, who moves exactly like a human does. The whole idea of SFX and what is done is based on what the Director really wants and as soon as you know that - sometimes the Director themselves don't know what they want - you can go through the multiple stages and get the information into the computer. So, whatever you're recording with a camera on Set, you have to create a digital version of that on the computer so that it all looks the same. There's a long process after that, which would take a very long time to break down.

***What other teams do you have to work with when doing SFX?***

**Stuart Bullen:** In the studio I tend to work with just the Director or my counterpart who is working in LA, who then sits with the Director on the days when I'm not there. These tends to be the only people we would deal with outside. However, if you're on Set, you're dealing with the Director, Makeup and Hair (due to the fact that makeup can get ruined throughout the day and the team won't have enough time to fix it, so we then talk and handle it during editing), or Costumes because we know that superheroes have amazing suits, but what you don't see is all the zips on them because we edit them out later.

***What is the future of VFX?***

**Stuart Bullen:** It's interesting because I think that Artificial Intelligence will have helped change it a lot, but it still comes down to artists and their passion and dedication - things that you just don't get from a computer and a computer can't quite figure out what a Director wants because they never are quite direct with what they say, so you have to figure what it is





and read between the lines. What I want the future to look like is better stories because that story. So, I hope in the future it's more about the story than VFX, but as you've probably seen with streaming, there's lot more VFX in great TV shows and films out there than there ever was, and a lot more coming out, so I'm guessing the future will be full of that as well as immersive, with these Apple goggles coming out, so there will be a lot more demand in the future as people want to be in a film and be part of it. So Artificial Intelligence will also be playing a huge role in that.

**What software do you use?**

**Stuart Bullen:** We use Maya and Houdini; those are my 3D packages. They will be the ones that create things like Groot - big characters that you have to move around a 3D space. You've got another application called Nuke, which takes that 3D stuff and combines it with scenes shot on set and you put it all together and make it look realistic. Those are the three core bits of software that we use. But not one person knows it all, so there are multiple people specialising in different areas of VFX, so you don't have to know it all.

**What would be your advice for pupils looking to have a career in VFX?**

**Stuart Bullen:** There are different routes. Like I said, I was a runner and it was good for me because you get to understand the pace of what it's like working in a studio; it could be quite fast at times and it can also help you in understanding software. When the artists go home, you can start training yourself. There is so much software that you can also get at home. Youtube is huge in training. When I started, (*Stuart's not that old!*), there was the internet, but there weren't a lot of tutorials online. But now there are loads and just watching those tutorials will get you a long way into understanding what you can do with software. But just getting you closer to the door is just reaching out to studios and saying "Hey, I'm interested - would you mind letting me have a look around?" and "What if I try doing some work and sit down on a spare machine and we see if I can produce for you?". If you want to go on set, there are so many different branches that can then lead to VFX. It's all a case of reaching out to people by any means such as LinkedIn or emailing on an online website they have. But there's no harm in trying. If they're all good people, nobody is going to not respond after you reach out and show interest in what they do and show that you want to progress in that area too.



# INTERVIEW WITH A PAEDIATRIC NURSE

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI + KHIMON FRIDAY + AMINA JAHAN



***We interviewed Violet about her journey to becoming a Paediatric oncology nurse.***

***What inspired you to become a nurse?***

**Violet:** I think I've always enjoyed looking after and caring for people - it was something that I was quite drawn to. But I had a morbid interest in Science and illnesses as a kid and I thought that nursing combined the two perfectly as you get the Biology bit and the human side of looking after patients. When my little brother was in hospital when he was little, the nurses who looked after him were always so lovely and made a really stressful time a lot better.

***What qualifications and work experiences did you need?***

**Violet:** There are 4 different types of nursing you can do, Adults, Paediatrics, Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. There is also access to Nursing courses you can do at College if that's what you want to do, which guarantees you a place at University.

Work experience-wise, I volunteered at a hospice for quite a while when I was doing my A-Levels, going a couple of times a week, making cups of tea and feeding patients, which I quite enjoyed. I did a bit of volunteering at a GP's Practice and did some work experience as a Practice Nurse and a weekend course at a hospital near me, which mixed Paediatric and adult wards.

This was quite helpful in helping me decide which type of nursing I wanted to do. Anything sort of related to Healthcare will help you prepare for University.

***What has been the most memorable moment of your career so far?***

**Violet:** I work in Paediatric Oncology, so I look after children with cancer who are undergoing treatment of bone marrow transplants, so a lot of the time children come in there really quite poorly. I looked after a little one once who had a diagnosis where they were told they would never walk again, paralysed from the neck down. We gave them all the treatments and by the end, they fully regained all of their walking limbs. It was a very special moment watching the child who we thought would be paralysed for life, walking up and ringing the bell. That was probably the best bit of my job.

***What challenges have you faced in your career?***

**Violet:** There are loads of different bits in nursing, where in almost every shift you are facing a challenge or something that you haven't encountered before. I found the transition from being a Student Nurse to an actual staff nurse to be the biggest jump for me, because you go straight from your A-levels into University, qualified by 21, and you think "oh my god I'm 21 looking after all these people and it can be a scary thing." I found the biggest challenge was finding the confidence in myself that I knew what I was doing. Sometimes you get Imposter Syndrome; you think you surely can't be allowed to do this, but as time goes on you become more confident, develop your skills and you slowly start to feel that you can do this and to believe in yourself that you know what you are doing.





***What are your views on the recent strikes by NHS staff?***

**Violet:** I know they get a lot of public criticism and stuff in newspapers, but the NHS is a very complex thing with a lot of staff and doctors in a growing, ageing population, because people are living for longer thanks to medical treatment, and as life goes on, people survive more things. For me, the pay for nursing hasn't changed that much over the years, while the role of the nurse has. The role of the nurse back in the early 90s, meant you did not give intravenous medication, you didn't give chemotherapy, you didn't do bloods, you didn't cannulate; it was much more washing and bathing, which is all still a big part of nursing, but we have been trained to do all of these different skills on top and the pay hasn't really changed. So I think that a lot of the nursing strikes are about wanting pay that is reflective of the multitude of skills that we develop over the years that we work and train.

Another important part is patient safety: you have a growing population of people

and nurses are leaving the nursing workforce as it's a really tough job and there aren't enough people to look after the number of people in hospital. Because of that, patients suffer. For me, I paid my course 19 bursaries and paid to do placements and 12-hour shifts. It's a tough course. If anything could change from these strikes from my point of view, it would be to subsidise Nursing and Midwifery Medical Degrees, to identify young people to get into it and to bring new staff into the workforce, as it is currently happening but it isn't happening in the numbers that need to happen to make the NHS run as safely as it can. The strikes are important for different reasons.

***In your opinion, what does the future of the NHS look like?***

**Violet:** Hopefully, it will continue to grow and change as the population changes and over the years we will get a lot of people in from school and from university, where the numbers of nursing staff will increase. We would get young people with different ideas and training to help the NHS evolve in the way it needs to evolve, to reflect the population that needs looking after. I hope the NHS will carry on being the NHS for a long time because we are very lucky that we do not have to pay for Healthcare like other countries. The cost of some of the stuff for the medicines we give can be in the hundreds of thousands of pounds and the

fact that everyone in that country has a chance to receive care is a massively informed thing. So hopefully it will continue to be free and we will all get lots of new staff into the workforce to help the NHS to grow and change.

***For those Platanos College Pupils who want to become Nurses or Doctors, what advice would you give them?***

**Violet:** I would say when you are doing your GCSEs or your A-Levels, keep your end goal in mind. I think A-Levels and GCSEs are tough, and in my opinion, they were tougher than University. So if there is something you really want to do, keep that in mind when you're doing revision and your homework, to get the end goal you want. This is something that needs to happen now even though it starts in Year 11. I have got friends who did Medical Degrees and I lived with a whole house of nurses. They are tough Degrees - Medicine, Nursing, Midwifery. You do a lot of placements and 12-hour shifts. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you are struggling, whether you are already on your course or when you first start. There is loads of support available and





just perceive and remember your end goal will be so worth it in the end. If you are thinking about going into Nursing it is a tough job, but to me, I think it is the most rewarding job in the world. You have hard days but it is the best. If you are thinking about it, do it.

***Have you ever been affected by an attachment to a patient?***

**Violet:** Quite a few times. On the ward I work on when children come in for a bone marrow transplant, they usually have had a lot of treatment beforehand. During their transplant, they can be in hospital anywhere between 8 weeks up to over a year. You get to know them and their family very well and most of the children I have looked after have a good outcome, but not all of them do. I looked after a little boy who had a bone marrow transplant and I got on really, really well with his family and him, and he ended up relapsing and passed away. That was really tough to think of at the moment you find out and you know what is going to happen it can be very difficult, but a lot of the time your colleague are all in the same boat at work, and all have those

patients. This happens to everyone, so talking to your Management, and talking to your Colleagues can be helpful. The NHS is quite good in that they can provide group support for staff as well. So there are lots of people you can go to for help and advice but as a nurse, you have a professional boundary and you don't overstep that line. You do get to know these people well when you spend so much time with them - it's human nature.

***Do you think we are starting to see huge progress being made to a point where all cancers are curable?***

**Violet:** I think each cancer, such as bowel cancer and breast cancer, behaves differently; some will respond to the standard treatment and some will not. Twenty years back, if someone doesn't respond to the first line of treatment, there was nothing else that could be given to them. But now we got teams of Researchers where I work, who constantly see different drugs that can not only prolong life if someone has got an incurable disease, but some of them go completely into remission. There is a lot of money that goes into research, not only in the UK but all over the world, and there are so many different trial treatments. Treatment is quite harsh and not everyone will die from cancer but suffer from the side effects of the treatment. I think developing kinder and more effective treatments is

something in the next 30, 40, or 50 years that will become a very big thing. We are already seeing a massive decrease compared to 10 years ago and the survival rates of children with certain cancers is increasing and for adults too. If we think back 50 years, the most common type of leukaemia, Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia, was entirely incurable in children, but now the survival rate with a child diagnosed with that cancer is 98%, so hopefully we do that for more cancers, even though some are harder to treat than others. With time, hard work and all these Scientists behind the scenes, I think it is definitely possible.

***Do you ever feel frustrated that the NHS might offer not limited things such as experimental drugs?***

**Violet:** The NHS - I can't comment on adults - but specifically for children, they are very supportive of experimental treatments. A lot of the time, the treatments are developed and then patented in different countries like America where Healthcare is not free and when





something is in the trial stage, Phases 1 through to 4 trial, it goes from theoretical then going into animal studies and then eventually into humans. I think the NHS should offer more, but I don't think the money and resources are there, whereas in America, they have got more money as it is a private healthcare system. Whilst we do see a lot of children with cancer, it is still rare, and it's not necessarily economical for the NHS to offer trial drugs for children with cancer when it doesn't occur very often. So I do understand why they don't but for parents who are going through the process, it would be much easier if they could have it here, instead of travelling to Germany and America. For the NHS, it's not economical to put all that money into treatment for cancer that doesn't occur very often. I think that it would be better if they did here, and hopefully one day they will once they've been proven an effective part of treatment. They will eventually offer it in the UK, but it will just take years.

***Do you think there are advantages to having a privatised system like in America?***

**Violet:** Yes and no: with the private sector, they can offer more things and more money is going into the system and the NHS is vastly underfunded for what it does. So they might be able to offer more than here. It's impossible to say, but there are advantages as the scope of things that can offer is probably way bigger. But also for a lot of the people I look after, their children wouldn't have been able to have the treatment they had because they wouldn't have been able to afford it. You have to weigh up the balance where everyone can access the treatment even if it isn't these experimental ones that might help, but at least access something. Whereas in some countries, it wouldn't be accessible at all.

***If we got private healthcare here, would you be able to access experimental drugs or is that an illegal thing within this country?***

**Violet:** I'm not too sure actually. I think that you can because children can go to different hospitals in the UK that offer different things, for example there is a clinical trial called the Car T-cell therapy, which is still experimental, in leukaemia; it is a relapse therapy. So if children relapse multiple times, they can access it. But they are trialling it with children with solid

tumours as well. There is the medical and ethical stuff, but there is no reason why a doctor who agrees to use that treatment on them, couldn't go and get that because it's their choice what Care Team they are under. But it has to go through all the safety assessments in animals and humans. So if it's a drug that is theoretically good but doesn't work in humans, I don't think they would be allowed to give it. For the ones they think might work, and they know it won't cause detriment to the child or the patient, there is no reason why they couldn't give it if there was a doctor present who knew about the drug and agreed to give it.

***Are there more routes in it now?***

**Violet:** There are a lot more roles coming out in Nursing. There are Nurse Associates, so as a Staff Nurse, you start at Band 5 and as a Nurse Associate you start at Band 4. There is a route to progress to a Staff Nurse: you can do apprenticeships or university. Health and Social Care can enable you access to Nursing courses, which can get you into a Nurse Associate course, a Degree course. There are loads of different ways you can get into Nursing and with Nurse Associates a big part of that is that you are paid throughout your training.



# INTERVIEW WITH A TRAINEE PILOT

INTERVIEWED BY KATY LE + MONAB ALNOOR + NEZIHE KARKIN



*Zach flying a plane*

***Year 10 pupils were lucky enough to get the opportunity to interview a trainee pilot called Zach. Here's what he had to say about life as a pilot and how we can undertake the journey to the skies ourselves, should we want to in future!***

***What inspired you to train to be a pilot?***

**Zach:** I decided to be a pilot when I was very young. It was a clear passage that I could draw. I grew up abroad in Hong Kong and so when it came to see family, it almost always involved a flight. A lot of my family and friends became pilots with Cathay Pacific. This specific airline is the main carrier for Hong Kong; it's almost like the UK's version of British Airways. When I was young, I managed to try and get a bit of work experience at Cathay in Year 10. I managed to experience many important things that a pilot would encounter, such as flight crew, engineering, marketing, flight planning and

so on. Ultimately, it was just being surrounded by pilots and listening to their stories that inspired me.

***What are the different pilots you can be? Which one are you?***

**Zach:** There are many different types of pilots: Commercial, Cargo, Services. Military, Bush Pilot, Charter Pilot, Tour and Adventurous sports such as sky diving and Flight Instructors.

I am currently what is called a General Aviator. I hold a private pilot's license and a single-engine piston rating, which allows me to fly single-engine propeller aircraft.

In terms of the different types of pilots, you get bush pilots who operate in remote areas and have undergone specialist training for rough terrain landings and survival (in case of emergency). These types of pilots are usually used for the transportation of medicine or equipment to underdeveloped areas of the world. They have to land on short runways, make muddy landings and fly in storms. There are also police force, fire pilot services and ambulance, as well as coast guard, all of which have ties in the military. There's also military and the Royal Navy, which carry warships and aircrafts. Private charters are

those who work and fly for billionaires and millionaires – these jobs usually earn the highest salaries. There are also commercial pilots who do general trips in the air. Other miscellaneous flight crew include skydivers and those who fly on the coastline to draw it down on a map. Finally, there are also instructors who teach aspiring pilots how to fly and obtain their licenses.

***What exactly does training to be a pilot involve?***

**Zach:** Training to be a pilot involves lots and lots of dedication; it is very intense. Depending on whether you fly of your own accord or with a military contract or with an airline, it involves a lot of flying and a lot of ground school. There are a lot of things to consider when being a pilot - most importantly, medical matters. The type of pilot you can be depends on your medical situation; there are two different kinds of medical license that you can obtain: one is a Class One Medical and the other is a Class 2 Medical. With a Class 2 you can become a general







aviator which means you can then fly small planes but if you want to fly larger planes, you have to have a Class One, which is a lot more and intrusive to your well-being and health.

Another frequently asked question is ‘*Can a pilot wear glasses?*’. Within a certain range you can wear glasses, but if you’re colour-blind, that’s where it gets more difficult. If you want to fly as a General Aviator and you are colourblind, it is okay as long as you can differentiate between the colours red and green – which are the most important colours as they are how you are signalled.

There are different ways of becoming a pilot such as the Military - which can be very competitive. The Cadet route is another route and is very popular. You will have to be able to fund the training, which can exceed £100,000. Training to be a pilot takes a lot of financing, which is why it can sometimes take a significant amount of time. I currently work a number of part-time jobs to help support myself throughout the expensive training.

I think Ground School is the

most intense part of training. However, past that stage only flying is left, so there will be lots of flying from then on. After completing that, you go onto flying to obtain a pilot’s flying license, FRTOP, Night rating, CPLSEP/CPLEMP, MEIR, AMPS MCC, AUPRT, and then type A rating. APS MCC (airline pilot standards multi-crew cooperation) is where you learn to work together as a team in a cockpit as you don’t fly on your own in big jets. Usually, there are 3 pilots on a long flight – the Captain, Senior First Officer, First Officer and Officer. Once you have achieved your licence, you have to ensure that you remain current; that means going and flying as much as possible. In the UK, the law states that you have to complete 3 take-offs and 3 landings within 90 days.

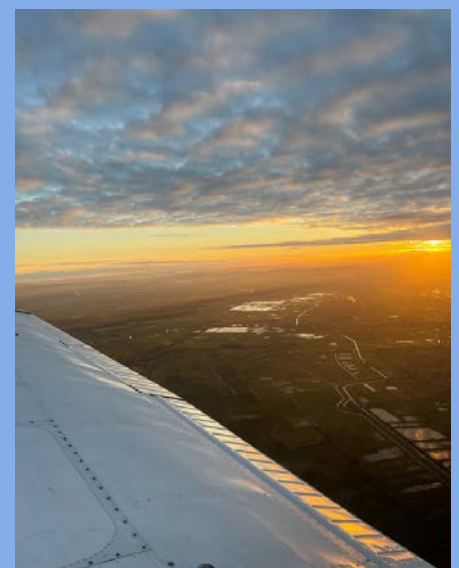
***What qualifications do you need to become a pilot?***

**Zach:** To get your pilot licence you do not need any qualifications - you just need to pass a medical. You have to be at least 16 years old to start training and 16 years old to do your first solo, but 17 years old to hold the licence and fly by yourself with friends and family. However, to become a Commercial Pilot, you need to at least obtain a Level 5 or C grade Higher in Maths, Physics and English at GCSE. It is preferable by airlines to do A Levels or other educational pathway after secondary school. Geography can also be looked at as a quite crucial

subject, as knowing the weather and destination are the most crucial parts of becoming a pilot. Reading charts and planning routes are also very important. Some airlines do look out to see if you have obtained a University Degree in Aviation.

***Did you ever face any challenges such as travel sickness?***

**Zach:** You do start to feel a bit of sickness after you pull some G-force when facing a steep turn. However, 2020 vision was a challenge for me, though it is not required. The most challenging thing I have faced is medical. I have astigmatism, therefore I am required to wear glasses. Astigmatism is where the cornea is slightly more oval than spherical. The pandemic was also challenging as it put my training on hold for about a year or 2. The weather can also be quite challenging, as for 2 and a half months earlier this year I could not fly due to the fact that the weather was so poor.





£100,000 a year, as that is how much training costs.

***Typically, how often will you travel overseas and to what countries?***

**Zach:** So, travelling overseas is almost always happening if you fly for a commercial airline. For Ryanair and BA, you would mainly travel to Europe, but it entirely depends on what type of aircraft you are flying. If

you're flying a small A320 (which is a single aircraft), you will most likely be in a destination between 1-6 hours radius; however, if you are flying a wide-body aircraft, you could be flying in the air for 4-16 hours and that could take you anywhere in the world: Asia, Africa, America and so on. Depending on what your roster is and what type of aircraft you are flying, you may have a 2 on and 4 day off, or a 4 day on and 3 day off. However, I am not fully sure as I have not reached that stage yet.

***How long do you stay in a country for?***

**Zach:** It depends on the country. As a pilot, you will be given some considerations because if you can't fly due to the hours you have left or the airline does not have a scheduled flight back, you can stay for as long as the government allows you to. But there will be a point at which if you are not there with a Visa or you are not granted a Visa, then you will have to leave. The most important thing is not having any criminal

charges; if you have a criminal charge you cannot fly anywhere really - no airline will take you and you cannot travel to America as America will definitely not take you in.



***What is the earning capacity of a pilot?***

**Zach:** From when you finish your training and you get hired by say, Ryanair, the starting salary is £18,000 for the first 50 hours. After 50 hours, it goes up to £38,000 and then so on, which can get up to £60,000 a year - that is only for First Officers and Senior Officers. When you pass the First Senior Officer position and become a Commander (which usually takes a Ryanair 4-5 years), you go on an Accelerated Commander Programme and could be earning up to £100,000 a year. Some airlines however such as Qatar and Emirates and all the legacy airlines (lucrative, luxurious airlines) will offer up to £250,000 - and that's just Commercial. If you go and start working as a Charter Pilot and if you get very lucky, you could be earning any sort of number depending on who you are flying for - for example, if you are a private pilot for a billionaire. I think you should be earning

# INTERVIEW WITH A PAEDIATRICIAN

INTERVIEW BY MARIAMA DIALLO + RUSHDA AHMAD

*We interviewed Paediatrician Melanie on her journey to becoming a doctor.*

**What made you decide to become a Paediatrician?**

**Melanie:** I have to admit, when I first went to Medical School I was not sure what I really wanted to do later on in my career or in fact if I definitely wanted to be a doctor! I think we have to make such huge career decisions very early on in our lives, that it is very common to not always be 100% sure. Although it is very exciting embarking on your chosen Degree, it can also be daunting - and that is okay!

When I was in my fourth year of Medical School, my older sister had a baby, and this was the first time I had ever spent any real time with a little person! I absolutely fell in love with my new nephew and discovered babies were some of the best beings ever to exist. Around the same time, I



*Melanie at work*

experienced my first paediatric rotation, and that was - I discovered my calling! I found myself staying late during my A+E paediatric placements, completely losing track of time, having the most wonderful time meeting marvellous, funny paediatric patients, and wanting to learn and study more and more about this speciality! I found I had a natural knack chatting to kids and their families, and above all making them laugh even when they were sad! I felt this speciality really allowed me to be completely myself, and I just knew Paediatrics was the job for me.

**What are the most rewarding aspects of Paediatrics?**

**Melanie:** Many people will describe paediatricians as cuddly friendly teddy-bears, which can certainly be true, but what many people don't realise is paediatricians are also multi-tasking brave ninja warriors!! Being a paediatric Emergency Medicine Doctor, I see all sorts coming through the door- boy oh boy, if I could tell you some of the things I have seen or dealt with! We have to be able to resuscitate babies born extra early, take bloods from the tiniest veins in the world, help support a teenager undergoing a mental health crisis, tell a kid they have type one diabetes, talk about how to make your poop



softer, or take a bead out a child's nostrils! There is so much variety in what we do and what we deal with, and I absolutely love the challenge of this crazy mix!

Lots of people ask me, 'Don't you get upset when kids get super sick?.' It is natural for people to feel sad when people are sick, but what makes kids even more amazing is that as unwell as some may become, with the right management and treatment they can bounce back to good health so quickly, and it is awesome to be a part of a team that can make that happen! I just love making kids better, and you cannot really put into words how rewarding that is.

**What are some of the challenges you faced?**

**Melanie:** One of the trickiest parts about being a paediatrician is its training period, which lasts for about 7-8 years (on top of a 6-year medical school degree and 2-year initial general doctoring placements!) and is filled with even more exams, lots of training courses, and very tiring, gruelling rotas. This can

sometimes make it hard to maintain a good work-life balance, and over time you have to develop your own ways of managing this. Quite a few people find this difficult, so sometimes they decide to leave Paediatrics for another type of Medicine or leave medicine entirely. Because of this, our Paediatric college has done a lot of amazing and effective work to improve working conditions and staff retention.

The NHS at the moment is generally experiencing an unsettling time with overwhelming demands on its services, alongside worsening poor staffing and retention, and lots of discontentment about pay. Thus working in this environment is becoming increasingly challenging for everyone. Yet the hope always remains, that things somehow, someway, will get better.

I think we also need to confront the fact we are trying to look after children, in an ever-changing challenging world that is for example facing more air pollution, poverty, mental health crises, social media influence than ever seen before. As paediatricians we somehow



need to keep adapting to this, developing more solutions and ideas to navigate these crises.

***What advice would you give to those who want to become a Paediatrician?***

**Melanie:** To those of you who want to do Paediatrics, you need to really love it, as although it is the best job in the world, it is also one of the toughest NHS gigs! And for those of you who know you love it and want to do it, then just go for it, and fly!

***What would you say is the most important skill/quality in order to suit a role of being a Paediatrician?***

**Melanie:** I always tell people there are three gold standard qualities to being a Paediatrician!

1. We have to be highly competent and skilled in what we do, as we carry a huge level of responsibility, making sure we look after children as best as we can!
2. At the same time we need to be super kind, as when children are unwell it can be very stressful and worrying for them and their families, so it is important to remain very supportive and understanding.
3. And lastly, the ultimate cherry on top of the cake....we need to be...if we can...BE FUNNY (or as my nephew says...funny-looking!)....so that we can make children laugh and smile as much as possible!



***How did COVID affect you as a doctor working in the NHS?***

**Melanie:** COVID was a bit of a strange time for those working in Paediatrics. On the whole, kids were not suffering the immediate COVID lung infection manifestations that we were seeing in adults, and actually Paediatric Medicine became very quiet - to the extent that I actually volunteered my services in Adult Intensive care for 6 months instead of working as a Paediatrician, to help out where Clinicians were desperately needed. It is hard to appreciate it now, but working in the NHS during that time was quite scary, especially when PPE was just being introduced and vaccines did not yet exist!

The impact of the COVID pandemic on Paediatrics became apparent in due course. For example, we noticed more and more children were experiencing mental health crises, attributed to multiple factors including isolation and stress of lockdown. Due to lockdown, children were not mixing as much, which really changed the patterns of viruses and bugs! So all the colds and chest infections we typically

saw in the winter were having a huge break out during the warmer seasons, and we had to adapt to typical winter - like presentations happening in summer.

**How would you describe your journey of becoming a Paediatric?**

**Melanie:** As I knew I wanted to do Paediatrics from Medical School I started to do a few projects at university that were paediatric related. We get to do extra placement called Special Study modules and I chose to do that with the Paediatric Surgical team at the Evelina Childrens hospital in London. I have never met a more skilled team in all my life! They did some crazy life changing and saving procedures on the tiniest babies and I remember being so inspired by their incredible talent! I also remember them being so kind and patient to parents who were understandably so stressed and worried, and I thought this is what I want to be like when I'm a doctor.

When you graduate as a doctor, for the first two years you have to do a general mix of placements, and I made sure I got a paediatric job



during this time, just to be extra sure I wanted to do it. I had this paediatric job in Brighton by the sea, and had the most marvellous time! Every week there would be a hospital band that would come around to play awesome songs for the kids, and clown doctors, as well as the hospital dog to come cheer them up if they were feeling sad! Later on when I started Paediatrics, I learned to play the ukulele with some of the kids at work-but that's a story for another time!

I also had to get to grips with trickier parts of the job like all the practical procedural skills, such as taking blood from tiny babies and toddlers who try to run away from you and now and then give you a good well-deserved kick!

Although the job can be full of happiness, there are times that are harder, like when a patient does not get better. During these times, it is really important to have a supportive team around you, to be able to talk things through and share how you are feeling, as it is normal to feel affected and saddened by this. Also making sure to share your feelings and thoughts with your friends and family is important too, so you can try and process some of the very stressful things you experience.

To get into Paediatrics you had to do an interview, so I prepared very hard for this and got the jobs I wanted! And

since then, I have never looked back! I now work as a Paediatric Emergency medicine doctor and absolutely love it! Sometimes it can feel like it is too competitive to get your top job, but I always believe if you love it so much, it is meant to be - the world will make it happen, so just go for it!



# INTERVIEW WITH AN ASSISTANT FILM DIRECTOR

INTERVIEWED BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI + AMEERAT DAUD + VIRTUOUS DANZARIA



*We were lucky enough to interview an Assistant Director who has worked on a multitude of different film and TV roles such as GOT and Mission Impossible.*

*Could you tell us about how you came to work in films and TV and explain what your role is?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** When I was young I always liked playing with cameras and filming people. My grandad worked in theatre and so I was in a lot of shows as a kid, but realised at university that I wanted to direct, as the Director told the cameramen what to film and I liked that job. I went to university to study TV and Film in Salford. Then I started working as a runner, making tea and coffee and worked my way up to a 1st Assistant Director. This role is



the person that tells everyone what the director would like such as the actors, cameramen, art department, costume and make up. The Assistant Director is also the person that schedules the film, runs the set floor, directs the background actors/ extras, vehicles and animals.

*What was the best thing about being an Assistant Director?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** Getting to visit amazing countries and sets. Working with a large group of people and organising them while being creative in directing the background and setting up the scenes according to the particular story. Getting to meet new people. And everyday is different.

*What was most challenging about your role?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** Dealing with so many different personalities and desires and trying to prioritise everyone's different needs to shoot in the most efficient way.

*What was it like working on Game of Thrones?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** It was a lot of fun. We filmed in amazing locations and set up some crazy scenes!

*What is your favourite project*



*Sarah with Tom Cruise and Henry Cavill*

*to have worked on and why?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** My favourite job was probably The Darkest Hour as Gary Oldman had 5 hours of prosthetic make up to put on, so while the crew waited, we would often play music and have sing alongs with the extras.

*Who are some famous names you've worked with?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman, Martin Freeman, Johnny Depp, Penelope Cruise, Danny Devito, Jackie Chan, Harry Styles are just a few.

*Have you ever had any negative experiences with anyone famous?*

**Sarah Mooney Jones:** Yes many, but I would not like to





name them, to filming can be a very stressful environment with huge time constraints and often high risk stunts are being performed, so people can often lose their temper, and its usually at me as I am the one who liases between everyone.

**What countries have you visited for work-related reasons?**

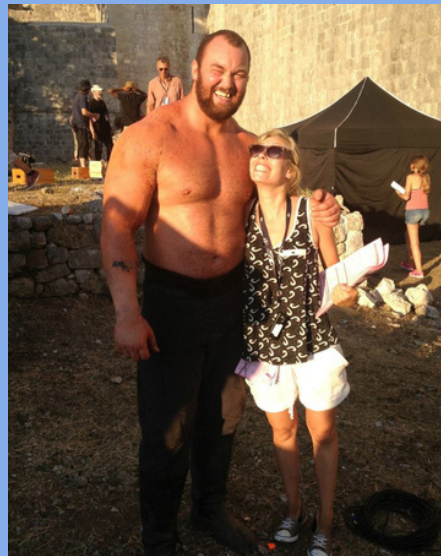
**Sarah Mooney Jones:** Some countries I have visited with work are Morocco, Iceland, Croatia, Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, New Zealand, France and Norway

**What advice would you give anyone who wants to get into the film industry?**

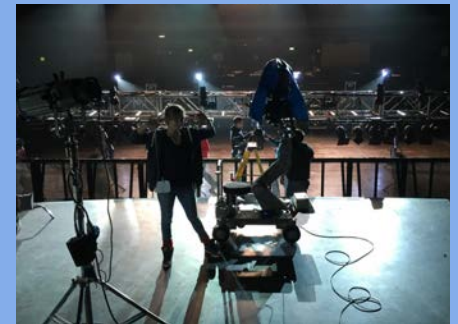
**Sarah Mooney Jones:** My advice if you want to get into the film industry is to apply for work experience and work your a\*\* off to get noticed! Then become a runner, have the best attitude and be willing to help with anything



and you will get asked on the next job. Going to university/college to learn more about how films are made can help you climb the ladder faster, but everyone starts at the bottom, so even if you have no qualifications you can still make it if you work hard and make a good impression.



*Sarah on the GOT set!!*



# INTERVIEW WITH THE BOURY ACADEMY FOUNDER

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FONESCA



We interviewed Caroline Boury who established the Boury Academy, a Performing Arts group that serves our local community. Lots of current and ex-Platanos College pupils attend the Boury Academy and have had amazing opportunities through it, including starring in West End shows!

***Did you always dream of running your own Performing Arts school and can you tell us about how the Boury Academy was formed?***

**Caroline Boury:** Yes I did. I always wanted to be an actress and I am lucky enough to have been able to fulfil a lot of my goals as a performer too, but I have always loved to teach and always dreamed of running my own school one day. The Boury Academy was formed after working with the students at Henry Fawcett Primary. I was teaching at lots of other places but I loved those pupils most of all - they seemed to have more



energy and drive than some that were attending the big stage school franchises. I asked if they attended out of school classes and most said no. I wanted to create a safe and affordable place for them to carry on dancing once they left primary school and for those who had exceptional talent but weren't able to go to extra classes. The lack of diversity in the performing arts is a big problem and one that has affected my husband personally in his career. With the launch of The Boury Academy, we saw a chance to try and fix that by giving access to professional training to talented young people, so he was on board immediately. That was 5 and a half years ago now, and we can't believe how much it has grown.

***What do you most enjoy about your job?***

**Caroline Boury:** Getting to work with young actors. When someone has a breakthrough in their confidence or performance or finally nails the skill they have been working on. I obviously love it when they book professional jobs and we get to call them to tell them they've got the role - that's always brilliant. I also love that we get to see so many of them grow up, it is a real privilege to be a part of their journey.



*Caroline with her Team at The Boury*

***What challenges do you face in your role?***

**Caroline Boury:** I will be careful what I say here...! Attitude to training can be difficult. We are living in a world of instant gratification, from ordering whatever we want online and it arriving almost immediately, to social media and instant bursts of endorphins from likes and shares. It is hard to encourage young performers to be okay with not being immediately good at something, to teach them that they actually have to train and work on things and help them to stick at it knowing they will get there in the end *if* they don't give up. That and lack of funding for the Arts generally.

***What makes the Boury Academy unique compared with other Performing Arts schools?***

**Caroline Boury:** We are a family. We offer pastoral support alongside our training and we now have a literal home for our students with



the launch of our brand new studios. We have six amazing dance studios and a common room that is open to students at any time to come and hang out. We are a community interest company (CIC) which means we are a not for profit. All money we earn goes straight back into the school and our community. Even our new studios serve this eco system as we pay rent to Wyvil School who channel that money into their students too, rather than a private landlord. Our local community is important to us and we partner with lots of other local organisations to give the best opportunities to all young people and we now also run adult classes for parents to get moving. We are not a franchise theatre school where profit is important and where you could attend in London, Manchester or Glasgow and find the same classes. We are totally unique and one of a kind, with a course designed specifically for our students and by and with our students.

As our mission is heavily focused on diversity, the other thing that makes us different is of course our wonderful students and team. Students see themselves reflected in the staff and with the professional work many



are getting we are proving that there is a hunger in the profession for more representation and that access to training is absolutely key.

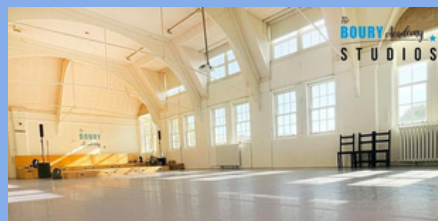
**What aspirations do you have for the future of the Boury Academy?**

**Caroline Boury:** We hope to make a success of our new studios and to welcome more and more young people through the doors. We are adding new classes all the time so my aspiration is that we become the go-to place for Performing Arts for young people in South London.

**Outside of your role at the Boury Academy, what dreams and goals do you have?**

**Caroline Boury:** I am incredibly lucky to be doing a job that I absolutely love and one that I have created for myself. It means I am living my dreams and goals every day. However I am also a mum to young twins and I hope that they grow up believing that they can do anything. To know that nothing can stop them if they set their mind to something and in the hope that the world in general is a more accepting and safe place to be.

**What advice would you give to Key Stage 4 pupils who are interesting in pursuing a**



**career in the Performing Arts?**

**Caroline Boury:** Training is key. This industry is a lot to do with luck, but you can make that for yourself. Find the people who have the right connections and experience to help you thrive. We can open doors for you but you have to be dedicated, work hard and be resilient when it comes to rejections. Watch as much theatre as you can, pay attention to the smaller roles in film and television and be brave.... oh, and come and join us at The Boury Academy!

**The BOURY Academy** ★  
Affordable Performing Arts Classes in Lambeth

DAY	CLASS	TIME	AGE
MONDAY	Street Dance	17:00 - 18:00	10 - 14
MONDAY	Street Dance	18:00 - 19:00	15 - 18
WEDNESDAY	Mini Bs Ballet and Tap	16:00 - 17:00	4 - 7
WEDNESDAY	Ballet & Tap	17:00 - 18:00	8 - 10
FRIDAY	Drama	17:30 - 19:00	11 - 15
FRIDAY	Drama	19:00 - 21:00	15 - 21

To Sign Up Contact us at  
0203 929 7600 | info@thebouryacademy.co.uk  
www.thebouryacademy.co.uk  
#PerformingArtsForEveryone @thebouryacademy

**The BOURY Academy** ★  
Affordable Performing Arts Classes in Lambeth

DAY	CLASS	TIME	AGE
SATURDAY	Mini Bs	9:45 - 11:15	4 - 7
SATURDAY	Boury Academy	10:00 - 13:00	8 - 21
SUNDAY	Mini Bs	12:15 - 13:45	4 - 7
SUNDAY	Boury Academy	13:00 - 17:00	8 - 21

Classes will take place at The Boury Academy Studios Wyvil Road, SWB 2TJ

\*Half Price Siblings rate available  
\*\*Discounted Rates for those attending partnering schools

To Sign Up Contact us at  
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www.thebouryacademy.co.uk  
#PerformingArtsForEveryone @thebouryacademy

# INTERVIEW WITH CHELSEA FOOTBALL CLUB'S DISABILITY AND INCLUSION OFFICER

INTERVIEWED BY LUCAS CAMACHO + THEODORE BAILEY + SAMUEL CARDOSO FERNANDES



**KS4 pupils interviewed Nico Manduzio, who is Chelsea football disability and inclusion officer, about his career.**

## ***What do you do for work?***

**Nico Manduzio:** I run and manage inclusive football sessions for the Chelsea Foundation to give everyone the opportunity to play the game they love in a safe and friendly environment.

My session participants are mainly from underrepresented groups, different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and people with disabilities, both learning and physical.

## ***Did you adapt much when you moved from Arsenal to Chelsea and why did you make the move?***

**Nico Manduzio:** The decision to start a new career at Chelsea was to challenge myself in a new role. I was looking to take on more responsibilities to grow personally and professionally. I knew that my skill set can

only grow by taking on a role that exposes me to different tasks and situations. At Arsenal FC I had accomplished the goals I needed to be ready for this new chapter in my life

## ***In your opinion, was the World Cup inclusive?***

**Nico Manduzio:** My opinion to it, whilst respecting cultural ideologies and traditions, the tournament could have been more inclusive by giving people and players more freedom to express who they are and what they stand for.

## ***Has it always been your dream to work in the football business?***

**Nico Manduzio:** I wanted to work in Sports, but not necessarily in football. Although, being a huge football fan of Inter Milan in Italy, I could picture myself working for them one day. My career went a different way, and I started a 9-5 job. After almost 15 years, of actively started changing my professional path that led me to work in Football.



## ***How did you start out in your profession?***

**Nico Manduzio:** I started with leading group exercise classes and strength & conditioning boot camps in gyms and parks. My passion for sports combined with helping people led me to different countries in Africa, where I started coaching the basics of football for community development programmes through local and global NGO's.

## ***Where can we apply for a job like yours?***

**Nico Manduzio:** You can look out for vacancies on the Club's website and apply online. Having coaching badges helps get you into the role you'd like to work one day. On the FA website there is a Beginner's course called *FA Playmaker* which is the first stepping stone into coaching football.





# crime & conspiracy

## WHO IS THE ISDAL WOMAN?

WRITTEN BY RUSHDA AHMAD



The Isdal Woman case is an unsolved mystery that puzzled Norway for half a century. The case started when the body of an unidentified woman was discovered at Isdalen in Bergen, Norway, on 29th November 1970. She was found by a man and his two young daughters as they went hiking on the foothills of the Ulriken, which was ominously known as the Death Valley due to its history of suicides and hiking accidents. An unfortunate woman had been badly burnt, so her face was

One of the man's daughters had noticed a burning smell before locating the body amongst tall trees. The family returned to Bergen to notify the authorities of their grim discovery. The body had been found on its back, the hands clutched together. The unrecognisable, and her clothes had been cut off. However, there was no other sign of an actual fire.

Near the body, investigators

also found an empty bottle of St. Hallvard liquor, two partially melted plastic water bottles, rubber boots, plastic passport container, a scarf, nylon stockings, a wool jumper, a purse and matchbox, a watch, two earrings, a ring, a melted cup and spoon and the burnt remains of bread and crackers. They also discovered a fur hat with traces of petroleum.

A blood test on the woman's body revealed a bruise on her neck and shockingly, there were 50-70 sleeping pills still undissolved in her stomach! An autopsy also revealed that her lungs were covered in soot and ash, suggesting that she had been burned alive and had died from carbon monoxide poisoning or an overdose on phenobarbital (a sedative). Her teeth and jaw were removed for further testing and it became evident that the body had gold dental work. So, the question remained: who was this mystery woman? And what was she doing in such a remote and cold region? And of course, how had she come to this tragic fate?

Things started to get even more strange as a few days after the mystery woman's remains had been found, two suitcases were discovered abandoned at Bergen railway

station. Inside the suitcases were multiple items of clothing, wigs, shoes and makeup, as well as money, maps, timetables and coins in different currencies. From their findings, investigators assumed that the belongings were those of the dead woman and they suspected that she had been a spy.

Following a media appeal, police discovered that the mysterious woman had checked into a hotel under the name of Fenella Lorch - yet there were no official records of anyone by that name. Furthermore, fingerprints that were found on her belongings did not match anybody on record. The police also attempted to crack the code of the woman's notepad and discovered that it contained details about Norway and Eastern Europe and suggested that she had used different aliases during her travels. This international angle only heightened the suspicion that the Isdal woman might have been a spy.

Eventually, the case went cold; following new evidence, the case was re-opened in 2016. However, to date, the true identity of the mysterious Isdal woman and the circumstances surrounding her death have yet to be discovered.



# THE SHOOTING OF SHIREEN ABU AKLEH

WRITTEN BY MADINAH MAKSENE



Just over a year ago on 11th May 2022, Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian-American news reporter for the Arabic news channel Al-Jazeera, was fatally shot, almost certainly by an Israeli Defence Forces soldier at the West Bank refugee camp. Abu Akleh was well known for covering the conflict for 25 years and was seen as the voice for Palestine. Palestinian MP Khalida Jarrar said that Abu Akleh *"was always my voice from the prison cells."*

Abu Akleh became a familiar face when the second intifada (Resistance Movement) broke out, and Palestinians and Arabs all over the world gathered in front of their televisions to keep up with the latest happenings with regards the violence. As a resident of Jerusalem, she was able to report on the happenings from the inside of the region.

On that fateful day in May

2022, Abu Akleh was reporting from Jenin as an IDF raid was taking place there. Despite having protection gear and a vest with the word "PRESS" plainly displayed, she was fatally shot by a sniper. Israeli authorities first claimed that she had been murdered by a Palestinian gunman after becoming involved in the shootout.

However, independent investigations verified Al Jazeera's claims that she was shot by an IDF soldier and that there were no armed Palestinians in the vicinity.

News of Shireen Abu Akleh's death immediately stirred emotions in the Middle East and beyond. The face of Palestine was murdered, and this caused much distress to many Arabs, Muslims and others around the world.

However, this was not the first reported killing. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) released a report just two days before the one-year anniversary of Shireen Abu Akleh's death, stating that there is *"a pattern*



*of the killings of journalists by Israel Defence Forces (IDF), after which no accountability is taken."* Furthermore, since 2001, Israeli military fire has reportedly taken the lives of at least 20 journalists, of whom 18 were Palestinian. In a news release, it was stated that *"no one has ever been charged or held accountable for these deaths."*

On the 13th May 2022, Abu Akleh's funeral took place in the eastern part of Jerusalem. This event attracted hundreds of mourners carrying Palestinian flags and yelling pro-Palestinian solidarity chants. Israeli soldiers clashed with them, ordering the mourners to stop what they were doing and tried to prevent them from carrying her coffin on foot from the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood mortuary to the Cathedral of the Annunciation in the Old City of Jerusalem, where the burial ceremonies were to take place.



Despite a mountain of supporting evidence, Israel has consistently denied any allegations that it had anything to do with Shireen's passing. However, a year after the death of the beloved news reporter, an IDF spokesperson decided to speak up and apologise for the death of the late Al Jazeera journalist. However, Lina Abu Akhleh, niece of the murdered journalist, stated, *"To be very clear. The Israeli army did not admit to or apologise for murdering Shireen. To us, we don't consider that an apology...It's honestly a slap in the face to Shireen's legacy and to our family. An apology — which that was not — is not accountability...We want there to be accountability — for the soldier to be held responsible, for the entire system to be held to account for murdering a journalist and a US citizen."*

On 5th September 2022, the IDF released the findings of its own investigation, stating that there was a *"high possibility"* that Abu Akleh was *"accidentally hit"* by army fire, but that there would be no criminal investigation.

However, an earlier investigation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, concluded that Abu Akleh was killed by a bullet fired by the IDF; this was based on information provided by the IDF and the

Palestinian Attorney General, as well as video and audio evidence and a visit to the scene. They stated that *"It is deeply disturbing that Israeli authorities have not conducted a criminal investigation"*.

The question is: will anyone ever be held accountable for Abu Akleh's killing and will there be further deaths of journalists in the region?





# office of opinion

## PRIVATE VS STATE SCHOOLS

WRITTEN BY REGINA FONSECA

Given the choice, would you prefer to attend a private school over a state school? What would be your reasons for or against this?

Firstly, let's consider the different types of schools in the UK.

### State Schools

Every child in the UK is entitled to a free education. The most common types of state schools are as follows:

- Community schools (controlled by the local council and are not influenced by businesses or religious groups).
- Foundation schools / voluntary schools (have greater freedom than community schools in the way they are run)
- Academies (similar to independent schools that are funded by the government). They do not have to follow the national curriculum.



- Grammar schools (run by the council select their pupils based on a testing process).
- State boarding schools (offer a free education but require fees for boarding)

### Free Schools

Free schools are non-profit organisations that receive funding from the government, rather than from the local council. They don't have to follow the national curriculum, but must cater for all abilities. They can decide upon their own school terms dates and the length of the school day.

### City Technology Colleges

CTCs tend to be located in urban areas and aim to teach Science and Technology. Companies contribute financially to CTCs, which are free to attend and funded by the government.

### Private Schools

Private or independent schools charge pupils to attend. They must be registered with the government and must be inspected by either the School Inspection Service or Ofsted.

### Special Schools

Special schools cater for children who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Special schools tend to specialise in different areas:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Sensory and physical needs
- Social, emotional and mental health

So, whilst there seems to be a lot of choice out there for parents and young people about what type of education they would like to receive (let's not forget about Home Schooling too) this article will focus primarily on the argument of State vs Private.

According to a YouGov poll conducted in 2021, 80% of people who attended a private or grammar school said that they received a good standard





of education. Compare this with the State sector where less than half of respondents agreed!

**Key points about Private Schools:**

- Charge tuition fees (on average £5000 a term, so £15,000 per year)
- Shorter terms
- Smaller Classes
- May have advanced facilities or grounds
- Tend to be less socially diverse
- May be less prepared to accept pupils with some forms of SEND
- Teachers do not always have to have QTS (Qualified Teacher Status)
- Generate money for the UK economy: (£13.71bn to UK GDP in 2017!)

**Key points about State schools:**

- The government pays for each pupil, so parents don't pay fees
- May be affected by funding cuts from central government and local authorities
- Large class sizes
- Teachers are expected to have QTS / relevant teaching qualification
- A range of abilities are catered for
- Serve the local community so tend to have a more diverse demographic / pupil population

while private school applications have fallen by 26 per cent." Furthermore, "since 2017, the success rate for private schools securing an offer from Oxford has fallen from around 29 per cent to 20 per cent." Part of the reason for this is because Oxbridge has, in recent years, made a concerted effort to encourage State school pupils to apply, through lots of outreach programmes.

Furthermore, the lack of diversity means that private school pupils are often not exposed to different cultures and experiences, which can be a barrier to their own personal development and social relationships, whilst also being potentially damaging to how they perceive those who are not of the same background as themselves. Pupils may even develop a sense of entitlement because they come from a more privileged background, and this can lead to discrimination and narrow-minded views about others.

Ultimately, the choice between state schools and private schools depends on a variety of factors: personal preference, academic goals and of course, a family's financial situation. Both types of schools have their advantages and disadvantages, and it's important to carefully consider all of these factors before making a decision. So what do you think? Would you choose to go State or Private?

After hearing some of these facts, how do you view these schools now? If you had a child and money was no object, would you choose to put them in - a State or private school? In terms of academic performance, private schools generally have a reputation for providing a higher quality of education than state schools. Often, this is argued as being down to the smaller class sizes and therefore more individual attention that students receive. They can often also offer more extracurricular activities and a wider range of subjects than State schools.

However, back in May, an article in The Telegraph stated that since 2010, "state school applications to Oxford have risen by almost 29 per cent,





# THE RISE OF THE WOMEN'S GAME

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE CANDIDO

Since its start in the late 1800s, women's football has come a long way. For a long time, football has been considered a male-dominated sport, but women are increasingly taking the lead in the game with their passion for the sport coming to the forefront. Women's football is now growing in popularity, with more women participating in international and national games than ever before.

There is no doubt that women have persevered and successfully established themselves as important players in the sport, despite several challenges and obstacles. One of the most difficult obstacles that women's football encountered in its early years, was gender discrimination. Because of the perception that football was a 'man's game', several limitations on women's football were in place, including bans on women's games in some countries.

However, the tenacity of women to create a place for themselves within the world of football, resulted in major developments, including the removal of international bans.

Consequently, women's football has received increased attention from the media and advertisers in



recent years, with key tournaments and leagues being aired globally. In 2019 the Women's World Cup was watched by over over one billion people. Similarly, the women's Euros was viewed by a global audience of 365 million people.

Grassroots games are also seeing a rise in girls and women playing the sport. In fact, in the past decade, the number of girls playing football in the United Kingdom has increased by over 200,000, with the FA helping to improve access for girls and women.

But it is not only in the UK that we are seeing increased numbers of women playing football. Barcelona's Women's Team set a global record with 91,553 spectators viewing



their defeat of Real Madrid, whilst the United States has won the World Cup four times (compared with zero times for the Men's team!).

And of course, let's not forget that closer to home, last summer saw the magnificent determination of the England Women's team - the Lionesses - who roared to glory in the World Cup. And in May of this year, Wembley Stadium sold out for the very first time for a women's game - the final between Manchester United and Chelsea.

So whilst there is still a very long way to go in terms of ticket purchases, salaries and funding compared with the men's games, there is no denying that women's football is turning a corner. Let's hope this equates to many more goals to come...







# ARE WE OBSESSED WITH CELEBRITY CULTURE?

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI

Celebrity Culture is all about our exposure to celebrities' personal lives on a global scale. A quick scroll on social media and the gossip columns of popular newspapers, is enough to prove that society has become utterly preoccupied with celebrities. Indeed, it's uncommon to navigate a normal day without crossing paths with a celebrity name or two. Celebrities are embedded in the way we live - we see celebrities do or wear something and society feels the need to recreate it. But the question is, is this constant perusal of celebrity lives a good or bad thing?

Celebrities use their platform to project their views and do brand deals - these may seem innocent, but in some cases, well-known figures have promoted items that are not good for your health, like weight-loss gummies. Indeed, many Reality TV stars present unrealistic beauty



Kylie Jenner

standards and promote the notion that someone's value is based on their appearance - surely this is glorifying all the wrong things? Let's take Kylie Jenner for example, who looks vastly different now than she did just a few years ago, yet who perpetuates the myth that young girls can aspire to achieve her appearance if they just use her lipstick range. According to Glamour Magazine, back in April of this year Jenner seemed to acknowledge this double standard by stating that her famous family needed to have a *"bigger conversation"* around beauty standards, claiming, *"I don't want my daughter to do the things I did."*

Another concern with celebrity culture and how we peruse it in this age of the internet, is that many fans devote hours of their day to idolising their favourite actors, footballers and singers. Whilst seemingly harmless, this constant exposure can cause people to have problems with anxiety, body image and mental health.

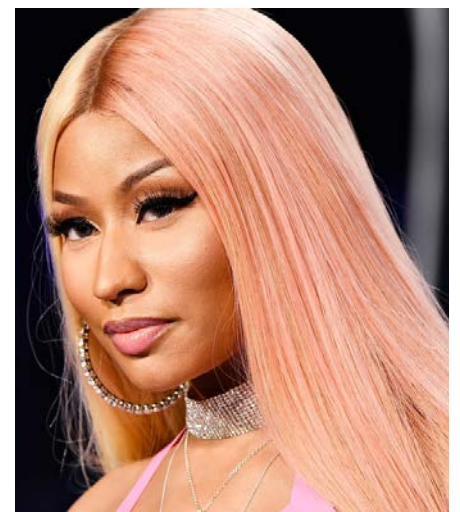
However, celebrity culture can make for a better world. Famous people often support social justice causes and help others. For instance, actor Keanu Reeves founded a Cancer Research Program for



Keanu Reeves

Children's hospitals, whilst Nicki Minaj has enabled a Village in India to help construct crucial amenities. Therefore, celebrities do often use their fame and fortune to help others, whilst also raising awareness of different causes amongst their fans.

So, can we have a healthy preoccupation with celebrity culture? Or are we constantly in danger of allowing our obsession with it to distort our view of reality, our self-image and our sense of priorities?



Nicki Minaj



# THE RISE OF THE NEPO BABY

WRITTEN BY CRYSTAL JOY AZZOPARDI



Did you know that New York Magazine named 2022 the "Year of The Nepo Baby"? The term 'Nepo baby' refers to the family ties of an individual who is connected to someone in a particular industry. So, someone may have a mother or father who happens to be successful in say, the movie industry, and because of this, they too benefit from preferential treatment. So, what's so wrong with this? Surely most parents would love to help their own child to forge a successful career?

Well, the term Nepo Baby has begun to attract negative connotations and not everyone likes being referred to as such, believing it to be an insult. Why? Well, because the term itself suggests that a person only got to where they are or achieved a particular level of success because of their connections - not because of their actual talent.

Prominent nepo babies today include Maya Hawke, Lily-Rose Depp, Gigi Hadid, Miley Cyrus and Brooklyn Beckham.

Maya Hawke (daughter of actors Ethan Hawke and Uma Thurman), has acknowledged the role that nepotism has had in her career, telling PEOPLE last year *"I'm very grateful for the fact that [my parents] made it so easy for me to do the thing I love"*. As well as this, she stated *" I think I'll get a couple of chances on their name and then if I suck, I'll get kicked out of the kingdom...And that's what should happen. So I'm just going to try not to suck"*. Hawke clearly acknowledges the advantages of being a nepo baby, but also recognises that she wouldn't be where she is today if she was bad at her job.



Maya Hawke



Gigi Hadid

Another example is model Gigi Hadid, who admitted, *"I know I come from privilege, so when I started there was this big guilt of privilege, obviously...I've always had this big work ethic because my parents came from nothing and I worked hard to honour them. There are so many girls who come [from] all over the world and work their a\*\*\*\* off and send money home to their families like my mother did, and I wanted to stand next to them backstage and for them to look at me and respect me and to know that it's never about me trying to overshadow or take their place."*

Zoe Kravitz, an actor but also daughter of famous parents, stated *"It's completely normal for people to be in the family business"*, whilst actress Gwyneth Paltrow said *"once your foot is in the door,*



Zoe Kravitz

*which you unfairly got in, then you almost have to work twice as hard and be twice as good".*

Neпо babies can be subject to fierce criticism and sarcasm on social media. Take Brooklyn Beckham for example, who has tried to forge numerous careers, the latest being a chef. Earlier this year, The Independent released an article in which it stated *"The eldest son of David and Victoria is carving out a lucrative niche as a not-very-good chef – whatever you do, maybe don't sample his roast beef. But it's his abject normality in extraordinary circumstances that makes him*

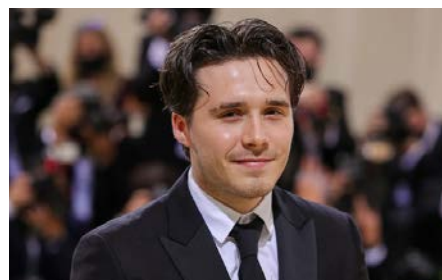


Gweneth Paltrow

*so entertaining."*

But does being the child of a celebrity automatically mean you are labelled a nepo baby? Many celebrities are refusing to leave money to their children when they die. Billionaire Microsoft Founder Bill Gates has stated, *"It's not a favor to kids to have them have huge sums of wealth... "It distorts anything they might do, creating their own path."* Actor Ashton Kutcher, who is married to fellow Hollywood actor Mila Kunis, has stated *"My kids are living a really privileged life, and they don't even know it...And they'll never know it because this is the only one that they'll know. I'm not setting up a trust for them. We'll end up giving our money away to charity and to various things...If my kids want to start a business, and they have a good business plan, I'll invest in it,"* he said.

But, despite these celebrities' claims that their children will not receive any of their money, surely their offspring are born into a life of privilege that the rest of us can only dream of? Does this in turn, make them a nepo baby by default? What do you think?



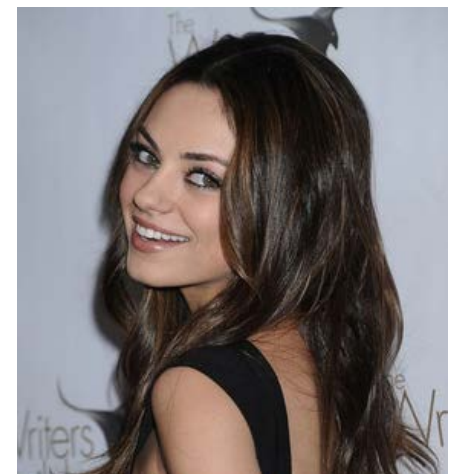
Brooklyn Beckham



Bill Gates



Ashton Kutcher



Mila Kunis



Lily-Rose Depp



# IS FASHION FAIR?

WRITTEN BY BETHEL DAVID

Nowadays we are absolutely right to expect both inclusion and diversity in all industries – and the world of fashion is no different. The fashion industry has historically been criticised for its lack of diversity and inclusion, mainly when it comes to the representation of different body types, races, genders and abilities. However, in recent years, we've seen a shift towards wider representation on the runway and a growing recognition of the importance of diversity and inclusion in multiple mainstream media campaigns. It is natural that people want to be heard, seen and most importantly, represented and respected, regardless of background, identity or 'difference'.

And whilst fashion may not seem to be as 'serious' as many other industries, we have to remember that the fashion industry has a significant impact on our culture and society, shaping our perceptions of beauty and identity. For many years, the industry has celebrated and therefore perpetuated very

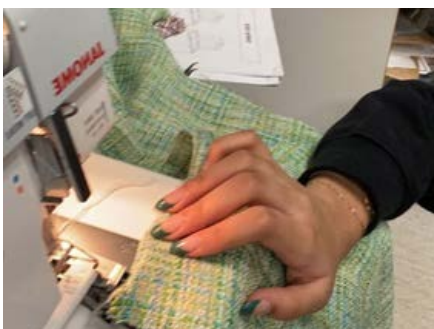
narrow beauty standards, excluding people who do not 'fit' into these standards. This has resulted in a lack of representation of different ethnicities, body types and gender identities. The lack of representation has led to a sense of exclusion for those who do not fit into the industry's traditional standards, causing low self-esteem and a lack of confidence, as well as a sense that someone who looks like them just isn't as valued as someone who conforms to traditional beauty standards.

Let's take something as simple and seemingly innocent as the Barbie Doll. For many decades, young girls' minds have been shaped by the notion that they must be slim, tall, white and able-bodied in order to be considered beautiful. But a quick look at recent marketing for Mattel - the company that founded Barbie - and you can easily see the changes they are striving to make: "*THE POWER OF REPRESENTATION. Barbie recognizes the importance of representation and is committed to doing the work to inspire the next generation.*" Indeed, Barbie dolls now include those with different skin tones and hair types, those who are differently-abled and those who have jobs that are not merely to be a model.



Recently, the fashion industry has made significant progress in promoting inclusion and diversity. More and more fashion brands are embracing diversity in their advertising campaigns and runway shows. They are featuring models of different ethnicities, body types and gender identities, challenging the industry's traditional standards of beauty. This has led to more inclusive representation of people in the fashion industry, which, in turn, is starting to have a positive impact on society.

Another way in which the fashion industry is promoting diversity is by working to create a more diverse workforce, including hiring people from diverse backgrounds and identities. It is critical that the fashion and beauty industries continue to aim to make positive changes in representation so that all of us, no matter the colour of our skin, the texture of our hair, or whether we are differently abled, can see our image reflected in the wider world.





# TWIN TO WIN!

WRITTEN BY INAYA ROSE (TWIN OF ZAKIYAH)

Many people think that being a twin is easy because you have someone to talk to and someone to help with your homework and revision – whilst this is true, life as a twin is not as easy as people think.

When you're a twin you get asked lots of questions like "How does it feel to be a twin?" or "Who is the oldest?" or even "Are you two twins?" The latter is particularly annoying because the answer is self-explanatory. Many people say to my sister and I, "I wish I was a twin." Sometimes we just look at them sideways and respond, "No, you don't."

Being a twin can be frustrating; people get you muddled up and don't always see you as the individuals you are. Your twin can also get on your nerves – which I guess is just part of normal sibling life. But being a twin means you're expected to share *everything*: a room, birthday celebrations, clothes...



However, on the flip side, sometimes your twin can be moderately helpful, such as reminding you of important upcoming events and helping with homework. So I guess it's not all bad!

Twins can also have an insane skill for telepathy that can't be matched. For instance, my sister and I could be thinking of the same song and even have the same random thought at exactly the same time! We might even choose to wear the exact same item of clothing without having discussed it beforehand. Our dad and grandparents have even told us that when we were younger, we would always say things in our own language and start laughing – no one else would understand what we were saying, but we definitely did!

Did you know that twins are very rare, with only 1 in every 250 pregnancies resulting in a twin birth? Being a twin is also cool because you can play pranks on your teachers by switching classes. More

seriously, you also have a built-in forever best friend when you're a twin so you won't ever be lonely. It's like having a teammate for life; no matter how much she gets on my nerves sometimes, my twin is my mirror and we are the yin to each other's yang!





# inspiration station

## REMEMBERING STEPHEN LAWRENCE 30 YEARS ON

WRITTEN BY RUSHDA AHMAD



You may not have heard of him, but it is likely that your parents or grandparents definitely have. Stephen Lawrence: he could have been any one of us. Unfortunately, Stephen will go down in history as the tragic victim of a racially motivated attack.

On the evening of 22nd April 1993, 18-year-old Stephen Lawrence was waiting at a bus stop in Eltham with his friend Duwayne Brooks. Both were young Black men. The two friends were returning home and had decided to change their original bus route as the bus they had first intended to use had been delayed. Soon after, Brooks spotted 6 white men across the road who started shouting racial slurs at the pair. They then crossed

the road, surrounding and attacking Lawrence, stabbing him twice and leaving two deep stab wounds on the right side of his collarbone and his left shoulder, which damaged 4 major blood vessels. Brooks ran away in an attempt to escape the assailants and shouted at Stephen to follow him.

Soon after the unprovoked attack, the perpetrators fled. Stephen, a skilled athlete, attempted to follow Brooks but succumbed to his injuries and bled to death; by the time he had been transported to a hospital, he had already sadly passed away.

The Stephen Lawrence case is significant because it shocked the nation because of the unprovoked and racially motivated nature of the attack. Furthermore, Stephen and his family were massively failed by the criminal justice system. This case really opened up the eyes of the nation to the reality of the racial injustices



faced by many in this country, as well as the institutional racism victims faced when dealing with the Metropolitan Police Force. Indeed, the investigation was severely flawed and it took years of campaigning for his family to achieve some sort of justice.

Three days after his murder, 5 prime witnesses were identified: Gary Dobson, Neil Acort, Jamie Acort, David Norris and Luke Knight. However, they were not charged. In fact, it took Stephen's family 19 whole years to finally get justice, largely because the Crown Prosecution Service said Brooks' evidence was inadmissible in court.

In 1997, the Daily Mail went as far as to put all 5 suspects' faces and names on the front page of their paper, accusing them of being murderers. The paper invited them to sue it if they were wrong. Two years later, the MacPherson report



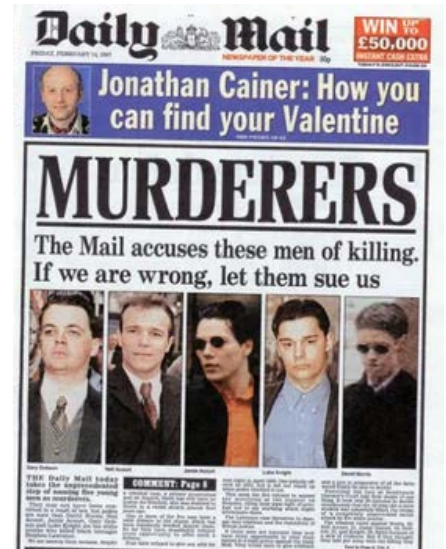
was published following an inquiry into the police's handling of the case; the damning report accused the Met of institutional racism and made 70 recommendations to address the problems.

In 2005, the double jeopardy rule, meaning a person cannot be tried for the same crime twice, was scrapped. This was critical as it meant that the suspects could be re-tried. In 2011, the trial of Dobson and Norris began following evidence that Stephen's DNA was found on their clothes. Both men were found guilty, receiving life sentences. But was justice really served with only 2 of the suspects being tried?

The murder of her son resulted in Stephen's mother setting up *The Stephen Lawrence Day Foundation* in order to commemorate her son's life and to create a more

***At the time of this publication going to print, the BBC has named a 6th suspect in the case, named Matthew White.***

inclusive and fair society, supporting those who are victims of the same sort of racial abuse Stephen Lawrence faced. Another charity, *The Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust*, works with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to help them succeed in the career they chose. Every year on 22nd April, Stephen Lawrence Day is celebrated. It allows everyone to come together as a community to honour Stephen as the bright young man he was and the legacy he has left behind. Furthermore, it exists as a symbol of hope that justice can be served, no matter how long it takes.





# THE LEGACY OF DAME DEBORAH JAMES

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



Cancer – it is a disease that has crippled the lives of so many people, with a diagnosis of Stage 4 having a virtually impossible chance of recovery. However, this did not stop Dame Deborah James from establishing a fund that would go on to accumulate millions of pounds to fund research into medicine for cancer treatments and into funding campaigns to raise awareness for bowel cancer.

So, who exactly was Deborah James? Well, prior to James's diagnosis, she worked as a Deputy Head teacher at Salesian School and Matthew Arnold School, where she worked up to her diagnosis in 2016. At age 35, Deborah James was diagnosed with Stage 4 bowel cancer and her world fell apart.

However, despite this life-changing news, James started a blog to raise awareness of bowel cancer and to document her journey through treatment. Going by the name of *Bowelbabe* on

social media, her vivacious nature despite the extremely difficult times she was experiencing, served to help and inspire her followers.

In March 2018, James began her work as a columnist for *The Sun* newspaper, through which she provided a candid insight into her journey with cancer. This then led to her joining the BBC *You, Me and the Big C* podcast, on which she and fellow hosts Lauren Mahon and Rachel Bland shared their experiences of living with or having had cancer. The trio provided a plainly honest, emotive yet often humorous view of their experiences with cancer and spoke with a range of different guest speakers, from fellow cancer patients to scientists making developments in cancer treatment. They also covered a range of topics on the podcast, including how Covid lockdowns affected cancer patients, specific types of cancers and how to remain positive in the face of cancer.

During her final months, fuelled by the desire to help others going through her circumstances, Deborah established the *Bowelbabe* Fund in May 2022; her initial target of 250K was greatly exceeded as the Fund accumulated £1 million worth of money that would go to

being invested into cancer research. For all her contributions to raising awareness about cancer and the sum she accrued for cancer research, James was presented with a Damehood from the Duke of Cambridge shortly before her death.

James spent her final days at her parents' home, where she died on the 28th June 2022. By the time of her death, the *Bowelbabe* Fund had raised almost £7 million. Her high-spirited nature continued into her final moments, with her last message being: "*find a life worth enjoying; take risks; love deeply; have no regrets; and always, always have rebellious hope. And finally, check your poo – it could just save your life.*" James's "*rebellious hope*" served as an example of the resilience and inner strength she had, right up until her final moments. There is no doubt that in spreading her messages about cancer far and wide and raising millions for the fight against cancer, her legacy lives on.







# REMEMBERING JUICE WRLD

WRITTEN BY NICHOLAS DE COSTA SILVA



If you're into rap music, you've probably heard of Jarad Anthony Higgins - known professionally as Juice Wrld, an American rapper, singer and songwriter. Juice Wrld was a leading figure in the emo rap and SoundCloud rap genres, both of which gained wider mainstream attention during the 2010s. But who was Juice Wrld and how did he become so big on the rap scene?

Juice Wrld was born on 2nd December 1998 in Chicago, Illinois. His parents divorced when he was just three years old and he was then raised by his devoutly Christian mother; Juice Wrld later stated that rap music was banned from his house due to his mother's beliefs.

Whilst attending Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Juice Wrld used the platform SoundCloud to share his music under the name

JuiceTheKidd. He recorded his first song *Forever* on his mobile phone, before releasing it on SoundCloud.

In 2017, Juice Wrld's first performance at a recreational centre in Chicago, made him a mere \$100. But, it was a start.

Not long after, in 2018, Juice Wrld's debut album entitled *'Goodbye & Good Riddance'* - which was about an ex-girlfriend - was recorded with Interscope Records. He also released the song *'All The Girls Are the Same'* on a three-song EP, with the track reaching number 92 on the Billboard Hot 100. Following this, Pitchfork Interscope Records signed Juice Wrld for a whopping \$3,000,000 recording contract! His second album *'Death Race For Love'* was released in 2019 and was judged to be the 40th Best Album of the Year by Rolling Stone magazine. He was also named the top new R&B/ Hip Hop Artist at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards. Juice



Wrld's best-known song *'Lucid Dreams'* was said to have been written in just 15 minutes.

Juice Wrld was also known for having a 999 tattoo; he stated the reason for this was that it represented the idea that whatever struggles a person is facing in life, they can turn it into something positive. He believed that God had given him the talent to write melody-based music that could reveal mental health issues.

Sadly, after a long struggle with addiction, Juice Wrld died on 8th December 2019. However, his music lives on.





# TINA TURNER: THE TOUGH SOUL OF ROCK 'N' ROLL

WRITTEN BY JASON TRAN



On 24th May, legendary music icon Tina Turner, died at the age of 83. She is best known for her powerful voice, electrifying stage presence and resilience in the face of adversity. She overcame numerous obstacles to become a global superstar and a symbol of strength and inspiration for millions of fans worldwide.

But where does her story begin? Well, for a start, Tina Turner is not her real name. She was born on 26th November 1939 in a place called Nutbush, Tennessee, and named Anna Mae Bullock. At the age of 11, her family moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where she discovered the vibrant rhythm and blues sounds that were to lead to her musical career.

In 1958, Anna Mae met Ike Turner, who was a talented

musician. Ike noticed her brilliant vocal ability and invited Anna Mae to join his band. He gave her a new name, Tina Turner, and the couple performed together, attracting large audiences. By the 1960s and '70s, Ike and Tina Turner enjoyed a meteoric rise in popularity. Fans love their fiery live shows, with Tina having an electrifying stage presence that wowed global audiences. Critical acclaim followed, with their most famous beltors including "Proud Mary" and "River Deep - Mountain High."

However, behind the glitz and glamour, Tina Turner was suffering from a turbulent and abusive relationship with Ike, who subjected her to physical and psychological mistreatment. In 1976 Tina gathered the strength to leave Ike, embarking on a solo career.



It was during the 1980s that Tina Turner rose to even more prominent heights in her career. Her solo album *Private Dancer* was a huge hit, with songs like *What's Love Got to Do with It* topping the charts. She went on to win 8 Grammy Awards and has been a high influence on artists like Beyoncé, Janet Jackson, Janelle Monáe and Rihanna. Indeed, when she entered the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame, it was commended that she had "expanded the once-limited idea of how a Black woman could conquer a stage and be both a powerhouse and a multidimensional being".

There are few who would doubt Tina Turner's influence on music and pop culture. She



was one of the first African-American female rock artists to achieve widespread success, and in doing so, she broke many barriers along the way. Her style mixed rock, soul and R&B, whilst her dynamic shows were famed for high-energy, enthusiastic dance routines and soulful singing.

In her personal life, Tina Turner was able to rebuild her life after overcoming deep emotional wounds, finding love and happiness with Erwin Bach, her long-term partner. *"I, Tina,"* Tina's memoir, was a best-seller and shed light on her difficult past, encouraging others to leave abusive relationships.

There is little doubt that when Tina Turner died earlier this year, the world lost a great music icon. But through her remarkable life and career, she showed us all the power of passion, perseverance and strength.

*"People think my life has been tough, but I think it's been a wonderful journey. The older you get, the more you realise it's not what happened, it's how you deal with it."*





# THE REMARKABLE RONALD MCNAIR

WRITTEN BY CHYNA-CHAE QUAIN-BROWN



You may not have heard of him, but Ronald Erwin McNair was an American NASA astronaut and physicist. He was born 21st October 1950 in Lake City, South California. He tragically passed away on 28th January 1986 during the launch of the Space Shuttle Challenger on mission STS-51-L. Physicist McNair was serving as one of three mission specialists in a crew of seven.

Ever since he was a young boy, McNair had loved aeroplanes and Science. In 1967, he graduated as Valedictorian of Carver High School. When he was 25, McNair graduated *magna cum laude* ("with great honour") and was presented with a Bachelor's Degree in Physics from North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University. He received his Doctorate in Physics from Massachusetts Institute of



Technology (MIT) in 1976, and became an expert in Laser Physics while working with the Hughes Research Laboratory. McNair was also very skilled in Karate and won the AAU Karate gold medal, eventually achieving a black belt.

But despite his success, McNair had to deal with everyday racism from a young age. In 1959 at the age of 9, he tried to check out books from a local library, but was denied this simple request. The library called the police when he refused to leave. Years later in 2011, the same library was named after him – *The Ronald McNair Life History Center* - in recognition of his accomplishments and refusal to bow to racism even as a child.

In 1978 Robert McNair was picked by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) as a specialist astronaut. He was one of the thirty-five applicants selected by NASA from ten thousand applicants. McNair's first flight commenced on 3rd February 1984, and lasted almost 8

days. One of the reasons he was selected was to increase the number of NASA astronauts from minority backgrounds. He flew on the Challenger for mission STS-41-B as a mission specialist, becoming only the second African American to fly in space. On this flight, Ronald McNair operated the Space Shuttle's robotic arm that moved a platform where an astronaut could stand; it was this technology that enabled the repairing of satellites on later missions.

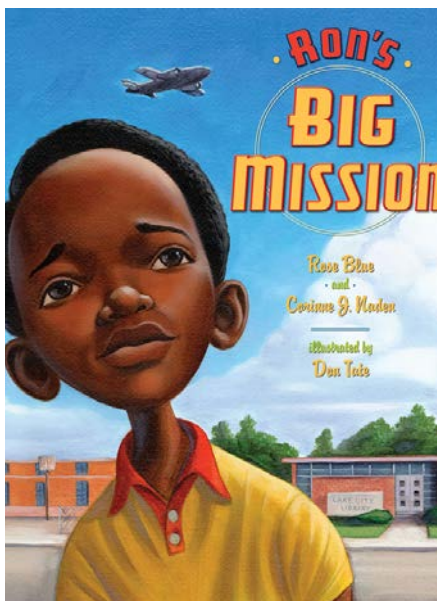
After the mission STS-41-B, Ronald McNair was chosen for STS-51-L as a mission Specialist for a crew of seven astronauts. McNair and his crew were aiming to release the Spartan Halley spacecraft (whose job it was to observe Halley's Comet) and pick it up after 2 days using the shuttle's robotic arm. However, on 28th January 1986, a mere 73 seconds after lift-off, the Space Shuttle Challenger was involved in an explosion and suddenly vanished. None of the seven crewmates survived.





McNair's legacy lives on. In addition to the library named after him, a children's book called *Ron's Big Mission* was published in 2009 that recounts this story as a picture book for young readers. In 2005 his brother Carl Stuart McNair, produced a biography about him entitled *In the Spirit of Ronald E. McNair - Astronaut. An American Hero*. It is described as a "poignant biography of Ronald McNair".

Even though he faced many setbacks and obstacles, Ronald McNair did not lose hope and persevered throughout his life until the very end. Indeed, in his own words *"The true courage of space flight is not sitting aboard 6 million pounds of fire and thunder as one rockets away from this planet. True courage comes in enduring... persevering, the preparation and believing in oneself."*





# cacophony of colours

WRITTEN BY SURI DAGI



Have you ever had the feeling you were being watched? Like your every step is being followed and you can't do anything about it because everybody thinks you're being crazy. That's exactly what I experienced; the only difference is I wasn't being crazy.

It all started with that wretched doll with its pale ghostly skin that resembled a lifeless human being. The two braids hanging on for dear life were just a poor attempt at hiding a broken skull. Two black endless holes where the eyes should have been. If you looked for too long, it was almost like a sick and twisted hypnosis. The most perplexing part about this doll was the jagged scars that took the place of the lips, where shattered and rotting teeth emerged. All of these supernatural characteristics, yet my mother still thought it was perfectly fine for a 13-year-old girl.

Having received this doll for my 13th birthday, I never saw anything wrong with its appearance. It was only during the upcoming weeks of paranormal activities and paranoia of being followed, that I wish I'd never set eyes upon it.

I did try to warn everyone about the strange encounters such as the many times the doll would appear in places I hadn't put in. But this was just ruled out as being "misplaced". There would be times that I would feel it make its way into my bed and lay down next to me for hours as I held my breath and prayed it wouldn't realise I was awake. Or the countless time I was walking, just to see a small shadow in front of me but nobody physically present behind me. I mentioned all these things to my mother, but she didn't pay it a second thought.



One regular Sunday morning (or so I thought), my mother was getting ready to leave for her hospital shift and I was just lazing about the kitchen. She said goodbye and hugged me before she left, but there was a sickening feeling in my stomach as I realised she was hugging me in a way that made me feel like she was never going to see me again. By this point, everyone around me had convinced me I was paranoid, so I tried my best to brush away the wrenching gut feeling.

It wasn't long before my mind got the best of me, and I found myself climbing out of bed at 1am just to confirm the whereabouts of the doll. I usually did this when my mother wasn't home as that's when I felt least safe. I walked into the living room and to my surprise the doll wasn't there. However, I did discover a note where the doll should have been. A note with an address and the words "*if you want*"



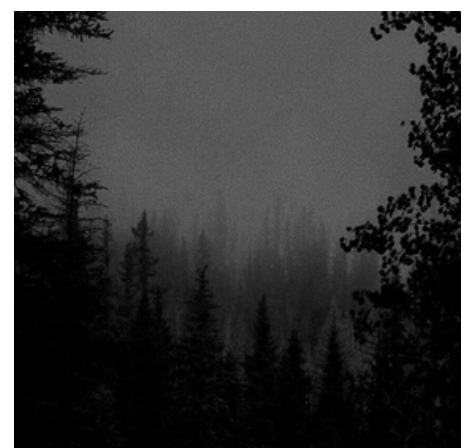
answers" written beneath it. I should have ignored this and gone to bed - surely it was just a cruel prank? But I simply couldn't; I wanted to prove everybody wrong, but most importantly, I wanted to rescue my own sanity. That could only happen by going to the address...

It wasn't long before I was in the backseat of a cab, staring out of the window onto the empty streets of London. The same streets were normally bustling with people; this unsettled me even more as I realised that people weren't roaming around to help if I needed it. I ended up falling asleep in the car, the driver rather angrily waking me up and demanding his money. After getting out of the taxi, I realised that I'd arrived at my mother's workplace, the local hospital. I looked back to tell the driver that he'd brought me to the wrong location, but he was long gone.

Cautiously, I took steps towards the hospital, which was eerily quiet. As I entered the hospital, the gut feeling I had, kept getting stronger and

stronger, to the point that I thought the only resolution would be finding my mother and explaining to her why I was there. I started walking towards the lift but rapidly turned to face the stairs. I wasn't taking any chances knowing I'd watched plenty horror films. Floor 12. I sighed, having made it up all the flights of staircases. I started walking towards room number 5, my mother's staffroom. But as I was walking, I felt the sense of being followed once again, only this time, it was accompanied with a voice that said, "you're so close to discovering the truth". As friendly as it sounds, it was topped off an excruciatingly ear-piercing laugh, causing me to physically cover my ears to protect them. I stood in that position for a couple minutes, but it wasn't until that same horrific shadow appeared in front of me, that I started speed walking towards the room. Having reached the door, I flung it open. The sight that next beheld made me wish that I had just stayed at home that fateful night. What I saw was a nightmare that I couldn't wake up from.

There was my mother, standing over the same doll that she had gifted me, only, I knew it wasn't mine, because there were hundreds of the same exact doll. Each had been assigned a different name, some of which recognised; they belonged to the children of our neighbourhood.



# CAREERS POEM

WRITTEN BY UHUNOMA OBAYANGBONA



He stared impassively at the path that  
lay ahead of him  
Feeling confined by the thought of  
being restricted by a singular role.  
His mind a labyrinth, that seemingly  
had no escape  
For his thoughts, once a myriad of  
dreams, now seem shackled in chains.



*"You can be anything you want in  
life" ...*

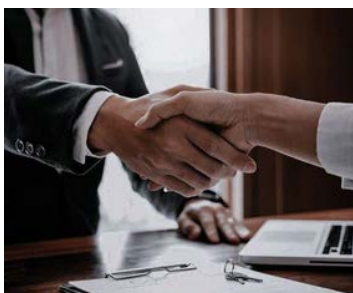
So why then is there a deficit in  
opportunities that were once so rife?  
But within the midst of  
disillusionment that seems to cloud  
his mind  
A flicker from within is combusted  
into one great light.



For he realised that careers are no  
arbitrary assortment of roles  
That one is helplessly confined to,  
But rather, an avenue to explore,  
A place where passion and innovation  
harmoniously resonate.



He stared at the path that lay ahead  
of him,  
Hopeful about the one he would  
venture forth into  
As where ingenuity and curiosity  
thrive,  
Dreams can be restored.



***"Attitude Determines Altitude"***