

# Masters of their Art

**From Russia: French and Russian Master Paintings 1870–1925 from Moscow and St Petersburg explores the interaction of Russian and French Art from 1870–1925**

This was a period that witnessed profound social upheaval and political revolution. The exhibition presents works of art by Russian and French artists active during this time, who are now considered to be among the great pioneers of modern art.

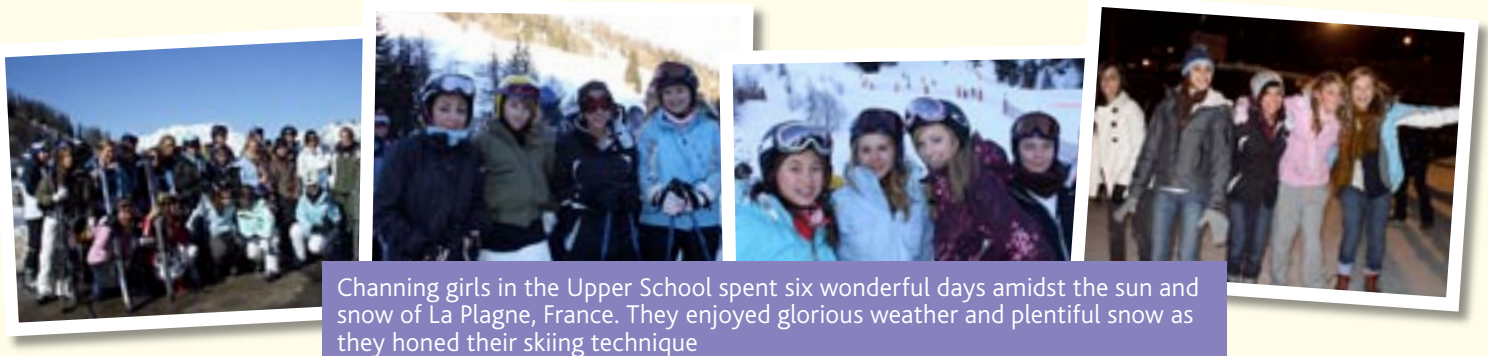
The exhibition, at the Royal Academy in

central London, displays masterpieces from the two great Russian collections, those of Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morozov. These two textile merchants began scouring Paris for Impressionist and post-Impressionist paintings and accumulated works by Monet, Renoir, Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse and Picasso.

We pushed our way through the crowds queuing for tickets and realised that this was a very popular exhibition. The girls coped

well and took an overall view of the show first, before focusing on individual works. Many of them were to be found sitting on the floor sketching and making notes on their favourite paintings. At the end, we all had time to buy postcards in the shop before heading off to Piccadilly to find our coach back to school. We all agreed that this was a very enjoyable and enlightening trip.

**Laura Kasim Year 10**



Channing girls in the Upper School spent six wonderful days amidst the sun and snow of La Plagne, France. They enjoyed glorious weather and plentiful snow as they honed their skiing technique

## The tragic lessons of drugs

**At the beginning of this term, Elizabeth Burton-Phillips visited Channing and spoke to the Senior School about her family's despair owing to her identical twin sons' addiction to heroin. Mrs Burton-Phillips has spent the time since her son Nick's death writing articles and talking to schools about the dangers of drugs.**

Aided by a moving slideshow, Mrs Burton-Phillips briefly took us through the childhood of her twin sons, Nick and Simon. From being pageboys at a friend's wedding to students studying for their GCSEs at a well-known independent school, things seemed perfectly ordinary. However, that soon changed. She admitted to us how naive and ignorant her family had been about drugs. Even as a PSHE teacher, she didn't emphasise enough their dangers to her students. At the age of 13, Nick and Simon started smoking cigarettes in the park or on the way to school, which was mainly due to peer pressure. However, she was unaware of this at the time, and was ignorant as to how easily available drugs were. Between the ages of 13-14, they started to smoke cannabis, using 'bongs' and shared bottles of

cider between them and their friends. When they reached 15-16, their drug use gradually progressed from ecstasy to cocaine. We then watched a video of Simon explaining how he got introduced to heroin. When he was 18, he used to go out with friends to the pub, have a few drinks and then smoke spliffs of weed with friends. However, when a new person entered his group of friends, no matter how friendly he seemed, he naively trusted him. Little did he know this would be the person who would deliberately lead him and his brother into addiction. He also talked about five of his friends, who are all still heroin addicts 10 years later. 'All this stems from saying, yes.' Mrs Burton-Phillips described the emotions she felt, such as misplaced guilt, fear and embarrassment. She also described her sons becoming 'unrecognisable', both in appearance and personality, and talked of the regular vicious confrontations she had to bear. Nick and Simon felt so isolated and helpless, they eventually became homeless. Even their mother drove around town into derelict places, to make sure they had something to eat. However, Mrs Burton-Phillips soon realised she had to cut off Nick and Simon if they were going to recover. Unfortunately, in

February 2004 she received a knock on the door at 3am. She was told the devastating news by two police officers that her son Nick had died. Since then she has set up the 'Nick Mills Foundation' and released a book in May 2007 called, *Mum, Could You Lend Me 20 Quid?*. She decided to write this book because she feels it is important to educate parents on the dangers of being ignorant about drugs, and that complacency is not an option.

So far she has received 4000 emails from mothers who live in fear of the 'knock on the door'. Later, she showed us all she had left in memory of Nick: a box filled with syringes, spoons and pre-injection swabs. Fortunately, the death of Nick woke up Simon to the danger he was in, and now he has not used drugs in the four years since Nick's death. At the end of the talk, I went up to her to ask a few questions, as I wanted to know Marie's opinion (Nick and Simon's older sister) of her brothers' drug use. Mrs Burton-Phillips said: "Marie was so furious at what her brothers were doing, the anger she felt led to her becoming cut off from them altogether. Today, there isn't much of a loving sister and brother relationship between her and Simon."

**Laura Stratford, Year 11**

# The Channing Times

The termly newsletter for Channing

Spring 2008

## Founders' Hall Opening

**Channing was the scene of great celebration last night as the new Founders' Hall was formally declared open by Mrs Mary Burns, an Old Girl of the school and former Chair of Governors. Mrs Burns started the proceedings in Founders' Hall by recalling her school days at Channing and the fond memories of what was then the Old Hall. She recalled the girls and the teachers she had been at school with and the numerous plays performed in the Old Hall.**

Mrs Burns, assisted by her son Malcolm, now himself a Channing Governor, then unveiled a plaque outside Founders' Hall, which commemorated her many years' association with the school, first as a pupil from 1926 until 1993, and then as Chairman of Governors from 1969 until 1975. Mrs Burns remained as a governor until 1985.

Guests, including former headmistresses Mrs Tatiana Macaire, Mrs Isabel Raphael and Mrs Elizabeth Radice, joined current

headmistress Mrs Barbara Elliott inside Founders' Hall to enjoy a wonderful array of drama, dancing and music, performed by girls throughout the Senior School. Mr Howard Rees, Assistant Director of Music, conducted a moving and evocative fanfare that he had composed for the occasion, while sixth formers Sarah Payne-Baader and Siobhan Banful worked magic with their innovative dance routine with the help of girls in Year 7. It was delightful to see so many guests, including many former pupils and staff, pack the Hall and send it into its next stage - that of a site for performing arts, complete with sprung floor and state-of-the-art lighting. Thanks in particular to Nicole Thorn, Channing Development Secretary, for her help in organising such a memorable evening.



Four Channing headmistresses outside Founders' Hall. From left to right: Mrs Radice, Mrs Elliott, Mrs Raphael and Mrs Macaire



Mrs Mary Burns officially opens Founders' Hall



Mrs Mary Burns talks to Channing Development Secretary Nicole Thorn

## On the House

**The time has come for Channing Senior School to brave a change of scenery. The Senior School's recent decision, based on the vote held last term, to divide the girls up into Houses – Goodwin, Sharpe, Spears and Waterlow - has been enthusiastically received. The Head Girls, Isabel Richards and Danielle Segal, took this idea to the School Council and received unanimous support.**

As all the economists of the school well know, competition, in theory, increases efficiency. It is hoped, playful rivalry between the Houses will improve achievement in all areas: sporting, academic and the arts. The Houses will also help encourage friendship and support across the year groups.

But first, let us go back to the origins of the House names – for how can a pupil support her House if she does not know its history? The Sharpe sisters, Matilda and Emily, founded Channing in 1884. Both were

passionate about education for women and the liberation that comes with the choices that learning brings. They ran the school until their deaths in 1914 and 1916, respectively. The Channing motto, *conabor*, was devised by Matilda Sharpe and is Latin for: "I will try". Perseverance is key to success, something that, although of course is not lacking at present, will hopefully transpose to new and exciting heights as a result of the installation of Houses in the Senior School. The Unitarian Reverend, Robert Spears, after whom Spears House is named, also had a hand in the founding of the School. He, like the sisters, was also concerned with the issues of women's rights and on 6 April 1868 he made his chapel the home for the first public meeting at which women's right to vote was discussed.

Waterlow House is named after the philanthropist, Sir Sydney Waterlow. In the late 19th century, Waterlow left the

infamously dank streets of the East End in search for pastures new and came to rest in the green, sunny climes of Highgate. Waterlow and his family then occupied Fairseat, now a home to the Channing Juniors. Waterlow achieved a great many admirable feats in his life, including giving us Waterlow by providing the grounds that surround Fairseat as a "garden for the gardenless": a gift to the London County Council. The Goodwins arrived at Fairseat House in 1911. The house was used as a partial operating theatre with Nurse Goodwin in the wings.

History recalls the generous, venerable deeds of these esteemed women and men, to whom Channing owes so much, and after whom the Channing Houses have been named. In this history there is a legacy that holds much to be admired, by Channing Girls and all members of our community.

**Rose Saltiel, Year 12**

# The heroes of war

**Amid the horrors of war and the deaths of soldiers and civilians, it is often forgotten that animals have also died in their millions. From the battlefields of the Crimea in the 1850s to the killing fields of the Somme in 1916, horses in particular have played a crucial role in the fighting, as cavalry, pulling guns and ambulances. Ironically, most of the Allies' surviving horses were sold off to French butchers at the end of World War One.**

With this mind, children's author Michael Morpurgo wrote *War Horse*. In 1975, Morpurgo moved to Devon with his wife to set up Farms for City Children, a charity that allows urban children to spend a week living and working on a farm. One such child was a boy of 7 who rarely spoke, such was the severity of his stammer. One day, Morpurgo heard the boy talking quite freely – to a horse, which seemed to be listening very intently.

Fast forward to 2008, and the National Theatre has now dramatised *War Horse*, and girls in Year 8 and Year 9 went to see it. The story starts just before 1914, where we saw a young foal, Joey, being auctioned in a town

square. As Joey falls into the ownership of the parents of Albert, the young boy starts to care for him and they become firm friends.

When war was declared and Joey was sold into the army, Albert was distressed but took heart at the thought of a friendly officer looking after the horse. However, Albert discovered that the officer had died in battle and he decided to look for Joey. He soon found him, but the two then became embroiled in the thick of battle, taking in the horrors of trench warfare, constant bombardment and enemy attacks. Although Albert and Joey survived the war, many in the audience were moved to tears by the death of both men and beasts around them.

Centre stage were several life-size horse puppets, each operated by three humans. However, the story is so engrossing that you soon forget about the humans; it really does seem as though horses were on stage. There was a huge cast, a highly effective stage set that served as the countryside of Devon and the battlefields of Flanders, and songs written specially for the production by John Tamm.

**Calyx Palmer, Year 9**

## Spanish Trip

Girls in Years 10 and 11 spent a few days in the February half-term enjoying the sun and cultural delights of Andujar in Southern Spain. The girls stayed with Spanish families as part of an exchange between Channing and a local mixed school in Andujar. The Spanish students have already spent a week with their host families in London.



# Waste not, want not



'I'm sure my contact lens was in here.'  
Sorting out waste at Channing

**Channing is a small school by any standard, but when English teacher Mr Herring launched the Environment Society at the beginning of the Autumn term, he started wondering if he could do anything to reduce the huge amount of food and other waste that students and staff throw away on a daily basis.**

With the help of the girls in the Environmental Society, Mr Herring launched Action on Waste week. The Society first set out to alert everyone to the dangers of global warming and the harmful effect of landfill sites on the environment. The group then spent one rather unpleasant lunchtime weighing all the waste produced in one day by the school, including food, paper and other materials.

The results of the weigh-in produced some interesting results that gave everyone a lot to think about. In one day, the total weight of waste material produced by the school was 160.7kg. The total percentage of waste recycled each day, usually via the green recycling boxes in each teaching room, was 10.39%. Another shocking statistic for pupils and teachers alike was that 15.4% of white paper thrown away was not used on both sides.

We also discovered that, of the waste

produced, 88% came from food waste and outdoor bins. Kitchen and outdoor waste weighed in at a hefty 142kg.

We then set about producing a recycling target that was achievable, and we eventually settled on 30%. Girls and staff must now separate their scraps into two different bins – black for non-food stuff and green for food stuff. We are also encouraging everyone to take only what they want from the food queues and to think carefully about using paper more sparingly.

**Kitty Underhill, Year 10**

# Going potty in the British Museum

**Last month, we visited the British Museum and saw at first hand the beautifully decorated vases and outstanding sculptures that we have been studying in class.**

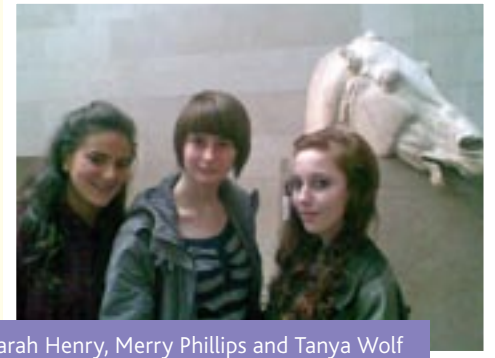
We were particularly impressed by the works of the black-figure artist Exekias. We especially liked his black figure depiction of Achilles killing an Amazon warrior, Penthesilaea, on a neck amphora. As Achilles' spear pierced her throat, he fell in love with her. Alas! It was too late, as he had just slain her. The composition of these two figures is remarkable and the contrast shown between the extremes of violence and love clearly

defined through this scene.

We also saw the magnificent Parthenon sculptures, also known as the Elgin Marbles, spectacular pieces of sculpture that illustrate a number of scenes that glorify Athens, its people and its patron goddess, Athena. These included the procession that took place at the Great Panathenaia (Athena's birthday), the battle between the centaurs and the Lapiths and the contest between Poseidon and Athena for the right to be patron of Athens.

Our picture shows us standing in front of the famous horse head of Selene from the east pediment of the Parthenon.

**By Sarah Henry and Merry Phillips, Year 12**



Sarah Henry, Merry Phillips and Tanya Wolf

# St Albans unveils its history

**The Hertfordshire city of St Albans is steeped in history. First appearing as Verlamium, a Celtic Iron Age settlement, it was then occupied by the Romans in AD 43 and, as Verulamium, became one of the largest towns in Roman Britain. It was destroyed during the revolt of Boudica in AD 60-61, only to grow in importance under the Abbot Ulsinus 900. He established a market, encouraged settlers and built three churches - St. Michael's, St. Peter's and St. Stephen's - on the approaches to the town.**

Then, in 1381, St Albans played a major part in the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, which is what Year 7 has been studying in History, so we visited the city for a few hours to find out more.

There had been growing conflict with the Abbot over milling rights and a surge of popular feeling that the townspeople should have more control of their affairs. Fifteen of those taking part were tried at the Moot Hall, the site of the present-day Town Hall. The Abbey Gateway and Clock Tower symbolise the conflict between monastery and town. The Abbey was surrounded by walls, to keep livestock safe and townspeople out, revealing the church's need for security from the town outside. The Clock Tower, built between 1403 and 1412, was built by the townspeople as a symbol of their independence from the church. This tension between the church and town was not resolved until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1529.

Our day was spent with one group undertaking a walking tour of St Albans, where our guide from the city's museum entertained us with tales of battles fought between King Henry IV and Richard, Duke of York, during the War of the Roses. It was hard to visualise arrows flying near what's now a branch of Monsoon, but when we explored the magnificent Clock Tower, we got a real sense of how people lived and worked in the Middle Ages, literally above the shop. We climbed the increasingly

narrow steps to the top of the Tower, where we had a fantastic view of St Albans and its surrounding countryside. Luckily, it wasn't too windy and the view was clear.

We then all met up to have sandwiches in the gardens of the Museum. In the afternoon, our group looked at medieval artefacts and tried to guess their uses. All the artefacts had been found in gardens and areas around St Albans, and it was interesting to learn how innovative medieval people were.

**Olivia Kent, Year 7**

Olivia Kent examines a medieval artefact

