Unfortunately, as most of you know John Charters, beloved teacher and companion, passed away during the 28th-29th of May, due to natural causes.

Mr. Charters was highly respected for his 40 year-long teaching career, devoted fully to his students and colleagues. He was born in New Zealand in 1949, where he studied and achieved a PhD in Chemistry, until he moved abroad. Despite his earlier focus on Chemistry, he soon developed a passion for Physics which led him to become the greatest teacher ever.

Mr. Charters taught at ISA for 8 years. The greatest 8 years ISA has ever experienced. He was the head of the ISA science department, the grade 10 grade level coordinator and an IB Diploma Physics HL teacher. He was not just a teacher, rather a friend for all of us who shared his values and interests. Mr. Charters was not only a teacher for us, he was a father figure, role model and an example for all of us. He not only taught us Physics, but also valuable life lessons along with English, Chemistry, Biology (which he considered a spin off from Physics), Mathematics and humour. He was unique in all aspects, more than can be described.

Death is always unexpected, especially when it affects one of our dear ones. We would still like to imagine him sitting at his desk, with a cup of tea, his briefcase next to him and saying his typical catch phrases “wicked children”, “oi!”, “you all have problems to do, some more than others”, “some did ok others were embarrassing”, “rrrr” and our favourite one “such sacrilege”.

There are so many more questions we would have wanted to ask you, so many more problems we would have liked to solve together, but now we have the biggest of all to solve on our own. He will always be remembered as a caring teacher, colleague and role model. Forgetting him would be impossible. Although he probably did not believe in heaven he will live on forever in our hearts and memories forever lasting. We will especially remember him by what he would always reply with to our complaints about something...

A photo of Mr. Charters. 

A commemorative book in the library for Mr. Charters.
Editor’s Note

Dear ISA,

Looking back from today, it’s certainly been an exciting end of year. And with NECIS finals in golf, tennis, girls’ soccer and athletics, elections, and final exams, it’s been a busy one too. I’ve enjoyed it, and I hope you have as well.

Of course, the joy of the end of school and the coming summer has been overshadowed by the loss of one of our most beloved community members. When Mr. Charters died two weeks ago, it was a tragedy. He was without doubt a great teacher, and beyond that a great man. But what impressed me was the level of fraternity and solidarity our ISA community displayed in his passing, and the support that those affected by the death have received. Let us honor Mr. Charters by celebrating the gift of life we all share, and may he rest in peace.

The news, however, isn’t all doom and gloom, and with the year coming to a close, it’s easy to forget everything that’s happened in the past few weeks. Student council elections came around, and you elected three candidates (Ryan Collins, Blanca Carmont-Zaragoza, and myself) to head ISA’s student body for the next year. Tom de Wolf has more on that, including an in-depth interview. Also, students in grades nine, ten and eleven recently completed their respective award scheme treks, and our journalists were there. Finally, Bertolt Brecht’s acclaimed play Caucasian Chalk Circle came to ISA, with its middle school cast and crew working for months to put on a wonderful show. Trinabh Banerjee was there, and gives his views in this issue.

Whatever you’re doing, have a great last few days and enjoy your summer break,
Your Editor-in-Chief,
Ari Economon

Who We Are...

VOICE is the International School of Amsterdam’s upper school student publication. We are grade 6-12 students who meet each week at lunch on Thursdays for publication planning and development – there is no journalism class that supports the project. We commit our time and energy to support our school, our community, and our own growth as thinkers and writers.

We welcome your letters. We welcome your article contributions. We welcome corrections that you wish to alert us to. Send all communications to Ms. Sabine Henrichsen-Schrembs (shenrichsen@isa.nl), the project faculty advisor, Editor-in-Chief Ari Economon (areconomon@isa.nl), or drop a note into the VOICE “suggestion/question” box outside room 189.

VOICE Team:

Want to improve your writing? Report on ISA issues and events? Get your name in the paper? If so, join VOICE! Meetings for 2015 are every Thursday at lunch, and we welcome any new applicants from grade 6-12. Remember, you can also send in specific articles to Ari Economon or Sabine Henrichsen-Schrembs.

VOICE is published on 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper, by MultiCopy of Amstelveen (www.multicopy.nl/Amsstelveen). We ask our community to join us in a “read and share” approach. Once you have read an issue of VOICE, if you do not wish to keep the edition, return it to the Voice display rack outside room 189 so others may read it. This is environmentally and fiscally responsible.

VOICE is available as a digital download (PDF) on upper school Final Site link.
Safe?- A Completely Necessary Rant.

It’s 7.23 P.M and I’m sitting on a bus. Normally, I would be listening to music, probably something by Sia, and staring out the window. It is after all, a beautiful warm day. Which, as we all know, is a rarity we must cherish here in the Netherlands. I’m not doing that right now. And as my bus travels home, I’m sitting here, typing away. I’m writing this now because I’m angry. Really angry. Steam out of my ears, red in the face, punch someone angry. I’m so angry that when I got on the bus, and the bus driver greeted me, I said “okay” and not “hello”.

I’m not that person. Ever. And I am not normally this angry. Normally I’m composed. Normally I’m the girl who sits in the front of the bus, and chats with the bus driver. If you asked my friends to describe me, they would not say I was the type to sit in the back, angrily typing away on her computer. Normally, I smile and politely walk away. Normally I look back three or four times to make sure they’re not following me. Normally I just walk a little faster, zip up my coat and hope that the bus will come quickly. Today I did not do that. Up until just now, today had been going pretty well. My classes were all bearable, the sun was out, and swim practice wasn’t completely exhausting. I had softball after school and singing lessons after that. It was a long day. After my singing lessons, I always walk out of the school and head to my bus stop, which is not on the Sportlaan. Instead, once I reach the roundabout, I turn left. I walk a longer path past the swimming pool, and wait at my bus stop.

I’m going to address you informally now and simply tell you exactly what happened: Some random dudes who I had never seen before slowed down their car, and followed me step by step from the roundabout by ISA to my bus stop. I’m not kidding. They called after me in Dutch; slowed down their car, and followed me step by step from the roundabout by ISA to my bus stop. I turn left. I walk a longer path past the swimming pool, and wait at my bus stop. Normally I look back three or four times to make sure they’re not following me. Normally I just walk a little faster, zip up my coat and hope that the bus will come quickly. Today I did not do that. Up until just now, today had been going pretty well. My classes were all bearable, the sun was out, and swim practice wasn’t completely exhausting. I had softball after school and singing lessons after that. It was a long day. After my singing lessons, I always walk out of the school and head to my bus stop, which is not on the Sportlaan. Instead, once I reach the roundabout, I turn left. I walk a longer path past the swimming pool, and wait at my bus stop.

What these grown, twenty-something year-old adult men called after me. That’s not the point of this article. Instead, I’m going to tell you that this happens to ISA girls a lot. This happens to all women much more than you might think. In a recent survey I conducted, for my 10th Grade happenings, which is also centered around the act of catcalling and general public-abuse women suffer, my group and I concluded that on average, girls in tenth grade (girls around the ages of fifteen to seventeen) are catalled or publicly harassed on the street about three and a half times a week. Three and a half times. Next, we went on to ask these same girls how old they were the first time they were harassed on the street. The youngest girl was nine years old. Nine. At nine years old, my little sister still believed in the tooth fairy. At nine years old I was in fourth grade. I traded Pokemon cards and poorly sang along to (clean) versions of Glee songs.

The average age that a girl at ISA in tenth grade was first catcalled at was twelve years old. There are around 52 weeks in a year. Fifty-two times three and a half is one hundred and eighty-two. This means that by the time a girl finishes eighth grade she has roughly been catalled three hundred and sixty four days of her life. When she graduates she will have been catalled around one thousand two hundred and seventy four days of her life. That’s around three and a half years of daily verbal abuse by the age of eighteen. My brother who is reading over my shoulder told me I should be a little “nicer” because I was at risk of sounding too outraged. I’ve made it home now and I’m sitting here writing this and half watching the Good Wife with my brother and my little sister. I’m no longer outraged that this happened today. After all, it was not the first time that this happened and it probably won’t be the last time. I’m just sad. I’m sad because next year my sister will be twelve years old. I’m sad for my friends who will (and have) called me asking me to talk to them and make sure they make it home or even meet up with them because they think someone is following them. And I know you’re sad too. No decent human being (I say this because I like to believe that the great majority of people I know are decent human beings) hopes that their little sister will be called after on the street, or that their friend twists their ankle while running home because she is afraid of the group of boys following her. I’ve realised that being angry won’t stop these men. Perhaps I even knew that before writing this article. So instead of being angry, I’m sitting here, writing this, and asking you for help. That’s all I can do, and frankly, at the moment, I can’t think of anything else that would be more effective than asking for your help. Inevitably, some time in the future, you will walk into a situation in which a woman you know, or a stranger, will be harassed on the street. If you see something, and you feel safe doing so, I want you to say something. Please. For your sister, for your mother, for your friend or for your girlfriend, say something. In fact, don’t just say something for them. Say something because they’re people. Human beings, who deserve respect. Say something to the person calling after her. Or you could say something to her. Remind her that not all men think that her only value is her legs. Remind her that the great majority of us are human beings, too.

And I firmly believe that together, we can change the world.

If you are interested in changing the treatment of women in our community, and all communities, please consider joining the new club “Like a Girl”. The club aims to help people at ISA come up with strategies for combating sexism while also raising money for girls education and women’s rights in developing countries.

Contact Evie Portier for more information at: eportier@isa.nl

By Evie Portier
The New Team

After an interesting series of speeches and after a campaign that certainly saw some of the most inventive posters, our new council is elected. Many people may be wondering how the newly elected president must be feeling, what he hopes to do in his first days in office, and if he can keep those all important promises. I decided to interview the new president of the student council, Ari Economon. Here is a transcript of the interview I held with him.

How do you feel about becoming president?:
Ari: I feel very excited and of course very happy, I am very glad that everything worked out the way I hoped it would.

How successful was your campaign in your opinion?:
Ari: Well it won me the election, so I would say that was very successful. In my opinion it was much better than most of the other campaigns.

Do you think you will work well with the team that has been elected?:
Ari: I know Ryan well, we have been on the basketball team together, I do not know Blanca too well, but I we already have been to one meeting and we seem to work well together.

Can you keep the promises that you made during your election speech?:
Ari: I have spoken with Mr Sanders and we seem to agree on many terms. I hope that our good cooperation will continue.

With a confident president, it seems that ISA’s council will have a bright future ahead. Now that the elections and exams are over, many people will be focusing on the upcoming summer break, but as for the President, Vice President and Secretary, a new year has already begun.

By Tom de Wolf

MIT Dean Visits ISA

A few weeks back, ISA received an exclusive visit from the dean of admissions at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Stuart Schill. Volunteering as part of a US government program to allow top educators to visit high school students abroad, he came to our school to discuss how US admissions work with a number of 11th grade students and parents throughout the day. As a dean at a first-rate institution, it was an excellent opportunity for juniors to get an inside glance into the application process.

I sat down with Mr. Schmill to talk through a new initiative he endorsed concerning the revamping of US college admissions. He told me “we don’t want students agonizing so much over the application process” and that “doing tons of activities and taking unengaging classes for the sake of applications does both students and universities a disservice”. Asked about the IB, he noted “I like the program better than the AP...it really allows students to focus on what they’re passionate about”. He concluded by saying “you have to work hard to get into schools like MIT, but what we really want to see is students making a lasting impact on their peers, their school and their local community.”

By Ari Economon
The 9th Grade in:
Bronze Award Scheme

2 days and 3 nights. It may not seem like much of a challenge, but when you have 65 litre backpacks on your back for nearly 6 hours, and those backpacks are full with tents and at least a litre of water, it is quite a different endeavor. This for nearly everyone who went on the ninth grade bronze award this year would be the start of three years that would slowly progress to getting the highly coveted gold award.

Like many trips before it, the bronze award scheme began with a 3 hour bus ride to Houffalize, a beautiful picturesque town in the Ardennes, a region well known for its hilly landscape and long rambling farms. On arrival at the main campsite in Houffalize, we began to split into smaller groups that would head off to the other 3 campsites. There would be around two groups heading to each of the four campsites. The first night is always in anticipation of walking the next day. Our group was starting at a campsite that had not been used before and that was not marked on the main map that we were given. The replacement map that we were given would be the downfall of several people’s groups. The first day started off very cold, as it did at all of the campsites. The weather did get better and better as the 3 days went on. All of the groups had left their campsites around nine to ten o’clock. Our Group walked along a path that we had planned as a scenic route and that would help us avoid the roads, however, we soon fell foul to 2 problems, firstly the route that we had planned to take was non existent, it had been removed due to the logging industry and secondly, the fact that our compass appeared to be a little faulty. But what is an award scheme without a few hiccups, nothing can ever be perfect, as many groups discovered. In the end, not a single group failed or was forced to pull out, this has apparently never happened before at this school, and this should be considered an achievement in itself.

By Tom de Wolf

My name is Prabhanjan Balakrishnan (PB), and as a Grade 11 student I just started a new CAS club called Gram Vikas. The club aims to support poor families in tribal areas of India and has already raised money for children and families there as well as in The Gambia. Read on to find out more and learn how to join!

In March of 2015 at a Global Issues Network Conference (GIN), I met the chairman of GIN, Mr. Joe Madiath. I was inspired by his work at the event and I thought of contacting him to see if I might be able to visit the school (Adivasi Residential School) where his organization was doing work and to learn more. This is when I got an email from Mr. Madiath himself that said that he would be very happy for me to come visit his campus during one of my breaks. I was free during winter break, so I went.

During my visit, I saw the living conditions of students and teachers at the tribal residential school and the villages nearby. The school had some interesting facilities, but I felt that they could improve with a faster internet connection. The villages seemed to be developing quite well with the help of Gram Vikas. However, I wanted to focus on the educational issues at the school, inspiring myself with Nelson Mandela’s great words “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world”.

When I came back, I decided to start this club in order to raise money for a new high speed internet connection at the school. So far, our club has raised awareness of people around the ISA community, and it has been getting great responses. In fact, one music teacher was so intrigued by the work that we were doing that he decided to donate €100 to our cause. Now that’s what I call true passion for a cause.

Recently, we held a mini Basketball tournament from which we raised 24 Euros (obviously not a major success). But it’s a start to a new year. We will be having many more fundraisers throughout the next year. So be sure to join!

You can also be part of our club next year, when the CAS fair comes along. We will have a stall and a sign-up sheet.

Be sure to join next year in Gram Vikas 2016-2017!

By Prabhanjan Balakrishnan
Ankle Twisty Ow-Ow Mountain;
A True Story

I’ve been sitting here for the past hour deciding whether or not I want to tell you this story. I could write you a really nice fluff piece about the Silver Expedition, or I could tell you about my experience, the whole truth. Either way, it’s a great story, but for the sake of integrity, I’ve decided to tell you the truth.

Day One:
My flight was the second to leave from Schiphol International Airport, and before we left, we all took a group picture. It was early, and the majority of us had all showered and slept well. We hugged our parents and then slowly checked our bags in. From there, we went through customs, where two of the ISA boys were stopped, and taken into separate rooms for questioning. Both these boys had the same name, which led us to believe that Schiphol was searching for a felon with the same name. After waiting for a while, we headed down to the gate, where we received a sheepish text from one of the boys who had been taken into a room that he would “probably make the flight”. When one of the two boys showed up, he casually explained that they had thought he had forged his passport. After demanding to see it, we discovered that it indeed looked like he had stolen the document from a museum and subsequently glued a second grade class photo of himself to it. The incident sparked a major discussion about the ease at which we could all forge passports if his was acceptable at an international airport. The other boy was eventually also let through to board the plane, and then we were off to Scotland.

There, we met up with the other group and we excitedly threw our heavy backpacks into the bus. The bus ride was about two hours, and as some people blasted music from their playlists (which mostly consisted of Queen and the occasional Rickroll), others were playing blackjack in the hopes of winning a box of brownies.

We arrived in Aberdeen, to find that we had an hour to kill. The sun was shining, the expedition hadn’t started yet, and a bunch of us headed to the supermarket to eat our last real meal. Fast forward three hours, and my group and I hit our first obstacle, the sunshine. Comically enough, it was 27 degrees in Scotland, and we were all getting sunburned. Luckily I over-packed a little, and after taking a short break, I managed to dig the 20ml bottle of sunscreen out of my bag. Bring sunscreen. Always, because Scotland will surprise you, and you will be sorry. That day we walked about ten kilometres, and it was relatively easy-going. We camped by an absolutely beautiful lake, and joked about our inevitable doom until the sun went down. Then we crawled into our tents and did our best to sleep.

Day Two:
I woke up early. Early enough to realise it was beginning to rain, and that one of the girls in my group had accidentally left her shoe outside of the tent. I snatched the shoe, and put on my hiking clothes. It was cold, and I was bored, so I ran down the road with the girls’ water bottles and filled them. In case you ever find yourself drinking from water you are unsure of, I highly recommend using the purifying drops your mother bought you, just to be safe.

When I returned to our tents, the boys were already awake and starting to make breakfast. I ate a powerbar and pancakes. We laid out the map and did our best to imagine the route we were going to face. A little bit of forest, and then a lot of uphill. We talked about our planned camping place for that night, between two pools of water, at a place called the “Pools of Dee”. It was high up on a mountain. We fantasised about the views, and the soft grass next to the pools.

Our walk began at around nine, and I was happy as ever, mostly because it was not my day to carry the tent. We walked fast, and we were happy. The sun wasn’t exactly shining but it was not cold, and our playlist was solid. We arrived at our planned camping ground at eleven. The group had walked sixteen kilometres in three hours. The Pools of Dee had been disappointing. The ground was rocky, and the wind was so...
strong we could lean against it. We kept walking up what we would later refer to as “Ankle Twisty Ow-Ow Mountain”. Every time we took a step, a rock would shift. We fell, a lot. We walked in a single file line to make sure the path was as predictable as possible. Walking became difficult, especially because we were all howling with laughter about a boy in our group, who insisted on creatively narrating the emotions of his feet the entire way down the mountain. We all fell over, crying of laughter.

We walked an extra eight kilometres that day, up and down mountains. It wasn’t all roses and sunshine though. We were all a little bitter about having to cross a river, and our feet were starting to blister. Everyone wanted to lie down. Nevertheless, we felt pretty cool, considering that we had walked 24 kilometres up and down a mountain before sundown. I wanted a steak.

Day Three:
There’s a reason why people live in houses, and I believe it’s because we all want to use the restroom indoors. When we woke up that morning, none of us felt a desire to use the shovels we had brought. Instead, we drank water from the river we had set up camp next to and ate power bars. We had no desire to leave early as we had walked a considerable amount of our intended trail for this day the day before. We packed up our camp while another group was having lunch next to us. We left the comforts of the grass and the river at 12.30, after two other groups passed us. It was warm and we had another mountain to climb. Conversation dwindled for a while, but it picked up when we saw what was ahead. About five kilometres of steep, uphill climbing awaited us. My feet were blistered. My ankles were twisted. We were all bruised, blistered, twisted and bleeding. We listened to music and whined about the walk up. What we didn’t know, was that the worst was yet to come. We climbed and walked uphill that entire day, across snow and boulders and rivers and lakes, day three punched us in the face. Hard. Despite all of this, it was worth it. The views were absolutely beautiful, and the euphoria of reaching the top of a steep mountain is indescribable. We reached our resting point for the night at 6 PM. I was tired. I was really tired. And I wanted a steak.

Days Four and Five: We walked downhill for most of the fourth day, and the fifth day was rather relaxed, but I’m not going to describe those days for you. Instead, I’m going to try and teach you the main lesson those days taught me.

Pay attention. Always. I want you to really remember this, because carelessness almost cost my group their Silver Award. Yes, I’m embarrassed to tell you this, but it’s a message important enough to share. Pay attention to your trash; always bring it with you, and always check that you have all of it. Pay attention to your group members. And most importantly, pay attention to the feelings you and your group members are having. An unhappy group is a careless one, and a careless group isn’t a group you want to climb a mountain with. It’s simple.

My group fought a lot towards the end of day four. We were unhappy, and we were ashamed of ourselves. A trip that started out as a Scottish fairytale quickly became an episode of Game of Thrones. We were bruised, broken down, and hungry. Luckily, the morning of day five was a cheerier one. We woke up on soft grass, and we were all excited to go home and see our families again. We talked things out, and although it wasn’t a perfect way to end our trip, for us, it was a happy ending, and I for one, was really craving a steak, which I did, eventually, get on the night of day five. (Pictured to the left.)

I know everyone has heard stories about life-changing moments people have experienced while out in nature, but I never thought I would be one of those people. The experience taught me how to be truly independent, and the responsibilities that come with it. I am different now than I was before I left on the silver expedition, and it’s not just because of the steak (which, by the way, was glorious).

Sure, the silver practice in Luxembourg was hard, and the Bronze wasn’t a walk in the park, but the things I experienced during my Silver Final Expedition will always be with me.

By Evie Portier
Art Show Showcases DP Students’ Creation

Last month, 12th grade visual art students gathered together to show off their best pieces at the DP Art show. Organised by art teacher Rika Duevel, and featuring creations from 15 different students, the show was a big success, drawing dozens of fellow students, teachers and parents.

In order to pass diploma art, students must create 15 pieces of varying different styles, 12 of which are displayed at the show. This year, multiple types of art were on display, including sculpture, painting, image and installation. Each student had a particular area in which they could display their individual creations, with some choosing to simply hang their work on the wall and others creating innovative artistic installations through which guests could walk. The artists also each had a guestbook, where visitors could leave a comment, as well as personalised business cards.

Visitors who were interviewed were overwhelmingly positive about the show. One was pleasantly surprised at “how much art each kid makes in two years”, while another said she was “impressed”. The student artists reported being relieved that their two gruelling years of DP work were almost at an end, liking the experience to a goodbye from their school. They were satisfied with the show and the attendance from fellow students.

In the end, this year’s DP art show was a success, and will likely serve as a good standard for this yearly ISA tradition in the future. So remember to go support your fellow art students at next year’s show!

By Ari Economon
From the 11th till the 13th of May, talented individuals from ISA’s middle school got together to present the renowned playwright Bertolt Brecht’s play ‘The Caucasian Chalk Circle’.

The play is about a peasant girl (Grusha, played by 8th grader Lucy Lynch) who rescues a baby and becomes a better mother than the baby’s wealthy parents. Set in Georgia, during a period of civil unrest, the play follows Grusha as she must convince the town’s people and the audience that she is the true mother.

Students from grade 6, 7 and 8 got together in November and auditions and casting began. The best students were selected, and practiced rigorously from December to May. This training showed on the stage. For 3 days, the cast gave it their all. The play was superb and amazing to watch, despite some inaudibility issues. Nothing is perfect, and it did not take away from the play. The story was clear, and acted out quite well.

The Middle School Production was once again directed by Mr. Ken Baldino. His superb directing naturally helped the play achieve what it could. The big adaptable set, the many different costumes and effects benefited the play. I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Ken, and he answered some of my questions:

1. You directed the play last year. Is this year any different from last year?

   This year’s production (Brecht’s ‘The Caucasian Chalk Circle’) was quite different from last year’s (Shakespeare’s ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’). Here are two reasons why.

   A. ISA is a school, and the plays we produce are, first and foremost, educational opportunities for students. Last year, ISA students were exposed to Shakespeare. This year, they had the chance to work on a play by Bertolt Brecht, a hugely influential figure in theatre history. Brecht’s idea of theatre is quite unique, and I hope our production reflected his ideas. He thought that theatres should be closer to political lecture halls than places of entertainment, and he wanted to encourage audiences to think about issues rather than sympathize with characters. His theory of “epic theatre” asks the audience to acknowledge the stage as a stage, the actors as actors, and not some make-believe world of real people. To do Brecht properly, for example, we needed to demystify the theatrical experience, to strip the stage bare and make visible the technical elements, like lighting and set and costume changes.

   B. There were more moving parts this time: a large, changeable set, original music played on stage by a live band, numerous costume changes (nearly 70 different costumes were worn by the 17 actors), and an extensive lighting design.

2. As a director, what things do you have to manage and look out for?

   There are many things to manage as a director in what amounts to one calendar year of work. From the outset, it's my job to choose a play that will both enrich and challenge middle school students. Once I decided on the ‘Chalk Circle’, I built a concept for the production. The ‘Chalk Circle’ was originally written in German, so I spent part of the summer reading various translations and choosing one that made the most sense for ISA. I then adapted the script for ISA’s production. In September, I recruited a group of 7th Grade musicians (Noa Kremer, Zozi Lencz, and Daniel Parfenov) and began to work with them on composing original music for the production. By September, I had assembled a design team (Jeanine Vijgen - set, Varja Klosse - lighting, Clare Lenterman - costumes). Actors auditioned and were cast in November. Rehearsals happened from December to May. During the rehearsal period, I am managing people's schedules and personalities, emotional and physical safety, and a whole slew of logistics (see question 1B).

3. What was your favorite part of the play?

   That an ensemble of middle school actors met enormous challenges without faltering. They pushed the limits of what children can do on stage.

4. Were there any parts in the play that could have been fixed or improved?

   Not on the part of the students or the designers. They were fantastic. Personally, I find one of the challenges of directing to be accepting various limitations and compromising accordingly. With any production, there will always be ideas and images that do not make it to the stage. Maybe one of them might have added something to the story.

5. Any hints on next year’s play?

   No idea. I will not be directing next year’s production.

Overall, this play was a wonder to watch. Superb acting, great set design, and the use of a live band helped this play push what a group of middle school students can achieve. As this school year comes to an end, we can only wonder what other spectacles are in wait for next year.

By Trinabh Banjeree
Macklemore and Ryan Lewis 2016: This Unruly Mess I’ve Made

Some people may have heard about Macklemore and Ryan Lewis, two artists from Seattle, Washington, who compose Hip Hop music together since 2008. You might remember them from songs such as ‘Thrift Shop’, ‘Wings’, ‘Same Love’ and ‘Can’t Hold Us’. These four most awarded songs were part of their Grammy Award winning album titled *The Heist*, released in 2012.

You may have noticed that I’m writing in the past, since people today don’t follow their music and featuring in other songs, because they say “Macklemore is so 2013”, “Nobody cares anymore about him”. Well, in my and other people’s opinion, they are wrong. Macklemore and Ryan Lewis released a new album on February 29th this year, titled *This Unruly Mess I’ve Made*. What this album incorporates is events that happened in our society, together with experiences that the artist himself has had in the past. These songs transmit such a passion and message, to follow, that everyone should listen to these creations at least once in their lives.

As you may have heard Macklemore is currently doing a world tour to promote the release of *This Unruly Mess I’ve Made*. One of his stops was here in Amsterdam on April the 11th. I, together with some other friends, went to the concert and we personally enjoyed every single bit of it. The way he presented it, the way he caught us with his words before starting a song and the way he sang his most beautiful and significant songs (‘White Privilege II’, ‘St. Ides’, ‘Light Tunnels’, ‘Kevin’), made us understand how much he cared about these events that happened in the society in the past and present.

Obviously, besides singing significant songs, he also composed hardcore Hip Hop songs, to which everyone can go crazy to, such as ‘Downtown’ and ‘Brad Pitt’s Cousin’. Besides singing only songs from his new album, he also played his most awarded songs, such as Thrift Shop, And We Danced, and Can’t Hold Us. People were excited for it, since these are songs that will never get old and something to which no one cannot dance to.

Now, my intention here was to review the concert, but as you may have read, not much has been reviewed, because concerts like these have that special gift of already being notorious and well awarded by critics. Some people obviously can give negative reviews to it, but I personally have nothing to say to it. There was nothing that can be referred to as negative or unnecessary, everything was good, well done, catchy and fun.

Having said this, I hope that you, too, enjoy their songs and if not, that one day you’ll be able to go to one of their amazing concerts.

By Luca Santarelli
Dark Souls 3

On the long awaited 12th of April, the 4th chapter of the ‘Souls’ saga, known as ‘Dark Souls 3’, has been released and with punctual delay the Voice journal will be proud of introducing to you this wonderful game.

Those who already familiar with the ‘Souls’ saga will know that its story line is unlike that of any other game out there. First of all, the games don’t have a storyline, they have a lore, which is not simple and flat as a story-line would be, but is comprised of the whole history and mythology of the universe in which the games are set. However, the lore is not explained explicitly but hidden in dialogues, descriptions of objects and appearance of the game. One of the reasons why these games are considered to be extremely difficult is because the game doesn’t shout what to do, but whispers it to the player, making advancement possible to only the most observing and “wise” user. It requires some actual thinking instead of shooting anything that pops up on the screen, and for this reason many people are discouraged to be playing it.

Without any major spoilers, the lore of this title is the following. The infinite cycles of rekindling, leading to the creation of new worlds until the flame would die out is, have come to an end. All the past worlds are converging into the world of Lothric. The Lords of Cinder are those who once were mighty enough to link the flame and survive the massive burst of flame, and the duty of the player is to bring them to their old thrones.

In terms of gameplay, this new title has made huge progress from Dark Souls 2. The fighting style has become much faster, becoming very similar to the Bloodborne’s (another game from the same producers), except for the use of a shield. Several other things have also been improved from its predecessor; such as the graphics, move sets and boss fights. Many new features have been introduced, such as the MP (magic points) bar to limit the use of spells, miracles and piromancies, the “weapon arts” to use a special effect of a certain weapon for a limited time, and “humanities” to turn into human form has been replaced by “embers” to enter lord of cinder mode.

In conclusion, this is a great RPG game, and I recommend it to anyone who likes the genre. However, to fully enjoy the lore, it is advised to first catch up with its two predecessors by either watching gameplays or (even better) have a chance to play them yourself. This way you will be able to brag about your knowledge on the lore with your friends (girls love it).

PS: Praise the sun \[T]\/

By Gabriele Cepparulo

Batman v Superman: Dawn of Disappointment

One of the highest anticipated films of 2016 was Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice. For the first time ever we got to see Superman clash with Batman. And how was the movie you may ask? Well....It was pretty bad. The film was just trying to set up a franchise and forgets to tell its own story. The conflict between Batman and Superman was hard to buy since it did not make much sense. The marketing movie also ruined the film with way too revealing trailers which lead to the film having nothing new to offer since we saw it all on Youtube. The internet also did not like this film either with fans bashing it and it has a 27% percent on Rotten Tomatoes. After walking out of the cinema I felt a certain fatigue which turned out to be a superhero fatigue. Over the past few years we have been riddled with superhero movies and some have been unique and original but other ones have been similar and they showed us nothing new. For me Batman v Superman was a tipping point. Captain America: Civil War has come out now and I am happy to say that it is a significant improvement to Batman v Superman. It actually has a surprisingly similar story to the latter but it takes what’s bad about it and makes it good. I didn’t feel a Superhero fatigue after walking out of Civil War. This movie is refreshing to see since it is something we have not seen before. X-Men Apocalypse is coming out and may already be out by the time this issue is published but early reviews tell us that the film is not anything new and we should get ready to see another film which will make us feel even more tired of superhero movies than before.

By Moses Ochs
Alice Through the Looking Glass (June 1st)
After slipping through a mirror, Alice (Mia Wasikowska) finds herself back in Wonderland with the White Queen (Anne Hathaway), the Cheshire Cat, the White Rabbit, Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows (June 16th)
The Turtles return to save the city from a dangerous threat.

Me Before You (June 16th)
A girl in a small town forms an unlikely bond with a recently paralysed man she’s taking care of.

The Conjuring 2 (June 9th)
Lorraine and Ed Warren travel to north London to help a single mother raising four children alone in a house plagued by malicious spirits.

Now You See Me 2 (July 31st)
The Four Horsemen resurface and are forcibly recruited by a tech genius to pull off their most impossible heist yet.

Warcraft (May 25th)
The peaceful realm of Azeroth stands on the brink of war as its civilisation faces a fearsome group of invaders: orc warriors fleeing their dying home to colonise another. As a portal opens to connect the two worlds, one army faces destruction and the other faces extinction. From opposing sides, two heroes are set on a collision course that will decide the fate of their family, their people, and their home.

Monthly Movie Trivia:
Kevin Spacey was cast in Se7en two days before filming began.
Josh Hutcherson read the entire ‘Hunger Games’ trilogy in five days to prepare for his role as Peeta.
In total, Daniel Radcliffe went through 160 pairs of prop glasses by the end of the Harry Potter series.
Pierce Brosnan was contractually forbidden from wearing a full tuxedo in any non-James Bond movie from 1995-2002.
Christopher Nolan has never had a movie rated as “rotten” on Rotten Tomatoes and his lowest rated movie is The Prestige at 76 percent.

By Moses Ochs