



St Pius X College Chatswood

Microfiction

A selection of entries and illustrations

2024

In 2024, St. Pius X College students were invited to enter the third edition of the school's Microfiction Competition.

Put simply, students are asked to be both concise and creative through the composition of original stories of no more than 100 words. Other than the word limit, these stories had to include specific actions and words. This year saw a total of 240 student entries in the first round, with 30 students selected to compete in the live Grand Final held in the Senior Library.

This is a collection of standout entries from the Senior School, Primary School, and teaching staff, complemented by artworks commissioned by the Visual Arts Department and completed by their talented students.

The prompts for each round are below:

First Round

Required Word – “Rhythm”

Required Action – “Restoring”

Final Round

Required Word – “Remedy”

Required Action – “Dissolving”

Authors

Year 5	Isiah Byak
Year 6	Cian Geaney Zachary Do Ashworth Hilton Lucas Korth
Year 7	James Sykes
Year 8	Akain Premachandra
Year 9	Charlie Chippendale Zachary Rapa
Year 10	Aidan Lindsay Joshua Booth Hugo Hart Alex Higgins John Medalla James Thomson
Year 11	Lachlan Staber Robert Oner
Year 12	Daniel Staal Liam Caroll Blake Markulin
Teachers	Mr Ryan Balboa Ms Brooke Doherty Mr Pat Rodgers Mr Matthew Buda Mr Nicholas Westoff Ms Frances Doyle

Editors

Mr Dan Quilty English Department
Ms Frances Doyle Visual Arts Leader of Learning

Artwork

Year 6	Oliver Frydman Ethan Odze Ethan Roman Oliver Ward
Year 7	Brendan Fok James Mikan James Sykes
Year 8	Jake Kiem
Year 9	Jake Swan Liam Tumulty
Year 10	Remy Grskovic Hugo Hart Noah Marshall John Medalla Edward Moss Matthew Oppen Lucas Robson EJ Sacre Archie Turner
Year 11	Matthew Dixon
Teachers	Ms Donna Janes

Front Cover Artwork: Will Kevans Yr 10

Back Cover Artwork: Hugo Hart Yr 10

Judges

Mr Dan Quilty English Department
Year 12 Learning Prefects: Max Forbes
Fergus Fung
Cooper Anderson

Grand Final Entries



Artwork by James Mikan Yr 7



First Place

One Word

Lucas Korth, Year 7

One word: it can be everything, it can be nothing. One singular, miniscule word can change a life. Yes can mean everything. No can crush a soul, just like love can make a world. One word, big, small or that little bit in-between can all make a difference. Sorry can remedy an illness, a gap between friends. No can break a relationship, dissolve a ring in tears. One word has all the power. It can raise and it can raze. It can break and it can brave. One word, however small, however meaningless, however silly. One word is everything.

Second Place

Limbo

Liam Carroll, Year 12

Between Now and Then, I visit phantom's spin. Freed from shackles of synapse and bone, a waltz that never begins. Their wails exhibit, somehow completely absurd. Hating a world where a tree falls alone, but that tree is heard? Between Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow. Superfluous, ambiguous, free. Somehow filled with sorrow. A place where loneliness cannot thrive, a remedy for ghastly plans. Where phantom's tears fall through ghostly cheeks, and I'm joined in the Devil's dance. This world calls like a drug, behind eyes, ridicule prone. But ghosts can't reach and give a hug, so I dissolve in this place alone.



Artwork by Remy Grskovic Yr 10

Third Place

A Surreal Reality

James Sykes, Year 7

When the world is hushed, and the moon reigns supreme again, a surreal reality is awakened from its deep slumber. Reality is dissolved in a cognitive vision, present, yet battling the mind's creativity. 'Tis' a remedy for life's humdrum conformity, when reality's conventions are dissolved in a puddle of endless possibilities and distorted memories. The brain weaves these thoughts, to an alien world, governed by imaginations powerful grasp. Where the improbable becomes possible, where norms are challenged, and reality dissolved. When daylight bathes the darkness once again, normality reclaims the throne, but the dreams' uprising, is inevitable to come.



Artwork by James Sykes Yr 7

Primary School Winner

A Castle Once Greater

Ashworth Hilton, Year 6

The petit sandcastles raised by youth. Each one a fable untold. How will this one unfold? One picturesque afternoon, born from sand is a masterpiece reflecting one's very soul. The care and wonder coming from the heart is evident in this work of art. Night wakes and the ocean caress the lone foundations. Weary insects make their abode. The dwelling becomes subject to much more. The sun and moon race, the burden increases, a clumsy hand, a squabble among swarms, no remedy for the test of time. The fading refuge now buckling, returns to the tide awaiting life once more.



Artwork by Archie Turner Yr 10

English Faculty Prize

The Dust

Joshua Booth, Year 10

As the dust covers our eyes, our souls, beguiled by our heavenly lit bricks, begin to dissolve. The dust begins to cover our ears, our souls, our bodies, in a one-sided battle against all of humanity. The body begins to dissolve too, the product of centuries of inactivity. The individual glances in the mirror – only to see a mindless husk. But there is no remedy for the dust. And so, when the sun engulfs the earth, driven by a final dying breath, there will be nothing left to conquer. For the dust is us, and we have no remedy.



Artwork by Edward Moss Yr 10

Principal's Award

To Remember

Lachlan Staber, Year 11

The ephemeral wind gave life to the rusted swing set. It sang, I remember, it sang. The tired grass danced to its dissonant song; I remember those days. Lonesome, it yearned for company, beckoned by the unbroken laugh of my youth. The sunlight painted the grass in the morning, its gentle strokes permeated the forgotten green. No remedy could halt to dissolution of my own memories. Like tears in the rain, each memory as valuable as the other, reduced to lifeless grey. I miss that swing, I ache for that grass, I desire that sun. I can't remember.



Artwork by John Medalla Yr 10



Ipomoea Cairica

Blake Markulin, Year 12

Lush foliage erupts over our tree's branches. Lilac blooms sit upon swirling green vines. I thought they were lovely. But as I grew, they constricted. Holding my dead bark tight, imprisoning my future in the carcass of my past. Violet funnels, once beauty's visage, now perniciously bright. Noxious green snakes lacerate my carapace. My world has darkened. I weep. Acrid acid rain spills from the heavens. Each droplet boring holes through your pretty poison petals, pouring life into the withered me. Your choking canopy dissolves. Sunlight streams to my roots again. It's warmth, the remedy to my sorrow, returning.

Artwork by Edward Moss Yr 10

It's Not Only Humans

Hugo Hart, Year 10



“A Blaze is coming” – reports came back. It’s true. We’ve known for days now. The slight smell of smoke lingering amongst the eucalyptus trees hinted toward the unwelcome flame. Most animals flee. Obviously, we stay put, desperately in search of anything that may remedy the current situation. The fierce inferno ensures its presence upon our woodland as heatwaves rapidly dissolve what was once known as “home”. I glance upon my branches one last time and weakly smile. When we write about non-humans experiencing humane qualities, we call it personification. I call it reality.



Waves to Memories

John Medalla, Year 10

Waves crash along the shore. The saltwater sprays across the rocks like a spritz, soon dissolving into the sea breeze. Floating. Washing away from the shore. Tall hills of water wash over my body; a calming remedy. My eyes are waterlogged from the stinging spray, fighting for even a glance of the shore. Dark, navy waves pull me away once again. My ears flood, water gushing. In. And out. I can't feel my legs. Sombre clouds frown upon me. As my muscles give out, the water engulfs me. Waving a forever farewell to my memories.

Artwork by Oliver Frydman 6 Green

First Round Entries

100 words or less

The action of “restoring”

The word “rhythm”

Written during class and home time

Against All Odds

Akain Premachandra, Year 8

Acids bubbling, fluids mixed, and concoctions made. Frantically moving around the lab like a hamster in a cage. The dim light of the dilapidated bunker enough to see the heavy bags under his eyes. The scientific genius, desperate for an answer, certain of one thing. Time is of essence, a candle out in the mighty wind. Scarred hands picking up beakers and tubes dissolving one chemical after another. A no after a no. He was doing something impossible, a remedy for the apocalypse out there. While he rests, he knows no one is ever truly safe. The plague is spreading.

Artwork by Ethan Odze 6 Blue



The Water of Life

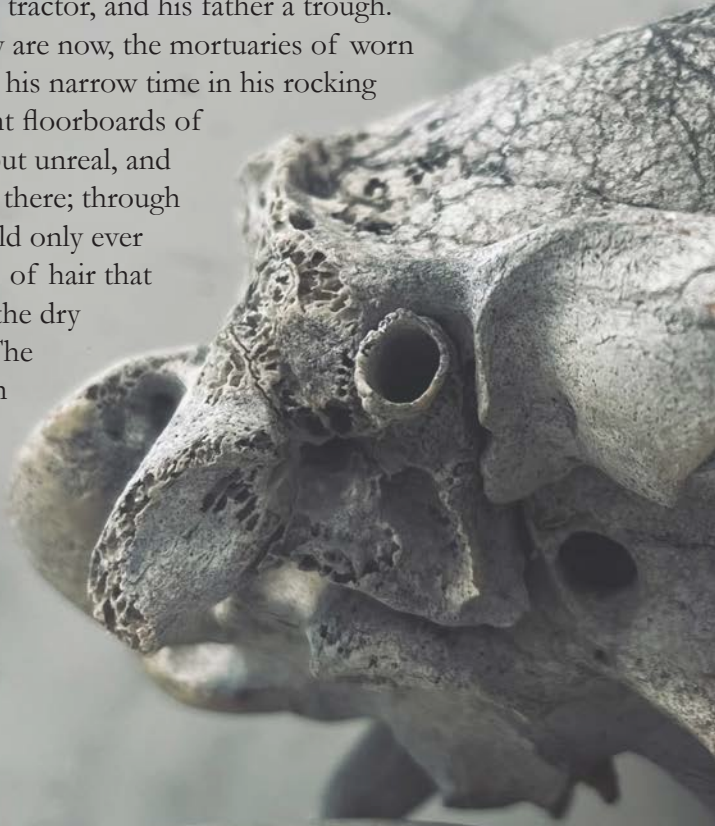
Alex Higgins, Year 10

This is it. It is do or die. The fate of the world lay on such young shoulders, crippling his body to the ground. His memory started to fade, dissolving into thin air. His most sacred memories were the only thing holding him from being swept through the gates of insanity. But as he opened his eyes, he was reminded of his mission. At his fingertips lay the power to save humanity. The water of life, glowing out of its glorious goblet lay in front of him. The remedy to cure the plague that had affected everyone. Everyone but him.

The Chronicles of Walgett

Daniel Staal, Year 12

My father died in his tractor, and his father a trough. Rusted things, they are now, the mortuaries of worn farmers. My father spent his narrow time in his rocking chair, creaking the ancient floorboards of the porch. He was real, but unreal, and intensely, simultaneously there; through the fly-screen door I could only ever infer his thinning strands of hair that wavered rhythmically in the dry wind, as did the wheat. The air was heavy, and therein is what he whispered to me. This is a dead place left for the locusts, he said, its putridity shares its ambience.



Artwork by Ms Donna Janes





Routine, Consternation, and the Fairway's Temptation

Zachary Rapa, Year 9

The mundanity of a life in the white-collar. Labouring through the rhythm of unrelieved, unvaried, unchanging work. Life hangs in irony's arms: the necessity of employment yet hating to be employed. But there was light at the end of the tunnel, where the struggles of the workday may find consolation. An early start, scents of luscious greens, tranquil peace contagious, mirroring that of 'Augustian' glory. However, there was no 'Master' present. Week-long dreams crushed with the epiphany of self-mediocrity. Yet one 'money-ball' and all faith was restored. And that's the addiction of Golf.

Artwork by Matthew Dixon Yr 11

The Forest Picture

Isaiah Byak, Year 5

When you investigate the forest most people do not see the tiny things that make the forest look the way that it is. The ants crawling up the leaves, the bees pollinating the flower, the caterpillar's evolving into butterflies, and the rhythmic clicking of tiny feet along the soil. Without them the world that we know today will be a cold dark and black void. So, when you see the forest try and notice the little things that make up the world that we know and love. Together we can restore the paradise that we see in our dreams.



Artwork by Lucas Robson Yr 10

An Old Man's Game

James Thomson, Year 10

An old man, in a young man's game. A game that I long forgot in the rhythm of my daily routine. A life of spontaneous decisions traded with eternal dissatisfaction but has a sense of security. I play the daily game of spreadsheets and shareholder meetings. A game with no risk and reward. The game isn't fun with no risks or obstacles. Slow and monotonous. So why should continue to play the game. Why live life that way? I should restore my vigour and breezy attitude. Live. Even if I am an old man, I can still learn new tricks.

Artwork by Matthew Dixon Yr 11

Those They Left Behind

Robert Oner, Year 11



“What now?”. I drag my eyes down from the sky to look at Cooper, whose eyes are turned above. He had thrown the question into the wind knowing none of us had an answer. The ships are gone now; the emotions, the pain and defeat so sharp and raging just hours ago, have faded now. They abandoned us, left us behind to restore some semblance of the world we used to know. Now, the humming and rhythm of the generator below me is the only sound that pierces the silence. For tonight, we have peace.



Bottled Up

Charlie Chippendale, Year 9

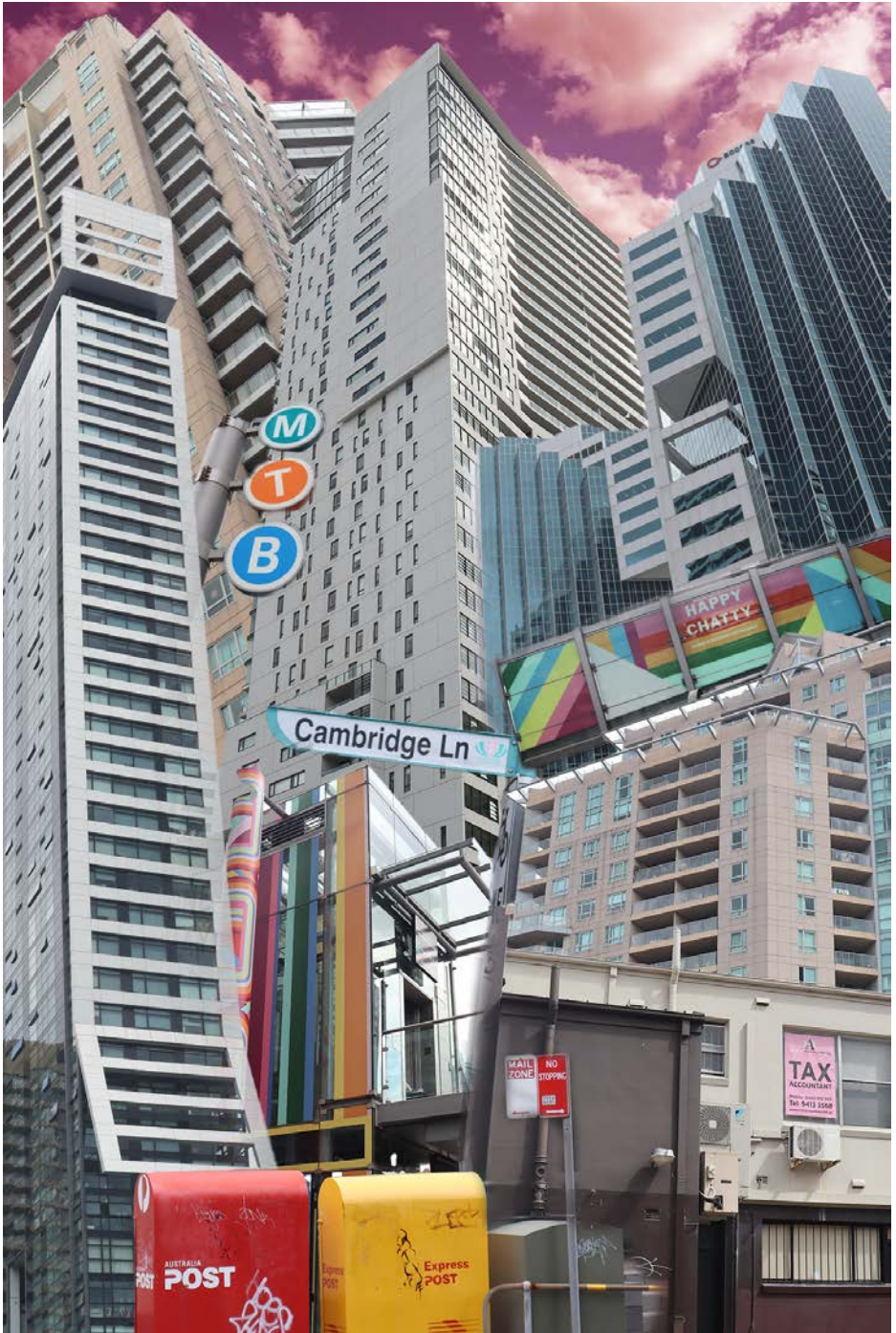
As the storm settles overhead, darkness covers the broken, barren land. Blinded by the negative feelings engulfing her, bottled up, isolated from the society that shuns. Peeking through the darkness, a break in the storm. Calling for her, but it is drowned out by the rhythm of the deafening storms thunder. Hope seems like only a distant thought, but she runs. Towards the light, closer and closer and closer, until finally the warming, comforting light envelops her skin. The barren land turns vivid colours of green, and blue. Hope is reinstated and joy returns to life.

Forgotten

Cian Geaney, Year 6

Deep in the Earth enslaved mythical creatures lurk far from the reach of light. Paying the price for rebelling against the gods by rhythmically repairing maimed weapons in the intense heat unleashed by the core of the Earth. These nameless beasts are immune to the destructive heat of the Earth's core, with hides so thick that trying to cut them with a razor-sharp sword is like attempting to kill a lion with a toothpick. These beasts may escape, but I doubt that the Gods will risk another uprising. For now, they lay forgotten in the depths of the earth.

Artwork by Oliver Ward 6 Green



Destruction

Zachary Do, Year 6

Destruction. A barren wasteland, nothing left but dust. Former glorious cities reduced to atoms, nothing left. Chirping in the distance, shoes tapping the pavement, a rhythm of noise trying to find something, anything to help him find, anyone. Trying to find someone to help him rebuild society but he couldn't. Nothing was going to change anyway, maybe he should just stop trying, just end it all. He climbed on top of a building ready to jump. Until a noise punctured his ears. Music. He ran down the building trying to find the source of the noise. He wasn't alone.

Artwork by Jake Swan Yr 9

Micro Haiku in Microfiction

Aidan Lindsay, Year 10

My microfiction:

It's about restoration

With the word rhythm.



Artwork by Noah Marshall Yr 10

Teacher Entries



Artwork by James Sykes Yr 7

Teacher Winner

The Paradox of the Slums

Mr. Ryan Balboa, Religious Education

As Amina walked through Kibera, she pondered its paradox: her people. Resilient, enduring - they were both remedy and affliction, many feeding a decay that slowly dissolved many a dream. In the slums, survival often meant sacrificing solidarity, feeding on nothing but another's will to endure. Amina knew one thing: the remedy could only be found through self-giving, and resisting acquiescence to the struggle. They had to rise, not just survive—break, not bend—to truly heal their brokenness. Progress, Amina thought as she reached the school's doors, would inevitably come - one smile, one answer at a time.



Artwork by Jake Kiem Yr 8

Artwork by Liam Tumulty Yr 9

Stratigraphy

Mr. Nicholas Westhoff, English/Senior Library

Detritus. Layers of mud. A lost world obscured. Pot shards and broken pieces bury the truth. Has the past been reinvented? Visions of a streetscape from once upon a time flash into my mind like sepia portraits of centuries gone. The gleaming modern towers of glass reflected the sunset as the ferry made its way across the harbour. Now in the shadows of sandstone facades I make my way down alleyways. The bustle of the present is gone. The rhythm of the city changes as night falls. Deep below, the sound of a running stream. What lies hidden beneath?





Grievously Wounded

Mr. Matthew Buda, Primary School

The wound seeped putrid yellow liquid. As viscous fluid touched the edges of the shattered knight's breast plate, it began to dissolve. Hubark couldn't believe what he was witnessing, the stench of burnt flesh and steel filled his nostrils. He frantically rummaged through his medical pouch, tinctures and salves were being strewn across the cot of the wounded knight. What could remedy this wound? Distraught, he called out, "Worm, fetch the brewing flasks, oh and bandages, lots of them!" No response. Hubark turned, looking for his manservant, as he peered over his shoulder, glowing red eyes silhouetted by darkness.

The Obvious Remedy

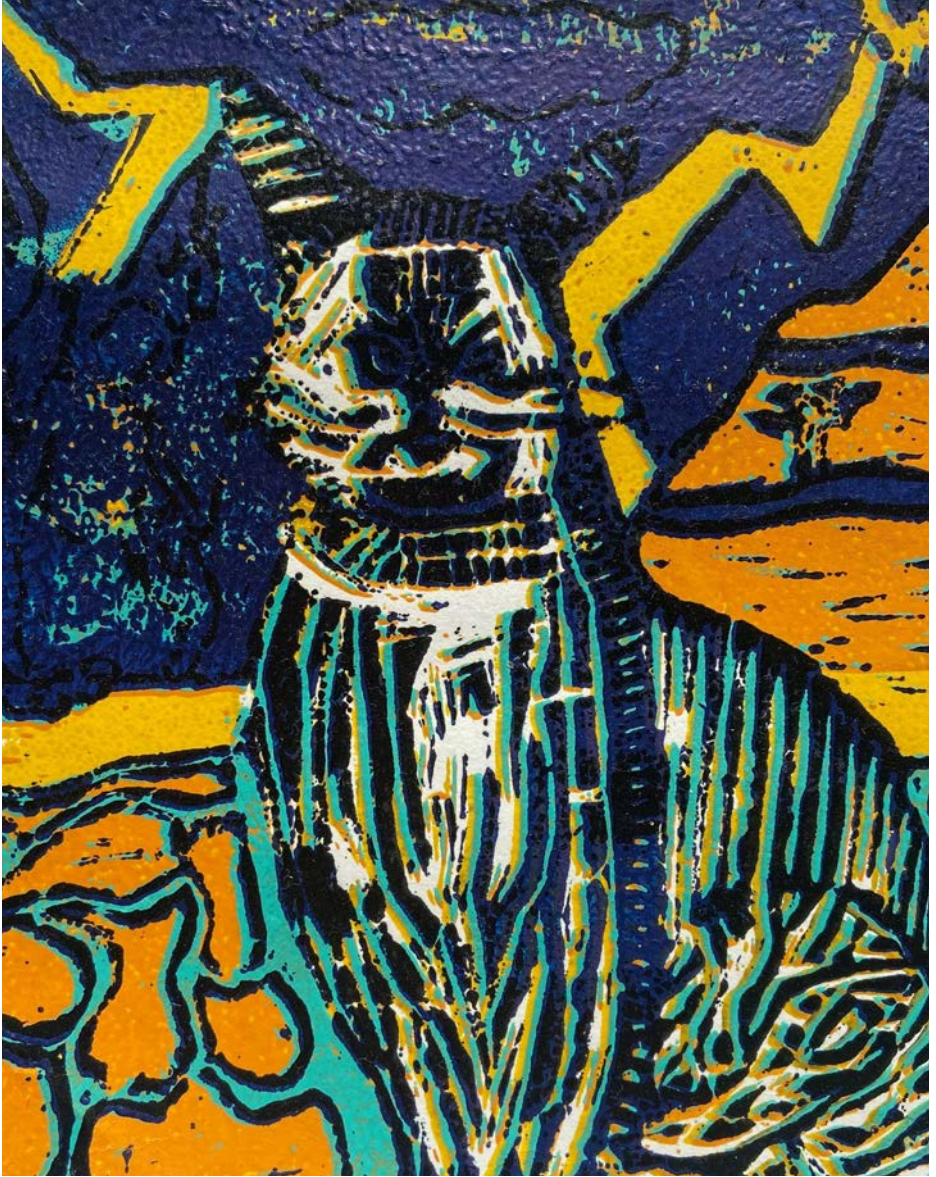
Mr. Pat Rodgers, History

A remedy to the situation was needed. He was out of his depth and increasingly out of control. Decisions were needed...and fast. There were options: dissolve the party? A radical solution but it would put the whole matter to bed. Stab him in the back? Better still, accuse him of heinous crimes? Belittle him publicly? Too blatant. Ah...the funeral... give him the wrong date. I can picture myself carrying the coffin as a loyal disciple of the Revolution's leader. And Trotsky's absence would never be forgotten.

Thrones

Ms. Brooke Doherty, English/Drama

It is a truth universally acknowledged that royalty has no need of trite conversation to assert their authority. And so it was with Louis Gustav III. As His Majesty cast a critical stare over his magnificent throne, his eyes narrowed. One grotesque, yellowed hair impaled the cushion. There was only one remedy: removal. He pressed forward. Witness accounts of what occurred next differ; what doesn't was the outcome: the pug's vainglorious ambitions rapidly melted under the onerous weight (and well-aimed claws) of the ruthless, one-eyed family feline. What remained was one simple reality: 'Queenie' the cat really was 'top dog.'



Artwork by Brendan Fok Yr 7

Snowy Therapy

Ms. Frances Doyle, Visual Arts

I tried to calculate how far I could see. In the distance there were layers of hills, mountains, ribbons of clouds. It had been a trudge up the steep slopes, wind biting, laden pack, leg muscles, feet and knees screaming with each metre elevation gain. One foot after the other, trying to keep to a rhythm of walking, knowing that soon, soon we would make the top of the ridge. Talking was difficult but words of encouragement amongst us all helped. Finally, the top and the view was stunning, joyous, an enveloping feeling of peace seeping through mind and body.



Artwork by Edward Moss Yr 10



ST PIUS X COLLEGE

CHATSWOOD

