



BRAMPTON COLLEGE

# Newsletter

Spring 2013

Edited by Mike Wheeldon

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## Brampton tops A level tables for 12th year running

For the twelfth year in succession, Brampton has come top of the DfE A level league table for London Sixth Form Colleges. In the table, colleges are ranked according to their average A level points score, in which an A = 270, B = 240, C = 210, etc. Brampton came a long way ahead of its competitors with a score of 251.5 points per A level entry.

Name of College	Average point score per A level entry
Brampton College	251.5
Ashbourne	239.1
David Game	237.4
Ealing Independent College	234.1
Fine Arts College	231.9
DLD	229.4
MPW	227.0
Duff Miller	226.1
Chelsea Independent College	225.5
Abbey College	224.4
Collingham	220.8
Lansdowne	214.9
England Average	214.8
Regent College	202.0
Wentworth Tutorial	196.8
Acorn Independent College	181.9
Bales	157.1
Average	225.6

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Tel. 020 8203 5025

email: [enqs@bramptoncollege.com](mailto:enqs@bramptoncollege.com)



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# Brampton students celebrate latest A level triumph

Stunning A level exam results in summer 2012 underlined once again Brampton's position as the pre-eminent sixth form college in London.

Students coming to the College from a wide range of educational backgrounds scored a remarkably high proportion of top grades across all subject areas. 56% of all entries gained A\*-A grades, and 86% gained grades from A\*-B. Over half our students scored at least AAB grades, and 70% at least ABB, with 38 students achieving AAA grades. These outstanding results meant that the vast majority of our students were able to go on to their first choice university. There were some magnificent individual performances, most notably Benji Rosen's A\*A\*A\*A in Biology,

Mathematics, Chemistry and German, after a one year course, which secured a place to read Medicine at University College London, and Qianxu Jiang's A\*A\*A\*A\* in Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics and Economics. Qianxu has obtained a place to read Mathematics at Imperial College, London. Katie Philips's top grades in Geography and Religious Studies won her a place to read Geography at Cambridge University, while top grades also led to places for Dentistry for Elham Kordrostami at Liverpool and for Medicine for Abi Pomeranc (at Queen Mary), Tara Kumar (at Liverpool) and Joshua Murray (at Peninsula).

Many congratulations to them all!

Bernard Canetti, Principal

## New York, New York

Brampton Art and Photography students enjoyed a fantastic trip to New York over the autumn half term to see some of the finest art collections in the world, including the great art of previous centuries in the vast Metropolitan Museum, the classics of modernism at MOMA, and a superb collection of Picasso drawings at the Guggenheim. Some of the most exciting work was to be seen in the many small commercial galleries in the Chelsea district. It was truly a feast of art, and hugely stimulating for the students' own work. "For me", said Amber, an A2 Art student, "the New York trip was an amazing experience because I got to see James Rosenquist's work in real life, one of the artists that I have been studying this

term. This allowed me to fully understand Rosenquist's technique and broaden my understanding of the themes and ideas behind his work. I also really enjoyed the Top of the Rock experience, as we went up in the early evening which allowed us to see nearly all the buildings in Manhattan just as they were lighting up, enabling us to capture some amazing photographs." Apart from the galleries, the very experience of walking around such an iconic city (the students got a lot of exercise!) with its magnificent skyscrapers and film-set images on every corner, was an education in itself.



The Rockefeller Centre  
(photo: Evelina Kremsdorf)



## Student story

*Rebecca came to Brampton from a local state school to try to gain the best possible grades after a disappointing AS year. After a year of hard work, she left with grades of A\*AA, and now has offers to read Maths and Philosophy at Bristol and King's College, London.*

I started Brampton College after a difficult year in my previous school. I intended to retake all of my AS and do my A2s in one year, which I knew would be a very difficult and demanding task.

I honestly don't think I would have been able to succeed without the assistance and guidance of inspirational teaching and encouragement. Weekly tests and regular homework kept me disciplined and feeling prepared for when it was time to take the real exams. Small classes and one to one tutorials gave the individual attention that I needed. Brampton didn't just help me get my grades but equipped me with newfound motivation, and skills such as time management, and I was able to regain my passion for maths and literature. Even though my timetable was demanding, there was still a friendly and relaxing environment with plenty of freedom. It helped me to gain the confidence to reach my potential and also gave me the ability to take a gap year studying in a Jewish seminary before reading maths and philosophy at university.

Rebecca Freund

## Biomedical engineering – an exciting new field for Brampton students

Dr Steve Niederer, lecturer on Biomedical Engineering at Kings College London came to speak to Brampton students about the research he undertakes. Hari Patel reports.

'The talk given by Dr Steven Niederer gave me a real insight into Biomedical Engineering. I enjoyed the fact that the practice of medicine has been revolutionised by the greatly increasing role of Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology and Engineering. This talk has given me a perspective of how the combination of all the life sciences has affected the role of doctors, and the way medicinal technology has progressed. The development of inorganic organs, for example saves countless lives, as they replace failing organs. Biomedical engineering also focuses on

the development of exceptional computer programming and 3-dimensional scanning. I love a subject that not only focuses on the development of human healthcare but also concentrates on the further development of computer and engineering technology. This is a field that was born to help the health and technological side of life and I thoroughly enjoyed the lecture.'

Biology students followed up Steve's talk later in the year with a visit to the National Institute for Medical Research, and there will be a report on this in our summer newsletter.

## Royal Academy teachers extend art students' imagination

This mind-expanding day started off with the tutors telling us to draw things which are hard to capture in charcoal: onomatopoeic effects such as a loud bang, or a bright light. This activity involved lots of quick drawings, creating a large abstract piece.

AS the day progressed, we were asked to sketch a model in a very short amount of time, in numerous poses. We were then asked to experiment with colour. The idea behind this was to break the habit of drawing outlines, and instead to draw within the figure, "not limit it with lines". Having done many quick sketches, we were asked to spend more time on the final drawing, which was to be the model in two poses. We were asked to implement some of the techniques use throughout the day, but it was not compulsory. Throughout the day, we reviewed our own and each other's work. I took many ideas from others people work and used them in mine. It was clear throughout the day that the more successful pieces were those that were evolving from the techniques taught throughout the day. For my final drawing I tried to use as many of the ideas that I got from earlier in the day to create a successful piece.

I found the day very interesting and thought provoking. Most of the techniques used on the day can be applied to other areas of art and not just life drawing. I intend to use the techniques learnt in the future. I thoroughly enjoyed experimenting with another way of working completely and broadening my art knowledge.



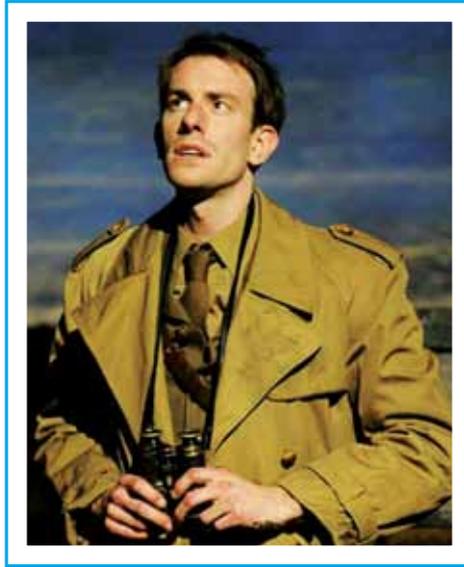
Anali and Tara getting stuck in...

Ben Nesbitt, AS Art student

# The Theatre of War

Brampton students saw some of London's best theatre during the Autumn Term. Top of the bill was Nick Dear's wonderful play at the Almeida in Islington, *The Dark Earth and the Light Sky*, about the life of the early 20th century poet Edward Thomas, who died at the Battle of Arras in 1917, and whose work we are studying this year.

Son of a classical Victorian self-made man who failed to disguise his exasperation with Thomas's literary inclinations, Thomas came late to poetry after years of commissioned work on lengthy books about the English countryside. His rhythmically precise, painfully honest poems are a key influence on later 20th century poets like Larkin and Hughes. Many of them circle around the subject of death, and one of the winning elements of this production was its contrasting lightness of touch, with humour, song, swift changes of time and scene, and imaginative use of the stage, while also exploring the sources of Thomas's pessimism and self-absorption. Students felt the play had brought the poems newly to life and helped to explain the man and his world behind them.



Pip Carter as Edward Thomas (photo: Nobby Clarke)

Elsewhere, theatre highlights included a modern adaptation of Euripides's *Medea* at the Richmond Theatre and a clever production of the same dramatist's *Trojan Women* at the Gate in Notting Hill, both a treat for Classics students. The *Medea* story was updated to the setting of contemporary middle class suburbia, where the heroine's trenchant intelligence and passionate sense of loyalty clash violently with the local culture of shallow individualism. Here, Jason has run off with the property developer/landlord's daughter, and Aegeus the childless king of Athens is an aging company rep with a holiday villa in Spain, while Jason is an Essex "executive" on the make. The brilliant doll's-house set conveyed the culture's superficiality and infantilisation - too flimsy a prison for this most forceful of tragic heroines, a role in which Rachael Stirling was very convincingly fascinating and dangerous. *Trojan Women*, which focuses on the plight of the Greek women waiting to be shipped off as slaves to the Greeks after defeat in the Trojan War, was set in a hospital ward, featured a single pregnant female as the Chorus, and video appearances from Tamsin Greig as Athene and Roger Lloyd Pack as Poseidon. There was some terrific acting from Dearblha Molloy as dethroned Queen Hecuba contemplating her comedown with believable distaste, and especially Louise Brearley as all three of Andromache, Cassandra and Helen.



## Talent Show

Brampton's annual Christmas Talent Show raised over £250.00 for charity and provided as always some surprising moments amid much impressive entertainment.

Hosted by the very funny and talented Dhrumi, who even sang a little song herself, the event featured an array of excellent acts. Tony Yang's guitar-playing showed that his talents don't just lie in academic work, while Darius's showmanship got the crowd clapping and swaying along. Sonam and Anshul both got over initial nerves to impress us with their lovely voices, and Michael's political rap - in Greek with lyrics in English projected on the white board - was thought-provoking as well as very skilful. Of all our vocalists, however, it was Anusha who surprised us most, with a really polished singing performance, while best of all, by common consent of our judges, (Joy, Jaimin, Rishi and Seun), was Temisan's incredible dancing, which you had to be there to believe. Well done and thanks to all participants.



Brampton Bonds and Bond girls

## Charity Fundraising

The Student Charity Committee has made a great start this year, organising three very successful events and raising over £800 during the Autumn Term.

The fundraising started in style in November with a James Bond themed dress up day. A group of our biggest supporters, both students and teachers, looked very glamorous in their black ties, dresses and even scuba diving outfits! Thank you very much for helping us raise more than £250. The Bake Sale was the next of our fundraising events; a day full of cakes, brownies and cupcakes of different shapes and sizes, in which students and staff were given the chance to show off their baking skills, helping us raise more than £200. Thanks to everyone who baked and of course to everyone who ate!



## Learning how to save a life

Twelve Brampton students took up the chance to learn first aid skills on a four hour intensive Lifesaver certificate course in late November.

The course was packed with fascinating and useful information, highly instructive video footage of first aid in action, including some alarming worst case scenarios. We went through lots of practice in the various techniques and came away having learned a great deal, from how to correctly respond to and deal with minor nose bleeds to broken bones, choking, burns and more serious incidences such as a person who has stopped breathing. Most important of all, we learnt which problem we have to prioritise. Everyone who took part found the course enjoyable, worthwhile and useful. We highly recommend it to other students.



The Secretary of State for Education

## A level reforms - Back to the future with Michael Gove

A levels are changing – again! Buccaneering education minister Michael Gove is taking us back to the future with changes to A level exams this year and again in September, 2015.

Under measures announced in the autumn, the winter A level exam session has now been abolished. And from September 2015, the current format of AS level as a stepping-stone qualification comprising half an A level will be scrapped. A levels will revert to being terminally examined qualifications that candidates take in their entirety in summer, but with the additional stringency that there is no possibility of a winter re-sit. After initial statements that AS levels would be set at the same level of difficulty as A levels, it now seems that the current standard for AS levels will be retained, but they will not count towards the A level as a whole as AS does presently.

Principal Bernard Canetti and Vice Principals Joy Mason and Mike Wheeldon met with local Hendon MP Matthew Offord in December to convey their serious reservations about the changes announced in autumn - changes that our current cohort of students will face. Bernard Canetti has also written to Michael Gove to express his concerns. We are convinced that they act against a school's ability to manage individual students' learning programmes in the most beneficial way, whether in helping students who for no fault

of their own (such as illness) were unable to take summer exams or to do as well as they could in them, or in accelerating the learning of some students by putting them in for exams earlier in the year. The rapidity with which the new rule on winter exams has been introduced is also unfair on the current cohort of students – moving the goalposts during the game - and goes against the longstanding convention of allowing two years before implementing changes in exam practice.

The latest announcements about A level compound these problems, taking us back to the unsatisfactory system of examination that put so many people off the qualification before 2000 and that was rightly rejected then as narrowly academic and elitist. Brampton prides itself on its ability to respond flexibly and sensitively to the educational needs of the individual, and is fortunate in having the staff and systems to carry on doing so, even in the light of this new rigidity from the Department for Education - but many larger schools will not be able to do so, and that is a step backwards for education in this country.

## Discovering London

Tim, Nadia and Kerry, Brampton's overseas student team, took time out on the weekend to introduce students to London. They based the day on the game of Monopoly and the students visited as many sites as possible in one day. Points were awarded for the most places visited and the students were required to take a photo with their mascot as evidence. The winning team received a tourist guide to London and some chocolates. A great day was had by all who attended.

“The Monopoly Run was a really fantastic experience”, said Tony and Alex. “It was a lot of fun and helped us to discover hidden parts of London. In addition, we had to use logic and planning. We were able to get to know the other overseas students and make new friends. We look forward to doing it again!”



Kerry and Nadia lead the Boris-biking in Regent's Park