

Holocaust Memorial Day

Commemorating the Holocaust Memorial Day on the 27th of January 2018 and culminating the activities pertaining to the Holocaust - which were underpinned by the aphorisms of the philosopher Theodor Adorno "To write poetry after Auschwitz is a crime" and "art is the social antithesis of history and society"- the students of Year 3 got involved in a interdisciplinary project of depicting through art these atrocities and the suffering of children throughout the 20th century and globally, thus exceeding the confines of the *Second World War* and providing a global and a trans-historical antiwar protest.

Activity 1 (English and Music)



The project was initiated by a familiar song taught at the children's English lessons, namely "Good Morning. How are you?" Subsequently, they were presented by the photograph of Gustav Mahler and information was given concerning his life and his preoccupation with the death of children (the death of many of his siblings, of his own daughter etc) and the way he transformed this song into a funeral march (Symphony no 1) that foreshadows - on the premise of Leonard Bernstein's theorizations and by means of musical semantics - the death of children in the concentration camps during the Second World War (Gipsy and Jewish melodies entwined with German military music).

Activity 2 (History and Theater)

These lessons coincided with the celebrations of the Greek resistance against the Italian invasion of Greece in 1940 and the subsequent anti-German war held by the Greeks. A play based on the excruciating experiences of the prisoners in the camps (by the Greek writer Iacovos Kambanellis - a left-wing prisoner of the concentration camps- and music by the composer Mikis Theodorakis) was presented.



Activity 3 (Global history and writing)

In this activity the children were presented by other conflicts of the 20th century and they pursued individual research concerning wars of the century and their repercussions on children's lives (German, Cypriot, Vietnamese, Palestinian, Arab, Syrian, Japanese etc). Following their research the students were involved in writing their feelings as if they were the children themselves using an array of creative writing techniques and genres, such as diaries, letters, internal monologues, autobiographies etc.





Activity 4 (Workshop and photography)

After discussing their feelings about what they have learned through their research, the students were engaged in realizing the importance of photography as a modern historical document that depicts the essence of reality, a reality that is *still and silent*, but it is "a silence that talks volumes" through the expressions and the gaze of the victims involved.





Activity 5 (art and painting)

The apex and the culmination of the activities constituted the art class. The lessons pivoted around Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream*, using the techniques of *collage* and *palimpsest*, in conjunction with information regarding the personal and socio-political history of the painter and the painting. The students assembled and arranged photos of children screaming, crying or being silenced as a result of wars and humanitarian catastrophes, thus unifying their screams and conjuring up a universal and globalized protest against the pulverizing consequences of war throughout history.





