



Established in 1936  
*The Doon School*  
**WEEKLY**



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**EDITORIAL**

**A Wistful Farewell**

*The warmth that follows winter is comforting, unlike the frigid November when I had promised to keep the goodbyes for later. How difficult it is to get the better of one's emotions, and more still, to write dispassionately. "What a height my spirit is contending! / 'Tis not content so soon to be alone." (John Keats, On Leaving Some Friends at an Early Hour) I think of the few fragmented farewells ahead – the remaining House Feasts, the Special Assembly and the more personal goodbyes – and am dismayed. Autograph books and white T-shirts will be circulated, inviting signatures. We will try to say, in five lines, what we want remembered of our five years together; this, I feel, is ridiculous. But none of these gestures can possibly do justice to their departure.*

*I, personally, feel indebted to the Batch of 2010. There was a time when we, the confident Scs, were ignorant and bashful D formers and they, our unfortunate guardians. We had imposed too much on their patience as they walked us to our classes, did changes-in-break because we were late for hockey practices, taught us the most basic rules and, on the whole, looked after us. I give them credit for having grown us up. They were, in their own ways, our guides and role models. They were there for us, starting from when they showed us the ropes in the beginning, all the way up to their last few days in School, when they still came by to watch and cheer at cricket matches and judge debates. In between their exams and the preparations for departure, they still try to teach us. We have grown up together in the same boarding houses, taking part in the same activities, competing with and against each other, revelling together on Holi and on birthdays, sharing the same jokes at the tuck shop and a number of other such gestures and sentiments that are entailed by our cohabitation. These gestures and moments are what comprise memories, and they show how much of a part of us they really are.*

*Strangely enough, this is a cycle. It will be our turn, inevitably, to take their place. We have been under their wing for so long. Their departure is only reminiscent of our responsibilities. We have a long year ahead which, like every other year, begins with departure, change and wistful nostalgia. Soon enough, we will find ourselves in their place, preparing ourselves for our last exam and packing our bags to leave. Six years are very short, and our memories of entering School are still fresh. Our entry and departure are marked by longing and tears. All we can really do is make the most of the interval in between. I believe the only fitting expression of our gratitude is the pride of being part of School, and the knowledge that they leave it in our hands, inexperienced, yet able.*

**Lyrical Excursion**

*Abhilaksh Lalwani reports on the recent trip to Delhi for the 46th Shankar-Shad Mushaira*



On March 5, 2010, I found myself in the company of Arjun and Uday Shriram, on way to Delhi for the 46th Shankar-Shad Mushaira, escorted by MHF and ASH. It was a fairly uneventful journey and there were, of course, continual stops at fast-food joints, and not-so-fast food joints. It was a sultry Friday afternoon in Delhi, very unlike our valley's weather. Uday and I put up at the Shrirams' residence, where I personally took no time making myself feel at home. MHF and ASH had accommodation elsewhere, and Arjun retreated to his house. Scruffy and depleted as we were, we decided to freshen up before entering the merry company. But, woe to us, the fifteen minutes we took to wash our faces were enough to miss the *mehfil*. But, being Doscocs, our disappointment was soon mitigated by the aroma of *kebabs*, and some of the most excellent dishes I have eaten in recent memory. Truly, a 'Wah!' is due to the cooks. The mushaira was the next night, and as the mushaira runs late into the night and requires uninterrupted attention, we decided to turn in early.

The following day, our hopes were high. Needless to say, I was pleasantly surprised to find poets of the eminence of Javed Akhtar present at the gathering. It was about eight o' clock when we checked into our seats (may I add, first-row, middle) at Modern School's Sir Shri Ram Hall. It was here that I was informed about the history of the Mushaira: it was the legacy of the late Sir Shri Ram and celebrates the goodwill between Indian and Pakistani poets. Another pleasant surprise came my way when I chanced upon the fact that I had premier seating at a live-tecast Mushaira that was probably the biggest gathering of its kind in the world.

*(contd. overleaf)*

## WELCOME

We welcome a new member of the teaching faculty, **Partho Roy Choudhury** (PRY), who will be teaching Hindustani Music. We wish him the best for his years ahead at Doon.

## CRICKET

The School Cricket Team played against the **ONGC** on March 7 and won the match by 5 wickets.

The School Junior Cricket Team played against the **Hostel Academy** on March 7 and won the match by 5 wickets.

Well played!

## DEBATING NEWS

The following are the results of the **third round** of the **Senior Inter-House English Debates 2010**:

### Hyderabad vs Oberoi

**Winner:** Hyderabad House by walkover.

### Kashmir vs Tata

**Cancelled** as both teams failed to report punctually.

## APPOINTMENTS

The following are the appointments to the Editorial Board of **The Econocrat** for the forthcoming year:

**Editor-in-Chief:** Shivam Katyal

**Editors:** Prateek Agarwal

**Senior Editor:** Vinayak Bhandari

**Chief of Production:** Kanishka Malik

**Graphics Editor:** Sparsh Batra

**Associate Editors:** Gursehej Oberoi, Saadman Choudhury

We wish them a fruitful tenure.

## POETRY RECITATION

The following are the results of the **Vikram Seth Junior Statesman Poetry Recitation Competition, 2010** which was held on Saturday, March 6:

### Juniors:

**1st:** Rahul Srivastava

**2nd:** Pranay Raj Kapoor

### Seniors:

**1st:** Arjun Sethi

**2nd:** Shashvat Dhandhanian

Congratulations!

## Opinion oll

Do you think ScLs should be more a part of our community?



(308 members of the community were polled)

**Next week's question:** Does the prospect of going on the midterm break enthuse you?

## T20 RESULTS

In the finals of **The Inter-House T20 Cricket Competition, 2010**, Tata House beat Hyderabad House by 13 runs to win the competition this year. Congratulations!

## BHARATANATYAM EVENING

Smitha Nair performed a **Bharatanatyam Recital** on the 10th of March in the Music School. A report runs in the next issue.

### | Poetry |

## 10 More Days

*Shashank Peshawaria*

10 more days

Of pain –

8 of the torture

Of your presence,

2 more because

When I'll put on my clothes,

I will smell you.

Damn, kill me.

(contd. from page 1)

There were two poets from Pakistan, Pirzada Quasim Raza Siddhiqui and Zahra Nigah, and both spoke with great fervour! I can still hear Zahra Nigah's *ghazals* and *nazms* echo off the walls. The Indian poets there were Anwar Jalalpuri, Javed Akhtar, Shahryaar, and Waseem Barelwi. The atmosphere was so infused with creativity that the audience could not have enough, and there was such 'wah'ing (and occasional booing) that, by the end of it, I intoned the *wahs* subconsciously. It did not matter that I didn't understand more than half the words. The more I cheered, the more I understood the dynamics of the audience. Other noticeable performances were by Muraj 'Faizabadi' and Naseem Akhtar 'Bushanpuri'. And then there was Hussain Khan 'Jhanjhat', a rather controversial poet, judging by the audience reaction. The mushaira ended with Javed Akhtar's "*Achcha Nahi Lagta*". But, of course, we really liked it, and nothing had really ended.

We returned to the Shriram residence, where there was yet another, but much smaller, gathering of friends. There was talk into the early hours of Sunday and when I finally fell onto my bed, drunk on poetry, there was a certain satisfaction that only comes when one drinks life to the lees. The next morning, sleep-refreshed, I saw the dark side of eating too many *kebabs*, but let's not linger there. We left Delhi, after some delay, at about one. The oncoming traffic seemed to be all rushing towards the remains of last night's revelry; too bad the spoils were but memories which, when shared, like photographs of diamonds or replicas of originals, lose much of their splendour.

## CAREER CALL

The Careers' Notice Board will feature '**Actuarial Science**' this week. All those interested should look it up.

| Creative |

## A BASKET OF ORANGES

*Utkarsh Jha*

Walking stealthily through the orchard, the young boy looked over his shoulder. He saw the house, some distance away, still dark, and felt comforted. The farmer had definitely not seen him entering his orchard. As he slipped furtively out of the orchard and headed towards his shack a few minutes' walk away he wondered what his sister would be doing.

It was a cold winter night and the sound of thunder rolled in the distance. As he walked back home, his face glowed with pride: it was the first time he had managed to sneak out a basketful of oranges. He felt a vague sense of happiness that he and his sister would finally be able to have something other than a few slices of stale bread. This thought reminded him of the days he had spent with his father. Those had been the best times of his life. He had received two hot meals each day and had kept relatively warm even during the winters. However, his father had gone to war and nothing had ever been heard about him again. Now the only family he had was his younger sister, and he was forced to make ends meet by stealing necessities, even though he hated doing so.

Arriving at home, he was greeted by his sister, who was always eager to see him. As soon as he placed the small basket on the damp ground she peered in and, looking at the oranges, said, "Can we cook them?" The brother let out a small laugh and patted her on her back. Asking his sister to behave, he walked out of the shack for a quick dip in the stream that ran nearby. He whistled to himself as he bathed, feeling happy that he would be able to have a full plate of food consisting of oranges, bread and eggs (nimbly pocketed when the shopkeeper's attention had been elsewhere) for the first time in many months. He felt a warm and pleasant wave surge through his body at the thought of it.

He dried himself lazily while sitting on the bank and contemplated whether he should visit Mr Dalal's farm and try his luck at asking for a little milk. But he decided against the idea and walked back to his house, kicking the dust and rocks on the road. As he neared the shed he heard the sound of weeping and smelt something burning. He quickened his pace as he was worried his sister might have had one of her 'ideas' again. As he entered the shed, he saw a sludge of orange and burnt bread all over the damp earthen floor. He was taken aback for a minute. He failed to believe that his dream had been destroyed. When he questioned his sister, she told him that she had tried to help him by making a proper cooked meal.

For an instant, he felt rage rising like a dark tide. His hand rose, as if involuntarily, to strike the little girl. Sanity came like a dash of cold water as he thought with horror: 'Let me never let this cruel poverty rob me of more than material things.' All of a sudden, he felt happy. He bent down and hugged his sister. "Dry your tears," he told her. "There are plenty of oranges in the world."

## A LITTLE BIT OF BEAUTY

*Arifeen Chowdhury*

I once read somewhere that we are more afraid of life than death. I stopped to think about that for a few minutes, because it had struck the perfect note in me. We teenagers sometimes feel helpless with our surroundings and are unhappy due to peer pressure. It feels as though the world is full of ugly, wild things; and we are all doomed. Some feel as though life cannot get any worse. And then if it does, you ask yourself, "Why me?" When our heart feels beaten and broken, and we are caught up in a maelstrom of this feeling, we begin to sink. In fact, we don't even try to get rid of this feeling. Yet, at the end of the day, we have to move on. We have to renew our faith in humanity and restore the peace in our mind. There are ugly things in the world, but more than that, there is beauty.

If I had to weigh the beauty and the ugliness of the world, the beauty would undoubtedly stand out. The amazing fact of the beauty of the world is that there is at least a little bit of it in everything, from people to nature, from feelings to the mundane routine and the most dreary matters of life. There is beauty in the tearful eyes of a mother as she sees her child off to his first day of school. There is beauty in the aura that surrounds two people standing at an altar, making promises they sincerely mean to keep. There is beauty when a father tosses his child up to the sky and grabs him as gravity pulls him back down, not letting him fall.

The sky, I believe, is one of the most beautiful things in the world. It's a sight to behold when the clouds shift to form different shapes of all sizes, and when it changes hues several times right before twilight. The starlit nights when you and your best friend whisper your secrets in the dark and wish on falling stars. Why, there is beauty in the wonderful blend of people on this planet. There is beauty in the feeling of achievement when one has accomplished an impossible task, stretching one's boundaries and limitations by challenging oneself. Truth is, there is more to life than the terribleness of it.

Sometimes, things just kind of happen. They leave one helpless and hopeless, shattered to pieces. What do you do then, to pick yourself off the ground? Do you bury yourself under the heap of troubles and hide? Or do you fight for breath? Do you reach out for help? Or do you avoid the fact that you need other people? Are you too scared to admit your need for help? Way too many questions. Very few answers. They say, before you die, your life flashes in front of your eyes. Just make sure it is worth a watch.

## | Interview |

# Classic Notes

The Doon School Weekly's interview with the new Hindustani Music teacher, **Partho Roy Choudhury**

### **The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Tell us about your musical education?**

**Partho Roy Choudhury (PRY):** I was interested in music from the very beginning. I started my musical journey at the age of two. My father is a sarod player and has been my guide. It was then too early for me to start playing the sarod as you need a very good ear for it, so my father introduced me to the santoor. My parents always wanted to keep me indoors during the hot summers. To keep me busy, they encouraged me to devote time to this instrument. I really started liking the instrument and performed a concert at the age of four (playing on my father's lap so as to balance the santoor). I was applauded for my technique and style of playing. The journey continued. After my Class XII Board exams, I took one of the hardest decisions of my life, choosing between being a farmer and a musician. I didn't really get the best marks, and so I chose to spend my time with my instruments rather than with my books. I did my graduation with the rare combination of fine arts, music and IT. Meanwhile, I got a CCRT (Centre of Culture and Research Training) scholarship along with two national scholarships. In 2002, I met my teacher and mentor, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, and began the 'gharana' or traditional way of learning music. Each 'gharana' has its own style and its great teachers who impart their unique interpretation which is passed on from generation to generation. The traditional way of learning music involves an intimate *guru-shishya* relationship whereby one lives, eats with, and practises music in the ustad's own home. I joined Sherwood College in 2005, and spent two-and-a-half years there. I was living with my family there and, to come out of my comfort zone, I went to Aamby Valley International School near Lonavala. I worked there for three years before coming to Doon.

### **DSW: Which instrument do you like playing the most?**

**PRY:** Personally, I like the santoor. It is my main instrument. The santoor stays with me wherever I go.

### **DSW: Do you really think Hindustani forms of music are dying?**

**PRY:** I would not like to say that Hindustani forms of music are dying. I would rather say that Hindustani music has transformed. Just like our dress has changed over time, from dhoti to jeans, music has followed suit. The fact is, it is necessary to keep traditions and simultaneously adapt to new trends. It is very important not to forget our roots. Keeping that in mind, it is important to

learn but not to forget the foundation. Music is based on fusion, and fusion is only possible if we have a good understanding of Hindustani music.

### **DSW: What can be done to rekindle the interest of people in Hindustani music?**

**PRY:** People always think classical music is too complex. Hindustani music is taken to be extremely tough to learn. We need to take better steps to make Indian classical music easier to learn and more accessible to the students. For example, people love to listen to Sufi music but not many try learning it.

### **DSW: What are your other interests?**

**PRY:** I like painting and trekking. Cricket is my favourite sport, which I thoroughly enjoy. There was a time when I wanted to choose cricket over music, but then I understood that cricket was not my field. I am very comfortable with music.

\* \* \*

## | Report |

# Gallery Tour

*Abhijit Kejriwal reports on the recent art tour to Delhi*

It was a bright Friday afternoon when fourteen of us budding artists and art enthusiasts, accompanied by Mr Bhowmick, left for Delhi on an art tour. We were all very excited since it was to be our first art trip. We reached Delhi late at night and went straight to our hotel. The next morning, immediately after breakfast, we left for The National Gallery of Modern Art which is close to India Gate.

The gallery had paintings of various kinds on display. The time that we spent there saw us totally engrossed in the works of great artists such as Rabanindranath Tagore, M F Hussain and F H Souza. It was a wonderful experience indeed to look upon works that we had only heard of and seen in art magazines. It was a rare opportunity and we savoured every moment of it.

The next destination on the itinerary was the Lalit Kala Academy. The experience there was equally rewarding. We had a fruitful time discussing the paintings, sculptures and photographs on display there.

Third on our list was the studio of Mrs Pranita Dutt, a renowned artist. We spent about an hour there discussing paintings and techniques with her. It was quite amazing how much we learnt in such a short while.

Much as we would have liked it, the trip could not be extended beyond Sunday. We had to come back to school by the evening. However, this art trip was definitely a memorable and enlightening experience and we hope that similar trips are organized by the School in the future for its art lovers.

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