

THE SPINE



In This Edition

*The Millennium
Development Goals*

- Ask Alice and Alex

- Movie Reviews

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THE SPINE

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THE SPINE MAGAZINE



THESPINEABS



THESPINEABS

Editor's Letter

Written by: Samira Shabsogh

It's finally here! Spring has come at last, after what has felt like the longest Winter. The birds are chirping again, it's not so cold and windy anymore, and I can actually see blue sky. Not a blue-grey or stormy blue colour, but a clear blue sky at last! Summer is also soon to come, and amidst the seasonal changes, we seniors will be graduating, leaving behind our collective and individual legacies, setting standards for the next graduating class, and partying and having fun while everyone else is stuck at school!

Oh, and we have another issue of *The Spine* ready for you!

This issue's theme is development. This year is an important year for the UN and all of its member countries. We examine the effects of the Millennium Development Goals, and how fair they were. The progress each country made with the MDG's largely depended on the development of that particular country, as well as it's resources, so was it really fair or logical to think that all of the goals could be met by 2015?

Keeping in line with the theme, we have a reflection

on the Milan MUN trip, as well as the development of video games!

This issue also features two movie reviews. The first is a review of the classic animation, "Spirited Away." Though not a fan myself, Celine Eses breaks down the movie in an insightful way that will encourage people to see what the buzz is about. The second movie is "The Theory of Everything." If you haven't yet watched the movie, this review will tell you what to expect, and whether or not you should.

I have to say, I am so very proud of my fellow *Spine* staff. We made it! No matter how much work we had to do, the pizza and our combined energy no doubt helped us push through till the very end. Our talented staff works tirelessly to make sure that there is something for everyone in every issue of *The Spine*. I'd like to thank the wonderful Ms. Gill, who put up with us while we scrambled to assemble two issues, , and the amazing Ms. Jen, whose insight into the world of journalism heightened our standards.

Thank you for reading and I hope you enjoy this issue!

Welcome to the second issue of *The Spine*!

It's been a busy term with lots going on in and around school and our team of reporters and designers have been working hard to bring you the latest happenings, from art exhibits and basketball wins to the best in film and video games.

New this issue is our version of *Where's Waldo*... can you find the picture locations around the IB College? There's a *Candy Box* goody bag for the first correct entry, and a mention on *The Spine* Instagram for all runners up!

I'd also like to introduce you to Alice and Alex, our resident Q&A experts – get in touch through the Facebook page, survey monkey link (found on the Facebook page) or by email to get your questions answered!

Don't forget, we're always on the look out for writers and designers, with openings for both freelance and staff positions – if you're interested get in touch with us at thespine@abs.edu.jo, speak to one of the team or come along to one of our weekly meetings, Mondays at 3:15 in the Creative Media and Music Room. And yeah, there's usually pizza...

TTFN, Miss Gill

Millennium Development Goals 2015

Written by: Samira Shabsogh

Quick: name all of the Millennium Development Goal's! Bet you didn't name all eight, did you? That's no matter, because technically the world failed at achieving them. Of course they did make progress regarding each issue mentioned in the goals, but they didn't fully complete what they set out to do. There are several reasons for this.

For those of you who don't know, the Millennium Development Goals are goals that were established at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000 to be fulfilled by 2015. They are as follows:

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. To achieve universal primary education
3. To promote gender equality and empower women
4. To reduce child mortality
5. To improve maternal health
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. To ensure environmental sustainability
8. To develop a global partnership for development

To be perfectly honest, explaining what each and every goal means will take a lot of time (and words) so if you don't know what something means, there is a handy search engine called Google. I suggest you use it.

There are several reasons that none of these goals were fully achieved.

There are several reasons that none of these goals were fully achieved. Writing candidly here, the MDG's weren't very fair to the entire African continent. Generally perceived to be the poorest and the least developed continent, it had a hard enough time trying to overcome the effects of colonization (all relatively developed machinery and equipment left with the colonizers, basically Africa had to build itself up again) and all of a sudden, they were faced with a (not so) new set of challenges, this time with a deadline. The fact that Africa is the continent with the greatest number of issues relating to the MDG's does nothing to help its situation. Africa had a disability from the start. Meanwhile, Europe and North America had far

less trouble with these issues, and far more in the way of funds to spare.

China was the most successful in achieving these goals, while Benin (a country in West Africa, neighboring Togo, Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Niger) has been virtually unaffected by any efforts taken towards these goals.

Another problem is the fact that the goals are not very comprehensive, and by focusing on the goals governments may neglect other matters that are just as important. This presents the economic problem of choice and scarcity. Basically, we have infinite wants and needs, and finite resources. Because of this, we are forced to make a choice. Seeing as goal 2 focuses on primary education, a government might neglect other urgent matters, such as maintaining the standards for secondary and further education.

The MDG's aren't necessarily fair

The MDG's aren't necessarily fair, and instead of setting a deadline where all of these goals should have been met, the UN might have instead implemented policies that would have resulted in positive long-term effects, as opposed to relatively quick fix solutions. In my humble opinion, the UN should extend the goals indefinitely and offer as much aid as possible to developing nations seeking to meet these goals.



The 10th Annual Ayman Mousher Tournament

Written by: Alia Kawar

The ABS girls' basketball team, champions of the Ayman 10th Annual Basketball Tournament!

Walking into the opening ceremony in our white, astronaut-like warm-up suits, no one in the room took us seriously. Who knew we would end up the champions of the tournament.

With only a few months of practice, we never imagined that we were heading into an undefeated run, about to receive first place.

The first game against the Baptist school put everyone on their toes. We were all both nervous and excited to finally display the results of the hard work we had put into every practice. Winning that game gave us a boost for what was to come.

As the tournament progressed, so did our team spirit and team play. We couldn't believe how strong our team was.

The biggest surprise of the tournament was the game against a school we've been trying to beat for four consecutive years, International Academy of Amman. When we finally won against IAA, it proved to us how far we've come. We now had a chance to reach the finals and win it all!

On Saturday, the last day of the tournament, we had two final games and if we won both we would receive first place. IC Beirut was the first challenge. This game in my opinion was the best one for a number of reasons. In the first two quarters we built a huge lead as a result of our passing and team spirit. We made smart shots and played as a team. Finally, we won our last game against Ramallah Friends School, a Palestinian school, which made it a successful end to a fun tournament.

At the awards ceremony, the Coach of the ABS girls' basketball team, Zein Mango, was pleased to say, "I am so happy that we won, because I believe talent wins games but teamwork wins championships. I am

so proud of my champions!"

Mr. Mohammad Hourani, the Athletic Director, was also amazed by the team work and support displayed throughout the tournament.

"The tournament this year was one of the most enjoyable tournaments to organize," he said. "This is due to the level of sportsmanship that was demonstrated throughout the tournament. The teams also demonstrated a high level of Basketball skills in every game, and proved to be very entertaining."

"One major factor for such a motivating tournament was that the support we received from our classmates was so encouraging."

One major factor for such a motivating tournament was that the support we received from our classmates was so encouraging.

"It was great to see the enthusiasm of the ABS students in attendance cheering not only our teams but all involved." he said

Winning the tournament was an amazing experience. It showed that hard work pays off and that dedication makes everything worth it. Being a part of this journey for many years and finally achieving our goal of receiving first place motivated us to continue working together and aim for more success. I hope that our success will continue in upcoming tournaments. Keep supporting and watching to find out!

	Girls	Boys
First Place	ABS	Amman Academy
Second Place	IC Beirut	Mashrek
Third Place	RFS (Rammalah Friends School)	IC Beirut

The Power of Positive Thinking

Written by: Alia Kawar

Thoughts somehow shape the reality of our experiences. As simple as it sounds, I believe positive thoughts attract positive circumstances, while negative thoughts attract negative circumstances.

Focus on what you have rather than on what you don't have. Make it a habit. It is recommended to go on a mental diet of purely positive thoughts. In order to do that, you have to erase any negative thoughts you have. This results in having more energy to spend on solutions rather than dwelling on problems, which will make a huge difference in your life.

Don't judge other people by searching for their flaws. Instead, be curious about the motivation behind their anger. Judge less and strive to understand. To make positivity a habit, you have to focus on what's right and find something to appreciate.

When I was looking for someone to interview about positivity, Ms. Karamah was the first person to pop into my mind. The experienced IB Art teacher's contagious positivity and happiness shines through the school. Her bright colors and smile can't go unnoticed. So I was curious to know, what motivates her and keeps her so positive.

- What are your passions in life?
 - My students, "my babies"!
 - Dancing, especially salsa and tango.
 - Gym, swimming, painting, teaching and cooking
- How do you maintain a positive attitude everyday?
 - It's all in the mind. When there's a will, there's a way. It's a choice.

• Did anyone inspire you to be so positive, or was it your decision?

It was my decision, from reading self-improvement books.

- What is the importance of life skills?

I don't think we have enough paper to highlight the importance. But to summarise, life skills help people deal with life in a better way, to handle problems and

challenges with a more positive attitude.

- Do you have any advice for students?

Always think positive, I'm not saying it's always easy, who said life is supposed to be easy, but it sure is a lot of fun and worth it.

"Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions."

- Dalai Lama



MILAN MUN

Written by: Lara Abdullah

The model United Nations is a stimulation of the United Nations which involves 194 members who meet together in the General Assembly, New York to discuss major issues affecting our world today.

A group of 16 ABS students are heading to Milan, Italy on the 10th of March to attend a Model United Nations conference hosted by the Civico Liceo Linguistico School. The students that are travelling have been attending in-school training sessions that are led by the AMMUN XIV leadership team. Throughout these meetings the young delegates were exposed to debate skills, resolution writing skills and how to understand the fine line between being a good delegate and being the best delegate. These sessions were not limited to writing and public speaking exercises but they also focused on explaining the topics that Milan MUN have chosen to be part of the conference agenda. Our world today is without a doubt the pinpoint of a critical situation, especially our region, the Middle East. Therefore it wasn't surprising that some of the topics chosen entail the conflicts that the Middle East is going through such as the ISIS situation and the post Arab Spring framework that has been the key discussion of various UN conferences for the past few years. The delegates were exposed to different topics as well, ones that don't fit the dimensions of our own conflicts such as the conflicts faced by Africa and countries such as China and Myanmar.

The 16 delegates are representing countries from different parts of the world including the United States of America, Benin and Pakistan

The 16 delegates are representing countries from different parts of the world including the United States of America, Benin and Pakistan. It was an exciting opportunity for the leadership team to be engaged in such activities that involved training the new generation of AMMUN, that will not only represent the school at the international Milan conference but they will always be the guidelines for

them in their upcoming MUN careers. The delegates were exposed for the first time to the rules of procedures used by the model UN committees and that are internationally agreed upon as basic rules for chairing conferences and maintaining flow of debate.

At the end of the day, the delegates handed in all the required pieces of work and they challenged themselves to go beyond their own comfort zones in terms of researching the topics and ensuring that they would be able to defend their stances on the podium. We wish them the best of luck at their first international conference, and we hope that this is just the first milestone of their MUN journey.



Short Film Contest

Written by: Samira Shabsough

ABS will be hosting its first ever Short Film Competition this year! All entries are welcome, as long as they are original works between 45 seconds and 3 minutes long. They should be submitted by the 19th of April. I would encourage everyone who is interested from the KG to the IBC to take this opportunity, seeing as film is, after all, "the best IB subject!"

I managed to bombard the unprepared Ms. Gill with a few hard hitting editorial questions about the competition from an insider's view. Okay, so my question weren't really hard hitting, but we had an interesting and amusing conversation.

The aim of the competition is to increase the interest and involvement of students in film. The most important aim is to let students have FUN!!

According to Ms Gill, film is a "really wonderful way of expressing yourself." Not only is it "a fabulous way of telling stories", but it also lets people be creative and lets children "take chances and risks they might not take in the real world". Just to clarify, the film world is "absolutely NOT" part of the real world.

The beauty of the theme, Spy Games, is that it can go literally anywhere. Ms Gill visualizes it going from "arena type Mockingjay spy games to James Bond-esque to-" At this point I had to insert a childhood favorite of mine, "Inspector Gadget?" "Yeah! To Scooby Doo." Obviously, people can't use the characters, because that would be copyright infringement, but the general ideas can be used as inspiration.

The film can be a mockumentary, maybe an interview with an actual 'spy'. "I'd really like to see a hidden camera sort of thing", said Ms. Gill, "but obviously the participators need to be in on it. It can't actually be a hidden camera. Because that would be wrong in terms of privacy and permission rights."

The three categories are the IBC, the MYS, and the JS-KG. The youngest age group can have a parent or teacher helper. Entries can be made as individuals, teams, or even whole classes. The team entries will be entered in the category of the oldest member of the team.



**For full rules and regulations,
please contact Ms Gill Rogers.
grogers@abs.edu.jo**

CALL FOR ENTRIES

ABS Short Film Competition 2015

Enter your short film for the chance to win an exclusive prize and have your film screened to the public at the ABS Spring Fair!

**Drama, Comedy, Animation or Documentary/ Mockumentary,
based on the theme**

“Spy Games”

**Films must be between 45 seconds and 3 minutes,
All entries must be received by Sunday 19th April 2015**

**For more information and complete rules
please email Miss Gill: grogers@abs.edu.jo**



مدرسة البكالوريا - عمان
Amman Bacalaureate School

The competition
is open to all
ABS students

Entries can be
submitted in
the following
categories:

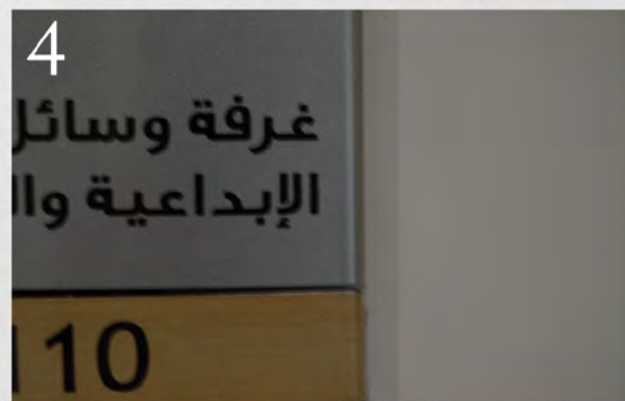
IBC

MYS

KG&JS

Where's ~~Waldo?~~ the picture

Successfully identify the locations of each of these pictures around the College. First correct entry gets a Candy Box goody bag. Runners up get a gold star and a mention in the magazine and on social media. Send your answers to : thespine@abs.edu.jo by the 31st May 2015



Pictures taken by Oun Nuqul

Amman As a Tourist

Written by: *Samira Shabsogh*

Photographed by: *Suleiman Mashini*

Disclaimer: I am not a tourist, nor have I ever been (at least not in Amman). I have, however, lived in Amman my entire life, so I guess it can be safe to assume that I know what I'm talking (writing?) about.

To be perfectly honest, if I were a tourist in Amman the first thing I would do is go to Rainbow Street. It's the area that used to be the hub for young people. Though the area died down at some point, it's now back up and running. Walking along the street you can see people of many different nationalities, and a variety of restaurants, it's an area that you really have to explore because there's just so much to do.

Another main attraction would definitely have to be the Roman Amphitheatre. It's a testament to how beautiful ruins can be, and how well old structures hold up. Within walking distance is downtown Amman, the Balad, where you can find many odd little trinkets and treasures. If you do visit the Amphitheatre, you need to climb your way up to the top. Bonus points if you can make it all the way up in one breath!

Souk Jara is probably one of the most colorful venues I've ever been to. Even if you don't buy anything, it's a fun an experience you won't want to miss out on!

I'm afraid I'm going to have to start the great falafel debate:

many will say Hashem is the best, while others will say that Al Quds falafel trumps every other establishment. Personally, I'm much more partial to Al Quds; I've been eating it for many years now, and Hashem had such an extravagant reputation that it just didn't live up to my expectations. I suppose Hashem is better if you want to sit down and enjoy your meal, but I've been more receptive to Al Quds' on-the-go style.

Of course there are many more sights to see, such as the King Hussein Mosque, the Cave of the Seven Sleepers (Ahl Al Kahf) and the Mango House.

If you're relatively new to Amman, I hope you found this helpful. If you're a Ammani, please don't hesitate to tell me whether or not you agree. If you think I missed anything, send a letter to the editor; We'd love to listen to what you have to say!



Swans

Written by: Sanad Tabbaa

Swans are the cruellest beings to ever be associated with the British Royal Family (excluding, of course, the members of the Royal Family). Though it is commonplace knowledge in Europe where swans actually live, I'm taking it on myself to inform Jordanians about the malevolent nature of these evil beings and to make it clear to you beyond any shadow of a doubt that, given the chance, swans will not only kill you, they'll find your home, murder your extended family and eat their corpses for kicks.

“No swans are domesticated. Nobody has the gall, patience or pure mental fortitude in order to domesticate a swan.”

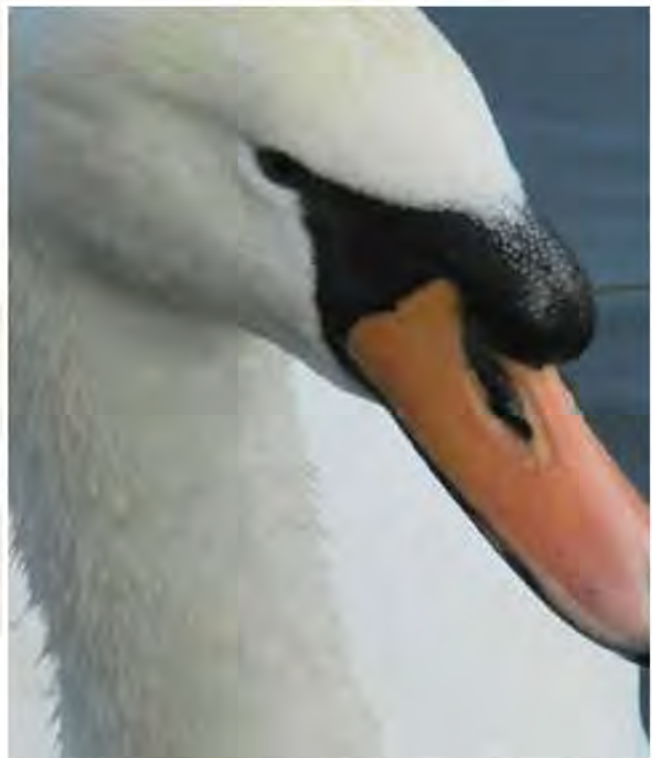
When you think of swans you probably think of those cutesy “tunnel of love” type rides and maybe the romantic idea that swans are loving creatures that mate for life and are beautiful, when actually the book “The Ugly Duckling” should probably be called “The Latent Psychopath”. What surprises a lot of people is that such a huge bird is even able to fly and that starts to make a lot more sense when you account for the fact that the swan’s wings are powerful enough to totally destroy a fully grown adult human’s limbs. There are, in fact, many documented stories of a single swan breaking a person’s legs all Mafioso style with its wings for no actual reason whatsoever.

No swans are domesticated. Nobody has the gall, patience or pure mental fortitude in order to domesticate a swan. They’re just too perpetually angry. Like enraged 13 year old gamers, they’re just impossible to deal with in any way that doesn’t involve ammunition. One of the reasons for this is that they have a personal bubble of about 3-5 meters; any closer than that and you risk broken bones and nightmares involving a lot of flapping and hissing. Yeah, that’s right, they hiss. Not just the sad, useless hiss that ducks and small children

have. I mean a serious hiss. Like a blow horn filled with vomit and pure fury and get this, they even kill a dude every few years. Back in 2012 a guy kayaking in a lake was surprised to suddenly find himself underwater and was even more surprised to find himself actively blocked from going ashore by an apparently furious swan which then proceeded to actually beat him to unconsciousness whereupon he drowned, presumably while the swan cackled maniacally and flapped its wings in glee.

Now look at that photo below. Does it still look so friendly? Yeah, didn’t think so. That isn’t the face of a beautiful, benevolent angel-bird. That’s the face of a serial killer. Look at those black beady eyes. It wants you, your children and your grandchildren to die in agony. Swans are pure hateful evil condensed into a single enormous avian entity of death that should be avoided and, if possible, eaten.

(The views represented in this article do not necessarily represent the views of the Spine magazine or, in fact, the writer. If you want to blame somebody because you have some weird misplaced love for swans, contact Sam. He let this fly.)



Bond, Millie. Mute Swan in a London Park. Digital image. A-Z Animals. Web.

Time Management is a Myth

Written by: Sanad Tabbaa

In my opinion, time management doesn't actually exist and has about as much credibility as reports of a floating obese man in New Jersey. Time management is a myth perpetuated by counsellors who believe that a student's problems can be blamed on them and the fact that they do not try hard enough (no offense to counsellors who are, on average, lovely people). The fact is, that every human is different and unique, and a mystical concept that some bored, lonely dude in a weird smelling office invented on a lazy Tuesday afternoon is not going to solve the issues that each individual student faces. Because of that, I'm going to deconstruct the ludicrous sorcery of time management.

Now, time management is defined as the process of exercising control over the time spent on specific tasks in order to increase overall efficiency. This works in theory but often fails when used for daily practice. Folks don't account for an important fact when attempting to manage their time and it's that very few people have an accurate knowledge of the difficulty of a task until actually doing it; ergo they are likely to provide incorrect estimates. As a human your sense of timing is imperfect and when you discover that you're off schedule, as a normal human you may panic and stress out. Life doesn't follow an agenda. Weird arbitrary distractions that get you off schedule are normal but the idea that you must, absolutely must, manage your time efficiently will often cause dread and anxiety which can hamper your thinking processes. Don't sweat it, as a human many things about you and your interactions are random; which provides us with the next point.

As a human you are unique. No other human being is exactly like you in every way. Seeing as a human being is totally unique it would not only be cruel, but irrational to assume that each will manage their time in exactly the same way and come up with a good quality end result. Time management simply doesn't work for some people. Different people have different intelligence, different habits and different attention spans. Some people simply aren't capable of doing work in long stretches, they need time to go out, walk the dogs or have an argument with a politically radical grandmother. The same way that one would not force a student to pull an all-nighter, one should not force a student to attempt to do something they are incapable of by nature.

Basically, the tips I will bestow upon you are as follows: don't sweat it if you don't feel like you're managing your time right, some people can't focus or will be miserable without some sort of break or entertainment and having a few short breaks rather than a single long one may be better for the way your brain works. Secondly, if you aren't a schedule or list person, don't sweat it. Examine yourself and you can probably find your perfect "work-niche". Thirdly, if you feel as though you're wasting your time on a task or that you simply can't wrap your head around an idea, take a break, if it's 3 AM go to sleep, a progressive, cohesive super schedule won't help you if you simply can't understand the topic and a good night's sleep is both good remedy and important if you don't like hallucinations. The fact is that nobody actually knows you better than you know yourself and as a result if you think that you need a piece of coloured paper to tell you what to do, I've got some news for you...



Visual Arts Exhibition

Written by: Sanad Tabbaa

The beginning of March marked an important annual event of the ABS, being the Art Exhibition every year the grade 12 Visual Arts students grace us with an exhibition of their collected mental anguish and sleepless nights turned into stunning works of amazingness. This year's crop was no exception to this age-old tradition of being awesome. The students this year had works varying from photography to sculpture and a few of the students exhibited work that was truly at professional level. Although we could sit here and praise the artists for another few hundred words, we'll instead let them talk for themselves:

Omar Abass:

TS: How do you go about your artistic process?

OA: Proper research; not just in terms of art movements, different types of media, going to museums...etc. It's important for people to get knowledge from analysing art pieces. It's important to go to exhibitions, see artists and check out local influences.

TS: How would you describe IB Visual Arts?

OA: Demanding but enriching.

TS: Any tips for up-and-coming artists?

OA: Meet deadlines, develop your thumbnails, don't rush a piece but don't be afraid to try new things and experiment with different media, colours and textures

Ghazal Kawar:

TS: Tell us about your artistic process?

GK: Research, research and more research. Depending on the idea I research an art movement, type of media, good texture...etc.

TS: Do your pieces have an underlying theme?

GK: Personal growth

TS: How much time does it take you to create a work of art?

GK: It differs between piece and piece obviously but it can range from one day to literally a week of nonstop work

TS: How many pieces did you end up doing, like in total?

GK: Sixteen.

TS: And what was your preferred medium? GK: Acrylic paints

TS: Do you have any tips for up-and-coming artists?

GK: Don't leave anything to the last minute. When you have time, work.

NOTE: We apologize for the lack of pictures of the exhibition; however, photographs of the student's art could jeopardize their IB grade.

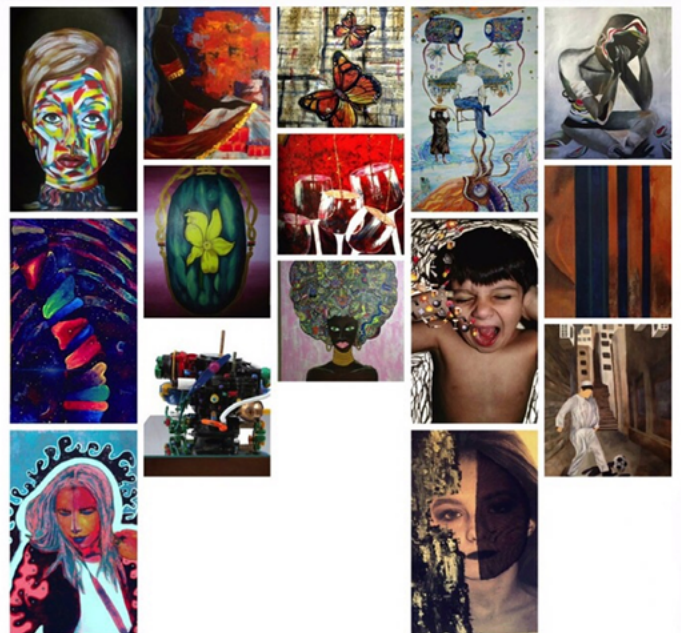
We wish the Grade 12 IB art students all the best in their journeys and hope that the next generation of students can learn from their example and take their tips to heart.



Under the Patronage of
HRH Princess Sarvath El Hassan
The Amman Baccalaureate School
cordially invites you to the opening of

The Annual Grade 12

IBDP Visual Arts Exhibition



Class of 2015

Adora Tadros, Aisha Bint Feisal, Ghazal Kawar, Haya Kawar, Jasmine Abu Hamdan, Jida fanous, Leen Ali, Leen Al-Sabounchi, Natalie Bahou, Natalie Kandalaft, Omar Abbas, Rand Edilbi, Raneen Kawar, Sara Bint Feisal, Sara Quqa, Thea Tadros, Tina Al-Safadi, Yasmeen Al Masri, Yousser Louhaichi, Zaki Goussous

Opening Monday 3rd of March 2015 at 4:00 pm
ABS IB College (New Randa Kawar Building) in the Multi-purpose Hall
until Thursday 5th of March 2015



Ask Alice & Alex!



Welcome to Alex & Alice, the Spine's resident Q&A experts!

1. Can I send NASA my selfie because I'm a star?

Alice: We're all shining stars one way or another! I'm sure NASA'd appreciate it. <3

Alex: The only time that sending NASA a photo of yourself would be applicable would be if you were offering yourself as a test-subject to examine the effect of drinking rocket fuel on the human body.

2. Why does the school get to control how many activities we are allowed to do if we are able to keep our grades and manage our time effectively?

Alice: I believe it's simply to avoid some people biting off more than they can chew. Some people can manage effectively, but others can't and still continue to put too much on their plate. It's for the general good!

Alex: Well, that would be because although you think you can manage your time efficiently, in actuality you are little more than a beanbag with legs, hormones and the ability to use a keyboard and you behave as such. You can't manage more than three activities, you'll die.

3. How do I get a high SAT score?

Alice: Study up and read!

Alex: Sell your soul.

4. Tips on getting baes?

Alex: It's important to understand that your ability to procure baes is directly proportional to how desperate the aforementioned bae is. Therefore, you need to make the bae more desperate in order to increase your chances. I suggest arson.

Alice: If you're just nice and polite to whomever you're crushing on, they might like you back! But if they don't, at least you can have them as a good friend. You'll find someone soon, dear. :)

5. How do I balance my academic and social life?

Alice: Prioritize! I usually assign some days for work and some days for social stuff (Like Thursday!). Works like a charm!

Alex: The important thing is to realize that academia is for nerds, but you still need to make a living. My advice: buy a gas station.

6. Leera or Atif? Why?

Alice: Both are sweet...it's hard to pick!

Alex: Atif. Always Atif. Living without Atif is like living without oxygen.

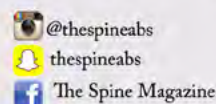
7. Who's Alice?

Alice: That would be me! :)

Alex: Alice is actually Satan's earthly vessel. If she responds to a question with anything that has to do with the blood of animals and a lot of candles, don't do it.

Ask Alice & Alex anything on SurveyMonkey!

www.surveymonkey.com/s/D9NKXC7



Video Games

Written by: *Oun Nugul*

Most people today think that the first ever video game was on the PS1 (Playstation 1), but in all honesty that is ignorance.

Historically speaking the PS1 debuted in 1994, while other consoles like the NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) and the SEGA Genesis out date it by 10 years, but even those weren't the first video game consoles. In reality the first ever video game was developed in 1947, and it was called the "Cathode Ray Tube Amusement Device". It wasn't accessible to the public much actually. But the influential video games that shaped the industry we have today came 45 years after the first video game.

Pacman:

Pacman, the yellow ball/ face that eats dots while being chased by ghosts. It is one of the most famous video games to date and generated approximately 2.5 billion US dollars in its first ten years, after inflation that adds up to 7.1 billion US dollars from quarters alone. Pacman was released May 22nd 1980 by Namco (Japanese developers) as an arcade game and not for any console. It became so popular in the 80's that merchandise and TV shows about Pacman were established. In the game itself the four ghosts are coloured Red, Pink, Cyan and Orange, and were actually named Blinky, Pinky, Inky and Clyde respectively (Clyde ruining everything). Another fun fact about the game is that it was meant to never end but at the 255th level a glitch would happen where half the screen would turn into code and you wouldn't be able to see that side of the level, this level was named the "Kill Screen". In the current era Pacman is still very much known and is a character in the new Smash Bros 4 on the Wii U and Nintendo 3DS.

Mario:

Everyone's favorite Italian plumber Mario was released 1 year after Pacman, but not in his own game. Mario was originally Jumpman and debuted in the arcade game Donkey Kong in 1981. His objective was to jump over barrels and climb ladders in order to

rescue the women known as "Lady". Later renamed to be Princess Peach. Mario is perhaps the most well known video game character ever, but ironically he wasn't even a main character in his first game. Mario's popularity surged and influenced the creation of several movies, spin offs and TV series. Today Mario can be found in games like Mario Kart, Smash Bros, and, Super Mario games themselves.

Tetris:

This is the game that made me want to write this article in the first place. After learning that some people don't even know what Tetris is, I made it a point to have this in the magazine. Tetris was made in 1984 by Russian developer Alexey Pajitnov. He named it Tetris because the greek prefix Tetra- which means four, and his favorite sport tennis. Tetra- is relevant because each piece in Tetris is made up of four blocks. There are 7 pieces in Tetris and they resemble the letter I, J, L, O, S, T and Z. The objective of the game is to fill up the space on the screen with Tetris pieces in order to clear lines. Tetris is one of the world's best puzzle solving video games and several million licensed and illegal spin offs of it have been developed. It has won several awards that remain valid to this day.

It's sad that kids of this generation won't get to play and enjoy the video games that began it all. It was thought that their legacy would live on forever, but recently it doesn't look like they will.



Spirited Away

Reviewed by: Celine Eses



“Spirited Away”, released in 2001, is an animated adventure movie directed by the “Walt Disney” of Japan, Hayao Miyazaki. It features a young girl by the name of Chihiro who ends up getting lost in a bath house in the spirit realm, while her parents were turned to pigs. She gets recruited by the head witch, Yubaba, and is proceeded to be renamed ‘Sen’ as a fee for being employed. The rest of the movie is made up simply by the extra-ordinary events that occur to Sen through meeting both kind-hearted spirits and horrifying demons as she tries to turn her parents back into humans.

While the synopsis may not appeal to everyone, the animation and character design is inarguably fantastic. The movie is about the atmosphere and environments that surround the characters. For example, there is a scene that features the characters riding on a train traversing over a water landscape, with no conversation whatsoever. The animation and the atmosphere alone do the talking. It’s one of the movie’s highlights in my opinion.

“The general appeal of the movie is that it isn’t general at all compared to other movies.”

The characters are also very genuine and relatable. They have human personalities, which is an especially difficult task in animation; it’s very hard to convince an audience that the cartoon in front of them is a truly human character, but “Spirited Away” achieves that. For example, Chihiro has both faults and strengths, Yubaba isn’t all evil, and the male lead Haru is an incredibly complex character compared to what you usually see in animated films. Everyone of the characters you meet has an interesting and dynamic personality, which can easily charm any audience.

The general appeal of the movie is that it isn’t general at all compared to other movies. Some people may feel that it is boring due to it’s purposefully slow pace to match the atmosphere. The idea and execution is not one that will appeal to the general audience, and in my opinion, that’s a part of the film’s allure. It’s not trying to be liked by everyone; it’s simply telling the story of a girl lost in the spirit realm, whether people like it or not. And that makes the film a special experience.

Even if you aren’t a fan of animation or such wild ideas, I still recommend you give “Spirited Away” a try. You may discover a new atmosphere you have never felt before, and have a new movie to be dazzled by.



The Theory of Everything

Reviewed by: Celine Eses



SPOILER ALERT!

The Theory of Everything is a romantic drama movie adaptation of the book written by Jane Wilde about living with her ex-husband, "Travelling to Infinity: My Life with Steven", and rightfully so. The movie features the process of how the couple met, how they split up, and the hardships they went through with Steven being slowly crippled by motor neuron disease.

"If you enjoy dramatic/romantic movies, then this is the movie for you!"

As a person who isn't such a huge fan of dramatic romances, I must say that the first half of the film is absolutely gorgeous. The progress of Steven's disease, the relationship between Jane and Steven, and the emphasis on Steven's theory on black holes are all beautifully portrayed through the actors' performances and the cinematography. It was a charming and very emotional ride.

However, the second half pales in comparison. At this point, Steven has been completely and utterly crippled and bound to a chair, and we get the sub-plot with the romance between Jonathan and Jane. We are left in the dark as to what exactly made Dr. Hawking such a brilliant physician, and instead are given vague renditions of time and space and what his work says about religion and his beliefs in God, which is an incredibly shallow dive into what made him such a famous and inspirational physician. This disappointed me to unbelievable levels, however, the book it was based on was written by his wife, so that may be the reason.

The second half was also incredibly boring compared to the charm of the first half due to the sudden slow pace the movie adopted. A movie can be horrid, even shallow, and have terrible acting but those movies are still entertaining to watch simply due to the silliness and due to mockery. The worst thing a movie can do is bore the audience, and I must say this half of the movie bored me so much I wished to simply take the disc out and watch something else instead because of how slow the movie had become.

In conclusion, The Theory of Everything is a generally charming flick. The movie is very aesthetically pleasing to the eye with it's use of colours and features the hardships that Dr Hawking has gone through quite dramatically. The relationship between Jane and Steven in the beginning of the film feels genuine, and is very charming! However, some might find the second half of the movie lifeless and boring, so heed my warning if you aren't a fan of drama.

If you think you'll be watching a movie about Hawking himself, skip this movie. It's all about the relationship, and Hawking's incredible theories are only lightly touched upon. If you enjoy dramatic/romantic movies, then this is the movie for you!



The Winner Stands Alone

Reviewed by: Samira Shabsough

The “Winner Stands Alone”, Paulo Coelho offers a suspenseful novel about the fascinating worlds of fortune and celebrity, where the commitment to luxury and success at any cost often prevents one from hearing what the heart actually desires.

Coelho takes us to the Cannes Film Festival, where the so-called Superclass gather—those who have made it in the dreammaker’s world of fashion and cinema. Some of them have even reached the very top and are afraid to lose their lofty positions. Money, power, and fame are at stake—things for which most people are prepared to do anything to keep.

At this display of wealth, power, fame and glamour, we meet the vindictive, rich Russian, Igor; the Middle East’s Karl Lagerfeld, Hamid; up and coming American actress Gabriela, eager to break onto the A-list; criminal detective Savoy, determined to solve the case of his life; and Jasmine, a young model on her way to stardom.

The plot of the novel unravels during the course of 24 hours. Each character interacts with every other character, though it is clear that Igor is the peripheral character.

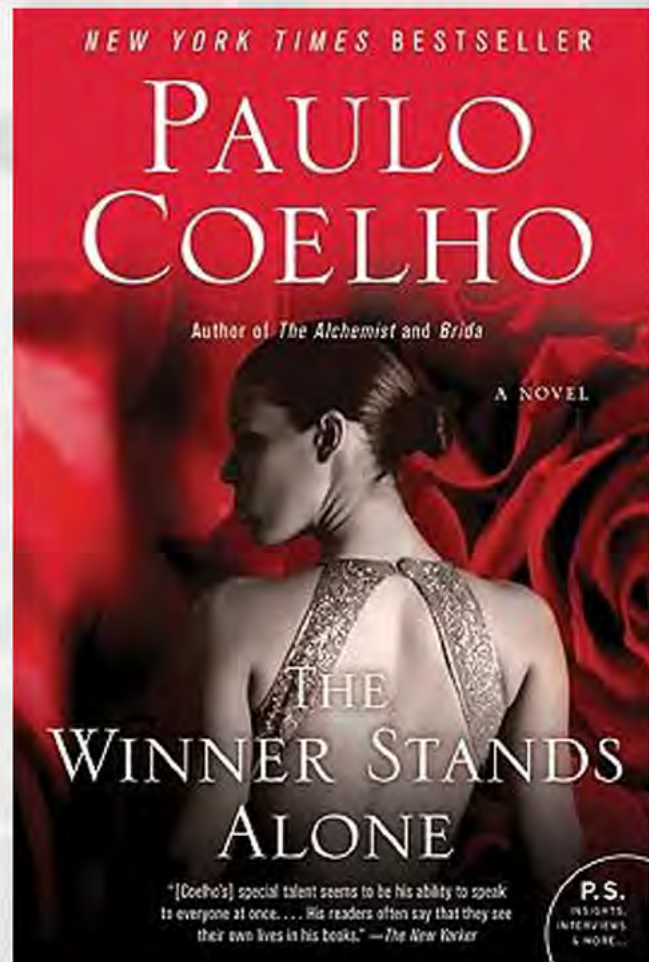
The character of Igor in particular is intriguing, simply due to the fact that we are positioned to see him as both protagonist and antagonist. He is essentially the “main character”. On a mission to avenge the infidelity of his wife, Ewa, who left him for Hamid. He believes that he is doing the work of God, and that this is his righteous path. He resembles Othello in his I’m-going-to-kill-(insert-wife’s-name-here)-you-c-an’t-stop-me-even-though-I-haven’t-fully-made-u-p-my-mind” phase, except there is no Iago in this situation.

It is a deep read, and one must think about it in order to fully grasp the intent behind writing this work. Also, if you are a person who is too easily lost with a large number of characters, then maybe this isn’t the book for you.

If anything, the book felt a bit rushed. I personally

would have loved to delve deeper into the lives and backgrounds of each character. For example, Gabriella comes from a Hispanic/Latin background (the book does not make it clear which exactly it is) and she is a character I would have loved to know more about. In the very beginning, she is being sewn into the dress she would be wearing on the red carpet. She thinks about a superstition; being sewn into a dress is symbolic for relinquishing your right to having a choice or say about anything in your life, it basically means that this is the point of no return. Coelho alludes to the idea that she may have been in this position before. Her character especially feels raw and unfinished

For many people, this book seems to be a hit or a miss. I fell completely in love with it and understood the meaning behind Coelho’s words from the first read. Others will strongly disagree with my opinion. Either way, Coelho maintains his powerful words and sense of narration in what is yet another bestseller.



Goodbye

Written by: Sanad Tabbaa

Connections are odd things. They're odd because unlike anything else they're infinite, but indispensable. We hoard and clutch to our connections with zeal and overprotectiveness, which is understandable because although they're infinite, creating a connection is so difficult and so unique that each one is an inexplicable achievement of human nature.

This occurrence is all the more fantastic when you can create a connection with someone through their work alone. Great masterpieces are great masterpieces because they create a connection with the artist on no basis other than their work. You can understand Van Gogh's nature through his brush strokes, Picasso's state of mind in his colour scheme, Socrates' thought process through his philosophies, and the late Terry Pratchett's personality and individuality shine through his literary works.

Sir Terry Pratchett, the second most read author in the UK, passed away on March 12th in his bed surrounded by his family. After bravely struggling with a rare form of early-onset Alzheimer's for about eight years (often calling it an "embuggerance"), complications with the disease combined with a chest infection caused him to succumb at the age of 66. He defied all expectations by battling the disease for this long (and remaining at his level of cognitive ability) as well as by continuing to write through dictation and appearing at occasions for fans until his final years. His last book was published in the summer of 2014. Pratchett used his unique blend of fantasy and humour to create a universe of a scale and depth rarely seen in any literary work. A Discworld perched on the backs of four elephants that stand on the back of the cosmic turtle Great A'Tuin. A realm which was filled with characters of such believability and a profound and stimulating sense of humanity that even 40 books into the series none of them had devolved in the slightest or lost their individuality or allure. To put it briefly, he created a world in which a failed wizard-student faced down a demon with half a brick inside a sock and made it not only funny and believable but also completely relevant to the situation.

As a testament to his ability to connect with readers, Sir Terry has written more than 70 books and had them translated into 37 languages over a prolific career of 47 years. He was knighted for Services to Literature by the Queen, an honour he responded to by forging his own sword.

His eccentricity, Santa Clause-like looks, brilliant cracks and lightning quick wit endeared him to his fans and helped create what seemed to be an individual bond with each and every admirer which, for many, made the news all the more painful.

To quote Sir Terry: "There are times in life when people must know when not to let go. Balloons are designed to teach small children this."

We shan't let go of his memory and will appreciate his humour for years to come. He will be very sorely missed.

"The entire universe has been neatly divided into things to (a) mate with, (b) eat, (c) run away from, and (d) rocks."

-Terry Pratchett



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