**EXEMPLAR STATEMENTS**

**English, Philosophy, Languages, Drama, Film, History of Art**

**English and History**

Times of revolution and social upheaval lead to a questioning of the relationship between self and world, as does exploration of the inextricable links between the twin disciplines of

English and History. I am consistently inspired by the power of both to illuminate and mystify human identity.

One of the main influences on my EPQ dissertation - a study on the extent to which the

countercultures of 1960s/70s America were influenced by themes presented in Ginsberg's 'Howl' and the ideologies of the Beat Generation - was the documentary series 'The Century of the Self'. Curtis' interpretation of the failure of the 1960s US counterculture as due to a shift in counterculture identity from the original tenet of humanitarian endeavour to a cult of the self was intriguing, particularly in its pertinence to present culture. Even more surprising to learn was that the '70s New York counterculture was influenced by the Romantics. I had always regarded Romantic literature as a genre inspired by revolutionary fervour and was shocked when Butler's 'Romantics, Rebels and Reactionaries' revealed the Romantics also became disillusioned with revolution, instead retreating to the solipsistic utopia of the imagination.

Exploring the works of the Romantics in light of the contradictory morals and ideologies of

'70s counterculture offers fresh insights. Rather than perceiving Wordsworth's work as a

'symbiosis between mind and nature', a re-examination of his 'Lucy' series reveals the

anthropocentric projection of the human onto nature. Wordsworth's gendering and association of the landscape with the female muse archetype allows him to assume a mastery over the environment. I am currently reading 'The Age of Revolution'. Hobsbawm's dismissal of Romanticism as due to its limited impact on the working class confirms the movement's separation from the original idea outlined in 'Lyrical Ballads'.

In viewing the works of the Romantics through the lens of another period, my approach to the interdisciplinary nature of English and History shifted to a New Historicist perspective.

Subsequent readings of Carr's 'What is History?' and 'Practicing New Historicism' led to the recognition of both disciplines as illuminative of past and present thinking, imbued by social conditioning. This led me to attempt to transcend received discourse, taking an active role as a historian. I found my A-level textbook to be aligned with the Whig interpretation of the ‘bloodless' Glorious Revolution, the justification of which rests on the vilification of James II. Yet, spending time with the Northumbrian Jacobite society enabled me to consider the interpretation of James II as an advocate for religious toleration, and the revolution marred by violence.

Reading 'The Madwoman in the Attic' introduced me to the terrifying idea that Milton's

construction of Eve has sentenced women to an inexorable fate. I am fascinated by the

subversion of this 'Miltonic cultural myth'. Beat writer Di Prima's 'Loba' redefines the

identity of Eve from 'divine afterthought' to a woman with an affinity to the Romantic

conception of Satan. In 'Coriolanus', Volumnia- a woman with power aspirations- creates

Coriolanus, a parody of masculinity through which she lives vicariously. It is ironic that in

fusing eloquence with physicality, Volumnia is the only character to embody the perfect

patriarch; a lecture at the British Library on the secret, epistolary friendships of literary

women was testament to the way in which female writers have been compelled to conceal their creativity. My A-level studies of the Gothic introduced me to the concept of Liminality and I find Gilbert and Gubar's interpretation of Bronte's 'Wuthering Heights' as a distorted

allegory of the 'Fall of Man' to serve well in destroying the polarities that confine female

identity. The inevitability of human fate propounded by literary works with religious

frameworks is compelling, a study I am eager to further at university.

**Drama and Theatre Studies**

“If you engage people on a vital, important level, they will respond,” said Edward Bond, and making theatre relevant is something that I am keen to explore through my own practice. A recent performance of “Electra” at the Old Vic seemed lifeless, and left me cold - I felt none of the raw energy that resonated from other pieces I’d seen. “Woyzeck”, for example, performed by ”Splendid” Theatre Company, was executed with such dynamic flair that it had a profound impact on me. The contrast in energy between the two performances was distinct. In ‘Woyzeck’ the actors played a number of different characters, using a Brechtian style of Epic theatre. Placards and direct address broke the fourth wall and allowed for a didactic, compelling performance that highlighted the political themes of the play, bringing them alive.

I am part of the digital generation, who have constant access to film and television of our choice; it could be argued that we no longer need live theatre. Even those in the industry suggest that theatre has to struggle to maintain its audience. Martin McDonagh recently told The Observer that he considered theatre ‘the worst of all art forms’. After watching a production of his play ‘Hangmen’ at the Royal Court, directed by Matthew Dunster. I don’t agree. It was a visceral experience and a prime example of how theatre can impact an audience in the way that digital media can’t. I spoke to one of the actors who has appeared in a number of big television roles, and he said that the exhilarating energy and response he got from being part of a live theatre production was something he could never get from television acting. I want to make sure that young people are excited by live theatre and one way to keep performance alive, could be to use influences from film and digital media. I love the work of Wes Anderson; I would love to watch a live theatre show replicating the distinctive style of his films, in order to create a versatile, original style of theatre that would appeal to a younger audience.

The process of transformation that occurs when an actor takes on a role fascinates me. The idea that you can become a completely different person on stage is one that appeals to me greatly. I want to affect people in the way that actors I have seen have moved me. Through my role in a production ‘Pool (no water)’ by Mark Ravenhill, I felt a strong emotional connection to the character I had created. Because the play is written as continual narration, there are no set characters and I had to establish a backstory and create a distinct characterisation. It was challenging to find an emotional connection that I could communicate to the audience. Being able to have such a personal input into the characterisation made me feel emotionally attached and helped strengthen my performance.

Drama is a valuable learning tool and I particularly enjoy using it in an educational context. Helping to run summer drama classes for 10 and 11 year olds in a local school and teaching drama in a children’s nursery, I have seen how the discipline can be used as a learning medium at any age. Drama games can teach children about the power of working collectively, as well as giving them confidence. Drama is also an effective way to actively teach literacy and text, especially for those children who might not be interesting in sitting down and reading a book.

Through photography and English, I have made exciting connections between the Surrealist photography movement, gothic literature and Artaud’s ‘Theatre of Cruelty’. I am drawn to the way the Surrealists used art, literature and theatre to explore the dark side of humanity. I believe that contemporary theatre should embrace modern influences, rather than concerned with preserving a more staid and outmoded style of performance. Theatre is a vital and valuable industry, and I am excited about the prospect of immersing myself into a degree course that explores all its forms.

**Drama and Film**

The link between film and theatre is something that I think is very important, as, in this current digitalised era, theatre is often overlooked, and underappreciated in a world where digital advances are taking over. This synergy of these two mediums has been revived through the recent NT Live initiative. Watching a screening of Stephen Daldry’s ‘Skylight,’ I thought that it gave a fascinating insight into the ideological clash between right and left wing political views, personified through two characters in a passionate relationship.

Theatre is a great way of holding up a mirror to society. I saw Tony Kushner, John Logan and Paul Laverty's ‘Decade’ at the Headlong Theatre in London, which focused on the bombings of the twin towers. The play was set in a restaurant at the top of the World Trade Centre, Windows of the World. I was fascinated by the way they used site-specific theatre to create a visceral and thrilling performance. This use of setting created a profound sense of realism that involved me with the play's catharsis and allowed me to empathise with the characters and their individual storylines. I was interested to see how such a sensitive subject could be portrayed on stage, using such a vast variety of theatrical styles and techniques. The play itself is a collaboration of different scenes constructed by writers from the US and the UK, which allows for different points of  perspective.

I enjoy working in a variety of styles, and recently I’ve taken an interest in verbatim theatre and I experimented with it in a group-devised piece about the lack of freedom and choice that refugees have. The complexity of working in a group meant learning how to overcome differences by taking criticism, developing resilience from that and being able to move on to improve. In this piece I used styles from practitioners such as Brecht, using Epic theatre to draw attention to political injustice in our contemporary society. We also used Artaudian methods to break the fourth wall, aiming to introduce elements of surrealism into our piece.

Currently in Art I am looking at the different perceptions of women, exploring the work of artists such as Marlene Dumas and Tracey Emin who are very important female figures in a world which often marginalises women. Through the poetry of Christina Rossetti in English Literature, and in my studies in sociology, I have explored different perspectives on gender, and the roles of women in patriarchal societies, and I am interested in the debates around essentialism versus gender as a social construct.

I am also a big fan of film and in particular Social realism, which has been an important British contribution to world cinema. Richard Bean’s ‘Made in Dagenham’ deals with the strike in the Ford factory in Dagenham leading up to the Equal Pay act, which was an important milestone for women worldwide, making it possible for them to have equal pay to men for similar skilled work. I have developed a keen interest in Norwegian cinema, which for me is characterised by a more sensitive approach to adolescence and sexuality, for example in films like ‘Ikke Naken’, which deals with the pre-adolescent sexual feelings of an 11-year old girl. Norwegian culture allows young people to watch films of a sexual nature, whilst they are more restrictive in showing violence, an interesting cultural difference between the UK and Norway.

I’ve achieved grades 1-6 in LAMDA, which has helped me become a more confident individual performer. I have also taken summer courses in Drama, including Blackheath Youth Theatre, where I acquired a range of new skills, in particular, working productively in big  groups, which helped me during my A level devised piece. I respond with enthusiasm to visual and action-oriented learning and I’ve managed to overcome my dyslexia by working hard in my academic subjects.

I would like to defer my place to complete an acting foundation course. I would also like to broaden my perspectives by working abroad.

**English Language and Linguistics**

Which comes first, language or thought? Are our brains hard-wired to acquire language? Is it ever acceptable for anyone to use the n word? Having been introduced to these kinds of fascinating questions at A level, the desire to know more has inspired me to study English Language at university.

The English Language has been subject to so many changes over time due to factors such as travel, globalisation, and migration - this is what makes it such a dynamic, exciting, living thing and such a fascinating discipline for study. As David Crystal says, “at any one time language is a kaleidoscope of styles, genres and dialects”. I’m intrigued by aspects of sociolinguistics such as how we perceive gender through the lens of language, and how technology is influencing our lives. However, what really grips me is the study of language not only on a global and social level, but at the level of word and sentence - I am keen to further explore aspects of lexis, morphology, syntax, phonetics and phonology, and how these work together to create meanings. For example, in Literature, I am interested in the social and historical contexts of texts, but I really enjoy applying my developing understanding of lexis, morphology and syntax to a close analysis of texts - for example, in a feminist reading of chapter ten of Jane Eyre, I have explored the way syntactical constructions and lexical choices encode gender stereotypes. Becoming immersed in what for me is a classic female text, I also focused my A level Language Investigation on the novel, exploring key features such as the representation of speech and the verb processes ascribed to both Jane and Rochester. I concluded that although Bronte does use language to challenge patriarchal norms, despite her deliberate attempts to create Jane as rebellious and independent, she is still in some important ways subservient to Rochester and to her social class; as Eagleton says, she is always concerned to pursue freedom within strict social rules. This can particularly be seen in her insistence that, despite her claims of equality, she still calls Rochester her master.

I am always keen to explore the relationship between my academic subjects. Reading Delusions of Gender by Cordelia Fine, I have become fascinated by the links between Psychology and English Language, both in terms of gender and child development. She explores all sorts of issues from ‘bad’ science to the persistent biases that blind us to the ways we ourselves enforce the gender stereotypes we think we are trying to overcome. There seems to be a trend within the sciences to find biological explanations for gender differences, and Fine’s arguments are a powerful antidote to this. As a neuroscientist, she presents a compelling argument for gender as being socially constructed rather than biologically determined. Of course, I also appreciate that some aspects of language are innate, as Chomsky says. This innateness means that when learning another language, we are both as ignorant as a newborn and yet still have the ability to acquire the language in its intricacy and complexity.

I have volunteered in the Speech and Language therapy unit at my school, working with children with specific speech and language difficulties, and other disorders from dyspraxia to mild autism. I worked with a particular student who had specific difficulties with spelling, and I used a phonics approach with him in order to help him to “sound out” individual letter sounds and blends - the approach was successful in this case, although from my studies of the acquisition of reading in English Language, I am not convinced that the “first, fast and only” teaching of phonics currently taking place in primary schools is the best way to foster a lifelong love of reading in children!

I am a resilient and highly motivated student who is really looking forward to the challenges and opportunities which university will offer me.

**English Literature with Philosophy**

A text's ability to reflect its context, while transcending the boundaries of time and space,

is what excites me about literature. Faulkner's 'As I Lay Dying' uses multiple perspectives and a highly experimental stream of consciousness narrative to explore notions of mortality and mourning in the Deep South; permeated with a terrible sense of futility, his work is as relevant today as it ever was. Exploring 'The Canterbury Tales' during the Insight into Bristol summer school, I discovered that literature of all eras shares an interest in the nature of the human condition, such as the functions and fragility of the human body, demonstrating the eternal thread that runs through literature - a thread which links us with our pasts and connects us to our futures.

I have been fascinated by the ways in which modernist and postmodernist texts have dealt with the notion of the subconscious and reflect the shift in the conception of 'the subject' in the aftermath of the two World Wars. Kafka's 'The Trial' seems to epitomise this absolute fragmentation of both logic and reality, with unconscious desires and fears plaguing the protagonist throughout. It was the exploration of the subconscious and Freud's 'Id' and 'Superego' that prompted me to delve deeper into philosophical and psychoanalytical accounts of the psyche, subjectivity and human nature - which connects with my wider reading on the gothic. After reading 'The Uncanny', I began making connections between gothic texts and the subconscious reactions evoked in the reader, such as a sense of unease or terror - and why we respond in these ways. I am still in the process of researching the work of Freud and have become fascinated by his theories about familial relationships and how these link to modern perceptions of gender.

However, my exploration of the female experience in various areas of study has also led me to re-evaluate Freud's ideas and to question his conception of the female as 'other', particularly after my reading of de Beauvoir. While studying Angela Carter's 'The Bloody

Chamber', I became interested in whether her stories subvert the patriarchal messages of traditional fairy tales or, as Carter herself says, merely bring the latent content to the

surface. In art I have been focusing on the depiction of women through pornography, using the artist Fiona Banner and the English playwright Joe Orton as inspiration for exploring text and writing within my work. I also chose to base my English literature coursework upon female experience, exploring the ways in which Anne Sexton's poem 'Buying the Whore' uses savage poetics to present a universal, carnal aggression against the female.

It was in year 9 through QMUL outreach that I was introduced to the work of Joseph Campbell. This engaged me so much that I chose to focus my EPQ Dissertation on his book 'The Hero with 1000 Faces', in which I challenged the applicability of his critical theories, and those of others such as Jung, to modern literature. I have continued to research archetypes such as The Temptress and how they have evolved from actual characters of seduction to abstract concepts of temptation and weakness on the part of the hero and how these interpretations reflect societal change. Classical philosophical texts, such as Plato's 'Meno' and 'Phaedo', demonstrate this profound intersection between concept and myth that Campbell found compelling. Philosophical and literary ideas intersect also through the work of Yeats (which I have been reading recently) and his use of the recurring symbol of the gyre. I am particularly interested in his reimagining of the Heraclitean doctrine of 'eternal flux' as the predicament of a modern subject that can no longer make claims to the myths of unity and stability. The translation of philosophical thought into poetry, perhaps against Plato's advice, is a fascinating turn of human thought and one that the postmodern scholar cannot hope to do without.

**English Literature**

Last year, I was lucky enough to visit Haworth Parsonage and the surrounding moors, where the Brontë sisters lived and wrote. This deepened my understanding of the remote environment in which the sisters grew up, and why the natural world and its relationship with human passions informed so much of their work.

Jane Eyre is by far my favourite literary character; I love the way her belief in her innate equality to Rochester challenges the Victorian view of her inferiority in terms of gender and class. “Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless?” – with these words Bronte inspires any girl who does not fit into prescribed versions of femininity, and Jane’s fiery temper and absolute refusal to submit to bullying or petty authority points to Bronte’s creation of her character as a fully rounded individual, rather than as a tissue-thin exemplar of Victorian virtue. Finally, her refusal to compromise her integrity, whether by making a loveless but societally approved, self-sacrificing match with St John Rivers, or by giving in to Rochester’s demands against her conscience, makes her a feminist icon before such a concept even existed. Through the character of Bertha Mason, Bronte also addresses issues of women’s silence, exclusion and repressed anger, as well as the interplay between the English class system and colonial wealth that drove men as well as women into questionable marriages. I am passionate about issues like these, and recently co-founded an intersectional feminist group which now has over 50 members. We recently launched a website globalwomen.org.uk. Our aim is to provide a platform for discussions about social justice issues, and to get other young people as passionate as we are about making a difference.

Through this website, I’ve been able to explore and develop my writing style as well as creating a platform to raise awareness of issues I feel are important. Reading and editing my colleagues’ work has vastly improved my writing as well as my critical thinking. I am currently applying feminist theory to Sonnet 130 by Shakespeare for our website. His dry humour pokes fun at the traditional courtly comparison of women to flowers, perfume and deities, which makes it feel incredibly fresh and modern. It could be argued that his insistence on loving a real women, flaws and all, rather than attempting to turn her into a madonna, and his demand to have her recognised and accepted with her imperfections, makes this a progressive piece. I’m currently working on my own poem inspired by this sonnet.

Volunteering at a local primary school to help children with their reading was rewarding, as I was able to share with them the books I loved at their age; books such as ’Noughts and Crosses’, which I loved in primary school as it deals with big issues in a way that children can understand and engage with. This novel taught me at a young age how white washed our society and history has always been, and the importance of questioning what we are told and the society we are brought up in. It was the first novel to make me think more deeply about oppression.

Taking History at A level has enabled me to become more critical in my approach; I have learnt to re-evaluate everything I read and develop an interpretation for myself. For example, I recently re-read ‘A Thousand Splendid Suns’. This time, I discovered there were some very problematic issues with it. Housseini could be seen as sexualising the female characters as well as suggesting that all women who wear the burqa are oppressed, which is not the case. As a canonical male author, I don’t believe he has a right to comment on female experience in such a way. The notion of the male gaze, which I have also been exploring in my personal study in my Art A Level, is also relevant here.

I cannot imagine a more fulfilling way I could possibly spend three years than reading books, so I am excited about the prospect of embarking on an English degree.

**Italian and English**

The phrase: "Ho un freddo cane", meaning "I have a cold dog," is nonsense to the English tongue but to Italians the phrase is used to express how bitterly cold someone is feeling. The problem that such idiomatic expressions cause for translators is just one of the fascinations which first drew me towards the study of language. It is theorised that language is first acquired in the womb; the foetus becomes acquainted with the native phonemes of its environment. Chomsky tells us that all language is innate and that the core of any language is the same grammatical one on which we all build. Thus, the innateness of these deep structures means that when learning another language we are both as ignorant as a newborn and yet have the ability to acquire the language in all its beauty and complexity.

To me literature is important because it exists as a manifestation of thoughts, feelings and ideas. It is a means by which humanity can find a personal voice and individual expression. Studying literary theory, it can seem that society's perception of women is always seen through the prism of the male gaze. Yet, in many ways literature has liberated the oppression of women, giving them a voice even if it has to be disguised - as in the case of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. Many feminist thinkers argue that women are trapped within a masculine language. English is an andocentric language which can be seen through suffixes which "mark" forms such as "actress," suggesting that the female is somehow deviant, or other. Hence women have had to seek personal expression through 'l'ecriture feminine'. One of my heroines is Virginia Woolf, pioneer of the narrative mode known as "stream of consciousness." Her novel 'Jacob's Room' employs this technique to capture raw emotion that is often lost within omniscient or unreliable narration, and allows the reader to identify with the narrator in a new way. This remarkable approach to narration and her exploration of the psychological is why I chose to study Woolf for my A2 coursework, in which I am comparing 'Mrs Dalloway' to Pat Barker's 'Regeneration' - two novels that explore the aftermath of WWI with a particular awareness of the effects of war on its survivors. Both are concerned with the ways in which we try to find a central meaning to life after terrifying and disturbing events - as Septimus realises: "The world raises its whip; where will it descend?". Through my research into the contexts of the "Great War" for this essay, I discovered Primo Levi's 'Se questo e' un uomo.' The detached tone of voice in Chapter 9, I discovered, echoed the words of Septimus in 'Mrs Dalloway', anticipating his suicide; his thoughts on humanity are that of "hollow" and senseless.

Studying classical Italian literature I became interested in Giacomo da Lentini and his contribution to Italian poetry. Allegedly the creator of the sonnet or "sonetto" meaning "little song," he arguably inspired great writers such as Milton, who adopted the Italian sonnet form for his poem "Methought I Saw My Late Espoused Saint" with its heartbreaking final line. I have also become fascinated with Futurism with its intriguing principle: "parole in liberta". A poet commonly associated with this style is Umberto Boccioni, his poem "Dress Shoe and Urine" highlights the obscure and dynamic style.

An exciting opportunity to attend a week-long residential creative writing course with the Arvon foundation enabled me to deepen my love of poetry by creating work myself. I wrote the poem "la verita delle pecore" ("the truth of the sheep") in a mixture of English and Italian, and the professional writers on the course singled it out for special mention. A recent visit to Italy and extra-curricular course at Westminster college confirmed my desire to study the language further, and I cannot imagine anything more wonderful than to spend four years immersed in the language and the literature which I love.

**English Literature**

Reading and writing are the forces that set me in motion, and are integral to my identity. Recently, I have been exploring literature’s position in modern British culture by taking part in open mic sessions at the Poetry Cafe in Covent Garden, and poetry slams run by Farrago Poetry. I was exposed to the spoken word through the Beat Generation writers. Kerouac’s ‘On The Road’ captivated me with its use of spontaneous prose and his recording of ‘October in the Railroad Earth’ introduced me to the possibility of using voice to enhance texture and rhythm. I am using Langston Hughes as inspiration for my A2 creative writing coursework as I feel the fluidity of Blues poetry translates well to paper.

Part of the reason I love the experimental literary work of the 20th century is that it demonstrates literature's ability to challenge social conventions; Baldwin and Ginsberg both grapple with the injustices of homophobia in their work, and as a queer female I find liberation in the confrontation of these societal taboos. This is undoubtedly why studying the Gothic at A2 has held such appeal for me, as it is a genre capable of sparking revolutionary thought. To me, ‘Frankenstein’ represents how a controversial novel can in fact empower generations, as even today its female authorship makes Mary Shelley the figurehead of Science Fiction and an inspiration to women who feel alienated from the genre. In contrast, the fears surrounding female sexuality are reinforced through Lucy Westenra’s downfall in that other classic Gothic text, ‘Dracula.’ I am interested in the representation of gender in YA fiction, such as the Twilight series, and it is disappointing to find that, over a century later, popular fiction is still used to confirm rather than challenge such fears. One of the prevailing notions about Meyer's novels is that they are anti-feminist, where Bella is merely a passive object, an allegory of the dangers of unregulated female sexuality. I attempted to challenge this in my essay, as I believe she can be read differently in the later books. I am interested in the perceived value of literature that has mass appeal, and the reworking of texts in different mediums to help them achieve this accessibility. This is why I explored ‘The Great Gatsby’ at AS by not only reading the novel, but also listening to a radio dramatisation and watching Baz Luhrmann’s screen adaptation. I felt the film’s portrayal of Daisy to be more sympathetic than the novel’s, unfiltered by Nick’s narrative point of view. I was interested to see the ways in which different people interpreted the novel, and how the story was manipulated for the radio, in a form that puts the emphasis on dialogue.

I enjoy making links between my A level disciplines - I am interested in the ideas of Wittgenstein, whose views are often informed by linguistics. I find it delightfully ironic that he answers the question of God’s existence, using a non-cognitivist theory that is rooted in lexis and semantics, or a poet’s most basic tools. My interest in linguistics led me to David Crystal’s discussion of the original pronunciation in Shakespeare, teaching me that the transformation of our language has resulted in many of the subtleties of his plays being lost on modern audiences. However, my love of the English language has made me an advocate of a descriptivist approach to language change, and I relish the development of a dynamic language rather than the preservation of a stale one.

I was lucky enough to take part in an Arvon course where I enjoyed the challenge of constructive criticism from professional writers and collaborated with my class to create an anthology which I then had the responsibility of editing. This close analysis of my own and others’ work has helped me to become a more reliable critic and I feel I have a better understanding of the drafting process. I am excited about studying English at university, and the challenges it will offer me.

**Philosophy**

I have always enjoyed thinking about issues such as identity, the nature of society, and the legitimacy of different sets of beliefs. When I discovered an academic discipline that centred around the exploration of these interests I was immediately hooked.

Reading Bentham's *Utilitarianism*, I loved the clarity and elegance of his prose, but I thought he was wrong to say that our decision-making is based solely on the desire to maximise pleasure. Most people would consent to this view; I didn't, but I wasn't quite surehow I could show this to be so until I came across Nozick's critique of utilitarianism. One has to admire the dexterity of the Experience Machine and other machines as thought-experiments devised to show that we desire more than just hedonism. This is what I love about philosophy: its combination of rigour and creative thinking, and its ability to explore alternative responses to questions that people assume to have obvious answers, that most take for granted.

I also love the idea that the student of philosophy becomes part of a community of enquiry that has existed since antiquity, yet has much to say to modern consumer society. Studying the subject at school has involved reading texts in the history of philosophy, placing them carefully in their historical context, and then relating them to contemporary political and social concerns, such as in the work I did last year on personhood, the Turing test, and animal consciousness. personhood offers an intellectual framework through which to consider contemporary political and social concerns. I have enjoyed both the historical enquiry involved, the logical intricacy of the discussions around such questions and their real world ethical and political impact.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the historical aspects of epistemology - exploring the works of early philosophers such as Plato and Descartes, and seeing how their ideas have developed over time within the ongoing conflict between rationalism and empiricism. The historical context of philosophical ideas is essential to the validity of them - for instance, after reading Descartes’ ‘Meditations’, and discovering that Descartes’ only solution to the notion that our senses deceive us is that the omnibenevolent deity would not allow deception to occur, seems extremely problematic to our current society consisting of a growing population of atheists.

Looking at Literature through the lens of philosophy also reveals new meanings. I am drawn to gender politics and for this reason, I chose to focus my English coursework on Doris Lessing’s: *The Fifth Child* - a novel that questions innatism and gender essentialism. This led me to read Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex,* andher view that ‘one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’ is useful in understanding Lessing’s critique of traditional domestic and maternal roles. History has taught me to spot patterns across a range of sources, and also to be mindful of the ways in which evidence can be manipulated to support ideas.

I love to seek out opportunities to extend my knowledge; recently attending OU organised seminar called ‘Mediating Intimacies’ (on feminist cultural politics and philosophy),The South bank empathy lab discussion group, a one day symposium at the University of East London on neoliberalism and the family, and the conference ‘Beyond Islamophobia’ at SOAS. I also attended ‘The Battle of Ideas’, a two day conference at the Barbican, where a panel I attended called ‘What is addiction?’ inspired my AS EPQ. Here, I explored the detrimental effects of the medicalization of normal human behaviour, and concluded that the medicalization of normal behaviour has been disempowering. I was inspired by Foucault and his doubts about whether the scientific approach to mental health has been solely beneficial. I am excited to explore new and challenging aspects of philosophy alongside others who love the subject as much as I do.

**Drama and Community Theatre**

Drama is one of my life long passions and I feel in my element when performing, especially in front of an audience. In the words of Oscar Wilde, "I love acting. It is so much more real than life." My love for all things theatrical began when I was 9, and I performed my first lead role in The Odyssey. Since then, I have played a wide variety of roles from the naturalistic work of Alan Ayckbourn's "A Talk in the Park" and Tim Cartwright's "Two" to the more stylised work of Steven Berkoff's "Metamorphosis" and "Dahling You Were Marvellous". I feel that on stage is where I belong. Regardless of genre, I always leave the theatre with a sense of excitement whether it be a classical or naturalistic piece such as, "The Girl with the Pearl Earring" or "Cause Celebre", or a more Avant Garde performance such as the Knee High production of "The Wild Bride" or "Beautiful Burnout" by Frantic Assembly.

Alongside performance, one of my other passions is working with young people. I already have a good deal of experience working with children. Working with children of all ages in a facilitating role in workshops - for example, working with primary school pupils during the transition process at Prendergast's Summer School - has helped me become more patient and organised. I have learned to plan activities and sessions to fit a specific brief. I feel that these skills lend themselves to the role of a drama teacher. I never fail to be excited by seeing people perform what they have created, and directed. I believe I have the skills to help others to grow in their dramatic ability, and foster in them a lifelong love of drama and theatre. Within school, I worked with a vertical grouping of students aged 11-17 years, directing and producing a piece of theatre to be part of a school-wide art installation. This allowed me to explore the role of director and take on the task of leading a group of mixed ages and abilities.

I have also volunteered at a Saturday theatre school, working with children aged 3-16 in theatre, music and dance. I gained many skills through practice running workshops and planning projects. I also worked as a volunteer in schools with the arts organisation Noxon Arts, helping children achieve better levels of literacy through the medium of drama. This work has shown me how to use theatrical exploration in subjects other than drama. As part of my Saturday job at a cafe, I run children's parties; this has given me more experience with working alongside children. My study of English Literature has given me knowledge and ability to analyse texts and to write critically. This, as much as my theatre work has enabled me to think consciously about a relevant audience. My photography has helped me think about design and creativity behind the scenes and the elements that comprise a well composed picture. It has also given me an insight into different art forms.

A great deal of energy and creativity is needed teach drama. I feel that I have the necessary patience, stamina and resilience. I can work as part of a group and give and take criticism .I would love to see my skills and ideas passed on to a new generation that will learn to love drama as much as I do. By deferring my university application for a year, I will be able to get involved with more community theatre projects and gain further experience with organisations like Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre, with whom I previously attended classes. I would also like to return to the London Bubble Theatre Company with whom I did a work placement and was inspired by their creativity and determination to involve members of their community in their theatre projects. I feel that such rich experiences combined with my academic studies will allow me to bring a further range of skills to the course. I am really looking forward to studying at university as neither of my parents had the chance to do so.

**History of Art**

For weeks in philosophy we had been talking about "the special feeling" of irrepressibly strong emotion that some claim to get when looking at art, and although I'd always had an interest in art and went to museums and galleries regularly, I must admit I had never felt it and was even beginning to doubt its existence. It wasn't until, standing in front of Turner's 'Sun Setting over a Lake' on a trip to Tate Britain, that it suddenly hit me, a strong and irrepressible surge of emotion - this is what it feels like to truly understand art. It was the philosophy module on Aesthetics that had allowed me to reach this understanding by forcing me to think about why I appreciated art in the first place, and so it was at this moment also that I began to seriously consider History of Art as the discipline for me. Now, I visit exhibitions with fresh eyes - looking critically at what I am seeing and not just appreciating what I like, but also looking objectively at that which I don't, asking myself why that is the case.

Studying Aesthetics made me question the pedestal upon which art stands and the nature of beauty itself, and made me ask why should it be that I find something beautiful while another may not? These questions are still waiting to be answered and it is my hope that by taking History of Art I can further my understanding of why this may be. But before reaching the aforementioned emotional and philosophical understanding of art, I had enjoyed a different relationship with it - visiting art galleries, appreciating the art for purely aesthetic reasons, and by making artwork of my own. As a member of the Tate Gallery I get to see all the London exhibitions as much as I like and am always inspired to work on personal projects as well as generating ideas for my work in photography. However, as much as I enjoy taking photographs, this is my least favourite part of the lessons: I prefer to spend the my time researching artists, and focusing on the analysis, interpretation an evaluation of their work, which is why I have chosen to study art from an academic standpoint instead of taking a more practical approach. However, I am at heart a very creative person, and very much enjoy photography, playing the clarinet (which I have been playing for the past 7 years) and painting.

I am also an enthusiastic writer - a week-long writing course at the Arvon Foundation last Christmas encouraged me to attempt writing a novel. I love writing creatively, but I find enjoyment in writing academically, too. For my comparative essay in A2 English Literature, I have chosen toexplore the idea of fantasy and its effects on family relationships in The Glass Menagerie and Oranges are Not the Only Fruit. However, working on my critical studies for my photography sketchbooks, I realised I much preferred writing analytically about artists and artworks rather than literature. It became clear to me that this was the discipline I wanted to further pursue.

Because of my interest in the arts, I have been spending a lot of time in the photography Department, taking part in the new creative marketing project for our 6th Form, supporting Year 10's with their GCSE choices and helping the younger years get a better understanding of photography. I like doing this because I feel that by sharing my passion with them I might, in turn, be helping them discover theirs. Working with younger students, we have explored the changing nature of photography by looking at the very earliest camera-less photographs, through to the impact of mobile technology in the present day. Through this work, I realized how fascinating it was to see how the discipline has changed so dramatically in the past 200 years. I then thought that it would be interesting to plot out the past of other areas of art in order to see how they have altered, and indeed hope to glimpse where they might be going next.

**Film and Japanese**

I am excited to have the chance to combine the study of two of my favourite interests – Film and Japanese - at university. I love the language and culture of Japan; my first experience (like many children in the West) was in the form of children's anime but this was only the spark which ignited my desire to explore Japanese culture more widely. My fascination with film is more recent but just as strong. I love films like 'The Life Aquatic' and 'Neko Soup', films that are the product of a unique creative vision - Wes Anderson and Masaaki Yuasa both possess unmistakable cinematic styles. As I started to understand that modern Hollywood films had no single creative mastermind behind them, the inventive thinking of these cinematic auteurs convinced me that film was to be my creative outlet.

While I am primarily interested in film history, film theory and analysis, I also enjoy practical film-making and was accepted onto a BFI course, where over 12 weeks we devised, shot, edited and premiered a short film. I learned new practical techniques and a great deal about teamwork, taking on different roles and responsibilities to create a film that we were all proud of. After enjoying the course so much I have volunteered as an assistant to BFI tutors on one day film courses, I was also introduced to the amazing Mediatheque at BFI Southbank.

In my Film Studies course, I loved analysing Film Noir and discovering that the potential interpretations were as wide as any literary genre. For my first assignment in AS I chose to analyse a scene from 'Blue Velvet', allowing me to explore my interest in surrealism within David Lynch's work and to consider how his use of film language conveys this to the audience. This analysis gave me a greater insight into how mise-en-scene and soundtrack can subtly evoke metaphorical meaning. I have also enjoyed exploring the work of Charlie Kaufman as an auteur screenwriter, looking at his philosophical and post-modern writing through Baudrillard's theory. This piece of practical coursework enabled me to demonstrate my knowledge of film language creatively and gave me a greater insight into film's ability to express meaning more explicitly and profoundly than other art forms.

After completing Japanese GCSE, I chose to follow the more internationally recognized JLPT. This focuses on practical language learning but my sensei of five years has also taught me so much about Japanese culture and history; I am most interested in contemporary Japanese culture, how it evolved so quickly while still respecting the traditions of old and also learning the intricacies of the language and it's history. Work Experience involving Japanese students at an English Language school plus my regular visits to the Japan Foundation to talks, seminars and the library have tested and expanded my knowledge of Japanese. I hope my interest in Japan has given me a greater understanding of other cultures and their languages including my own.

For my Independent Reading coursework in English Literature, I have selected 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'The Wind-up Bird Chronicle' for an interesting cultural, historical and literary comparison. Through Creative Writing I have learned to be a flexible writer, but for my A2 coursework I have chosen to specialise in my first love, screenplay (one of the main reasons for applying to the course). I have also contributed to a published creative writing anthology, the work for which I crafted with the help of professional writers on an Arvoncourse.

I have recently got involved with the new independent Deptford Cinema and would like to start programming for events and local film festivals. I plan to defer my entry in order to travel Europe, visit Japan, move up a level in JLPT and make more short films.

**Liberal Arts**

During my A level studies, I have become increasingly interested in how each discipline

intersects. For example: my love of performance led me to choose to explore Beckett's Waiting For Godot for my A level close reading coursework in English, as I am fascinated by the notion that there is no God - or if there is, he is not coming. We are alone in the vast infinity of the Universe, and must accept that, and must then seek moral guidance from an internal rather than an external source; Kantian ethics suggests that God is not a prerequisite to morality (reading Dawkins' The God Delusion powerfully brought home to me the damage religion has done around the world). Studying an exciting interdisciplinary course at university will give me the freedom to explore my wide-ranging interests within the arts and humanities.

Literature allows us to have access to, and to understand, worlds which would otherwise be closed to us. As a young black man in 2016, for example, I am able to enter the world of Christina Rossetti through her poetry, and it gives me unique access to the life and mind of a woman in the mid 1800s; in her work, I saw the struggles of a young girl to fit into the narrow mould Victorian society prescribed for them, in a culture deeply rooted in patriarchy. I found Shakespeare's Coriolanus fascinating, and was interested to see that the play's concerns are still highly relevant today, with the election of Trump and the recent Brexit vote suggesting that Coriolanus was right: if you give the "common curs" the vote, they may choose wrongly, and dangerously.

In Drama, I have gained a variety of skills which have broadened my understanding of

theatrical styles, practitioners and performance; studying a broad variety of texts has opened my eyes to different cultures and have given me insight into different social, political and historical contexts. I've been particularly interested in Stanislavski's work, applying it to my role as Jimmy in 'Look back in Anger', focusing on personal experiences to develop my character emotionally. I have embraced the works of practitioners such as Artaud and Steven Berkoff in order to become a versatile actor.

Within religious studies, I have enjoyed debates around some of the most important ideas: such as, whether as humans we share a collective purpose on earth to fulfil, or have any purpose at all. Ethics has for its roots the contemplation and awareness of what is right and wrong, and it has been exciting to engage with the ideas of various philosophers and teachers such as Bentham and Stewart Mill, St Augustine and Thomas Aquinas in order to understand the fragility that lies in the structure of human ethics. Moreover, engaging in healthy discussion of the effectiveness of ethical theories combined with evaluative component in essay forms that allows me to be clear, critically analytic in forming conclusions and judgements.

After viewing Wonder.land, a drama workshop at the National Youth Theatre opened my eyes to physical theatre. I have immersed myself in the world of theatre, seeing a wide variety ofplays from the Hammersmith Apollo's modern adaptation of Shakespeare's Midsummer's Night Dream to the Old Vic's production of the Lorax. Doing so has been an eye opener into the impact of theatre in the real world scratching an itch of interest to write my own work. I also play for a Senior Football team competitively, where I have learn the art of working as a team in order to achieve shared goals. I have also been involved in Debating with Debate Mate and had the chance to debate at the House of Commons.

A Liberal Arts course, in its Interdisciplinary connections, will suit my own curiosity and

allow me the autonomy to engage in a polygamous relationship with different course modules rather than the traditional monogamous marriage with a specific subject. As a First Generation scholar, acquiring a degree would be a great achievement for me.

**Film**

My enjoyment of film lies in the fact that it can be used both as a creative outlet and as an instrument for change. For example, films and television can highlight flaws in society in an powerful and affecting way, such in Charlie Brooker's 'Black Mirror'. I find the series

inspiring because of the way in which the mix of thriller and sci-fi elements and the dark

realistic overtones they create reflect "the way we live now," as Brooker says. For instance, our obsession with documenting our lives has disastrous effects in 'Entire History of You' which I think is directed beautifully by Brian Welsh for its increasingly claustrophobic feel, reflecting the diminishing sanity of the protagonist. A genre I also respect for this reason is Social Realism. I greatly value films like 'I, Daniel Blake' and 'Sweet Sixteen' by Ken Loach for their social impact through the way they criticise classism; an issue I am passionate about. In this year of my film studies course we are creating a short film and studying different genres such as documentary and my favourite; Soviet and German Expressionism. I am influenced by German Expressionism's defiance against reality through its twisted sets which reflect the collective inner turmoil of Germany post WWI. Due to the detail needed to create the nightmarish effects for expressionist films we also have them to thank for pioneering several film techniques that I wish to employ in my own films, including stop motion, exemplified in the over view shots of the city in 'Metropolis'.

I also have a similar preference for dark genres in literature such as crime and horror, one of my favourite texts being the poem The Raven, by Edgar Allen Poe. In my own time I enjoy emulating the key ideas of gothic literature through my own writing of screenplays. Creating scripts is something I frequently discuss in a film club I ran wherein students from all years could come and watch a film and have a topical discussion on it afterwards. My fascination with the macabre has aided me so far on my English literature course as we have studied gothic literature in Angela Carter's The Bloody Chamber, which I found valuable for its radical feminist portrayal of women during an era of incomplete women's Liberation. Linked to this is my love of work by Dadaist Hannah Hoch, who I think is greatly undervalued for her contribution to the movement. As a mixed raced LGBT female I find it important that women and other minorities are recognised for their contribution to art in which they are often overlooked.

I enjoy Hoch's work as I am fascinated by how the Dadaists presented ideas of destruction as a form of creation. In order to further study movements like this I have visited a number of art galleries and at the Tate Modern I came across one of my favourite pieces 'liquid crystal environment' by Gustav Metzger which I love for the way it combines both art and film . When I was at the Cardiff Natural History museum I studied work by Alexander Adams from his collection Defaced Portrait which has inspired me to study Anonymity as a form of violence as I wanted my work to highlight how media generalises certain groups in order to demonise them. I have decided to use video as a medium with performance artists such as Andy Warhol and Marina Abramovic as inspiration.

I believe that studying film at university will give me the opportunity to express my ideas

about modern issues in order to encourage change. I am from a working class background and have always tried to be the change I wish to see in the world, whether through taking part in student voice at my sixth form, or participating in anti-austerity marches. I want to take an active role in making those ideas heard through my own film-making and I look forward to engaging with a broad spectrum of people who have a similar passion for film.

**English**

I was sympathetic with Armando Iannucci’s statement, on ‘I’ve Never Seen Star Wars’, that he’d never read Jeeves and Wooster on the assumption that it was a comedy about the inferiority of the working classes. It is, in fact, a sophisticated subversion of the standard correlation between class and intelligence; characterising Wooster’s valet as the epitome of eloquence and perfect articulation and Wooster as the bumbling fool. I want to study English literature because I want to challenge traditional representations of social and political identities.

Historical context is always important to me when considering texts: I attended an Oxford day school on late 19th century gothic fiction which culminated in a lecture on Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes stories (the subject of my Level 2 EPQ) which provide a perfect record of Victorian anxieties - not merely in terms of the obvious threat of crime, but fear that the potentiality for primal evil exists in all members of civilised society – a fear of atavism that emerged in response to Darwin’s theory of evolution. Said’s theory of Orientalism is arguably applicable to both Doyle’s Holmes and Stoker’s Dracula as colonial texts. Historically much gothic literature has presented oversimplified notions of East and West, suggesting the threat to polite British society is only ever foreign in origin and uncivilised in nature; a seemingly anachronistic notion which continues to be peddled by right wing tabloids. Context for me is always key: in my comparative coursework I am exploring notions of the Pastoral in Brideshead Revisited and Jerusalem which each lament the loss of ideologically opposed Pastoral Edens. I was similarly engaged by our class debates around the presentation of ‘Coriolanus’ as an emblem of or as a victim of the rigid patriarchal structures of the Roman State. I am interested in the way my A level disciplines intersect, and this is evident here: Coriolanus argues the “common man” could not be trusted with a political voice; recent developments (Trump’s election and the Brexit vote) could be seen to support the notion there is need for epistocracy - if you give the "common curs" the vote, they may choose wrongly, and dangerously. Of course, this in itself is a very dangerous idea, presenting as it does a fundamental challenge to the principles of democracy.

Politics is hugely significant in both my academic and personal life. In Sinclair Lewis’ ‘It Couldn’t Happen Here’ a rise in populism is depicted parallel to the present one, that has (as Matthew d’Ancona says) created a post-truth society. I am especially interested in gender politics and consider the study of female writers and female identity crucial to literature as a discipline. I strongly identified with the character of Jane Eyre - primarily for her obstinacy in the face of both structural privilege, and individuals’ attempts to constrain her. Bronte superbly conveys the strength of the character through the narrative style, which shapes the heroine’s view of herself as a woman of agency despite the attempts of patriarchy to control her. Conversely, Hardy’s Tess is defined by her passivity, and choices are made for her by the male agencies in her life. Studying Rossetti for A level, I was intrigued by the tension between the empathy she shows for rebellious girls in her poetry, and her lifelong opposition to female suffrage. I also found many of the key ideas in Mary Wollstonecraft’s ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Woman’ depressingly relevant to contemporary society. Last year, I delivered a talk as part of our sixth form lecture society on Artemisia Gentileschi and the marginalisation which continues to be suffered by female artists.

The opportunities university will offer me, both academically and personally, are enticing. I cannot think of anything more rewarding than spending three years immersed in boooks, and engaging in debate around them, with others who enjoy a rigorous academic environment as much as I do.

**History of Art**

As an avid artist, reader, and historian, I am convinced that the study of art throughout

history has helped to document, as well as to make sense of, the turbulence of human life. I am deeply interested in human society and development, at all levels; cultural, political,

social and economic.

Art can act as a powerful lens, and I am interested in what it can bring into focus. In

English, I am comparing the work of Audre Lorde and Maya Angelou; both women use the visual to describe difference, and enact change through the powerful use of violent metaphors. In my own art, I have incorporated textual elements: inspired by artists such as Jenny Holzer and Barbara Kruger, my work tells a story in several different tongues. It is the responsibility of the art historian to choose how these artefacts and works of art are represented in academic discourse. This excites me: through writing about art, and creating debate surrounding its reception, we can enrich and elevate the object of study.

My approach to art has been informed by travels. My experience in Ecuador with Camps

International has impacted on the way I see the world. Encountering local people and their

traditions made me evaluate my Eurocentric understanding of art. In Western society art is

often seen as no more than another asset in our capitalist culture, whilst in Ecuador

artisanal practices lead to the creation of a commodity made from bare hands and sold for a dollar in order to put food on the table. This was interesting, as I had been told for many

years how self-indulgent art was, a hobby rather than the means to a sustainable income. I was honoured to have been welcomed into this community, but since my travels I have been more focused on social issues; I recognize the geographical lottery I have won which allows me relative liberation as a woman as well as economic prosperity.

My interest in the study of people is linked to my approach to the art gallery, and

institution. In 2014, on work experience at the Royal Academy of Arts, I was introduced to the institution as a meeting place for ideas; a workshop on Joseph Cornell and collage brought art history into real-time. More recently, taking part in an exhibition at the Gerald Moore gallery, I collaborated with two professional artists, Emma Finn and Amy Ash on discussions surrounding human instincts and systems of learning. Playing with themes of nature vs. nurture, we led tours around the gallery and asked visitors to interact with the artworks on display. This interest in how art and the world collide was recently reiterated whilst viewing Paul Hansen's exhibition 'Being There' at the Fotografskia gallery. Hansen uses his lenses to tell the story of modern day struggles all over the world; the power of Hansen's gaze manages to communicate with the viewer in a unique way.

Documentation of the past through art also fascinates me. For example ancient Greek pottery gives us insight to the culture, life and minds of the 1st millennium BC. Grayson Perry's vases draw inspiration from these artefacts to document the diverse life and culture of the 21st century, as well as to represent and animate social conflicts and issues such as Brexit and radical politics.

Education is not necessary to view art, but it can help us to understand its importance.

Everyone can understand the feeling of despair in Rothko's 'Black on Maroon' and the sense of an uneasy conflict between the self and society in Arbus' 'Identical Twins', but unless we give art the platform in schools that it deserves, its nuances can't be experienced by all. For me art's aim for inclusivity can help us to see the past through a different lens than the colonial, white, male gaze that we accept as our story. Through my studies I aim to consider a view of our history which takes into account every narrative. I am deferring my place as I am planning to complete an art foundation course before beginning my degree.

**Music**

Music is both visceral and cerebral, and this dual nature is utterly captivating and

provoking: The Rite of Spring caused rioting at its first performance; Carmen, forty years

before, similarly. In both cases extraordinary music provoked extraordinary feeling, but in

both you may need to know the sociohistorical context as well as the musicology to understand why. Carmen shocks by virtue of her disruption of social norms; Stravinsky with his polyrhythms and percussion-it is the music itself as well as Nijinsky's choreography that caused the scandal.

The power of music can also be seen in its effect on communities, such as the Landfillharmonic in Paraguay, where music made literally out of rubbish brings people together. It is sad that classical music's reputation is often as an art for the elite, while it has such transformative power on the lives of ordinary people. At the intersection of my school subjects lies an extended project on Carmen, influenced by a Sutton Trust lecture at Cambridge in August this year. I'm gripped by Bizet's choice of a female protagonist, based on the despised "pétroleuses" (female supporters of the Paris Commune, accused of burning down much of Paris) and by the history of the opera's reception. I am becoming increasingly involved on the topic of women as artists: Clara Schumann's piano trio in G minor is on the A-level syllabus, but I'm interested in her biography too. Reading Reich's The Artist and The Woman, I was fascinated by how a woman of that period became so admired and successful.

History A level this year focuses on Germany from 1870 to 1990, and I have been able to

connect my detailed understanding of this period to Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time, the score of which I came across this summer. Written in a Prisoner of War camp with scant resources, its lulling harmonies as well as hypnotic tempi (especially in the last movement, Louange à l'Immortalité de Jésus) and other moments of strained, haunting 'sul G' melodies and the patterning of gentle birdsong give the music a sense of the agony and ecstasy of a profound Catholic faith. McMullen's The Miracle of Stalag 8A helped me grasp the political and religious diversity of the musicians he was working with and the difficulty of his circumstances which still lead to this remarkable music (I am interested in Shostakovich's mid-century travails for the same reason.) Messiaen's obsession with the phrase "there shall be time no longer" seems evident in Liturgie de Cristal, as the bird song melodies passed between the violin and clarinet, mixed with the range of note values and syncopation in the piano, create an aura devoid of meter. The composer also plays with time in other ways; individual instruments drop out for long stretches and when performed the silent observation of some players creates a disjointed performance. Compared to the unity of other movements, the juxtaposition is so great it could even mirror the destruction Messiaen witnessed first-hand verses the creation humans are capable of.

I attend Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, have my violin grade 8 (distinction) grade 7 viola and grade 5 piano and perform in a variety of ensembles and venues (LSO St Luke's, Cadogan Hall and The Royal Albert Hall, my favourite concert being in Blackheath Halls in 2016 where I played the violin solo in Scheherazade). I presently lead the Junior Trinity Symphony Orchestra and have played 1st & 2nd violin as well as viola in a number of string quartets. I also play in the Composers' Ensemble (quartet, plus piano, percussion, wind, brass), which performs and composes collaboratively, and is the reason I have experience of improvisation. I also sing in their choir and pick out material on the guitar to relax.

Music has always been a huge part of my life, and having spent an enjoyable week at Cambridge University over the summer I would relish the opportunity to immerse myself in the subject as an undergraduate.