



## WITH LOGIC & SENSITIVITY

Adele Guyton, *Student*

*Adele is a 14-year-old student from the USA who lived in several different countries prior to coming to Brockwood this year. These are her reflections on Brockwood, and especially the Book Club after being here for a term.*

One evening at the end of September I found myself walking up the stairs to the Library for Brockwood's first Book Club meeting of the term. I have always been a lover of stories, but had never been in a book club before, so I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I don't know whether or not Brockwood has had a book club in the past, but this particular one began with last year's librarian, Usha. Coco Tas, one of last year's members, re-started it this year.

The group which assembled for this first meeting was eclectic, and as the term has gone on it has only become more so: students and staff, old and young, of all different backgrounds and reading preferences. While books are what the club revolves around, I come for the discussions we have and the companionship of some I might not otherwise have become acquainted with.

All the conversations of the Book Club have been fascinating in different ways. Oftentimes we will start with a presentation of a book, and the free discussion begins there. Though we sometimes stick to the topic we begin with, we have no obligation to do so, and we frequently look up to see that our thoughts have carried us from the

highest of fantasies to our own lives. The distance is not as great as it might seem.

Perhaps my favourite, and certainly the most personal session to me, was our third, in which I presented my own book-in-progress. I have shown my work to many people before, but this particular time was a unique experience. For starters, the majority of the segments read aloud were read by people other than myself, allowing me to listen to my own work in a way I had never done before. Also, I was surrounded by other readers and aspiring writers, as well as a few special guests such as Reuben Weininger, one of the Present Tense speakers. [See page 10]

Introducing my story to this group was different in many ways, and one was their response. Often when people first read my work, they'll say something praising or vague, but only rarely something constructive. Good or not, there is almost always something to improve. While the Book Club did not dissect the passage read to them for mistakes and possibilities, they took the time to think carefully about what I had written. This way of approaching all situations, with both logic and sensitivity, is one of the things I love

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## WITH LOGIC & SENSITIVITY

most about Brockwood.

As a new student at Brockwood, I still marvel at the atmosphere here and how it has already affected the way I see the world. A mere six months ago it was quite ordinary to me to have a chock-full timetable of no choice whatsoever.

Looking back, it's nearly unthinkable. At my old school, innovative and forward-thinking as it was, philosophical conversations of the sort that are common here were things I hankered after.

In some ways, I think the atmosphere in the Book Club is a reflection of the best sides of Brockwood—thoughtful, caring, humorous, kind. Just as Brockwood does, it has its better days, when conversation comes readily and everyone is energetically engaged, and other times when it is more laid back, as I will be with Brockwood when the holidays roll around. I walk out of Book Club pleased and satisfied. I can't wait till next time.

### FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH:

From left to right: Milena, Adele, Jing-Yi, Izzy, Julie, Arina, Coco, Oliver, Pablo.

Photographer: Petter Goldstine.



Adele, age 14, USA

## PAPERLESS NEWS

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Friedrich Grohe

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## EVALUATING THE SELF, AND SELF-EVALUATION

Adrian Sydenham & Bill Taylor, Co-Principals

*Most schools in England can expect to be inspected at least every three years by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). This official body reports directly to Parliament and prides itself on being independent and impartial. Ofsted is due to inspect Brockwood in the spring, and the following forms part of a self-evaluation drawn up for the inspectors by the Co-Principals:*

Throughout his life, Krishnamurti challenged the then widespread and traditional educational models based on behavioural conditioning and memorising information, overtraining the intellect in factory-style production line fashion. He emphasized instead a spirit of inquiry, relentless reflection on the deeper issues of life, and relationship not only with people but also with the natural and material worlds. He saw the pursuit of self-knowledge as the key to problematic issues; and excellence was to be encouraged in all areas of life, not only in the classroom. Together with increased self-knowledge and inquiry, this would lead to uncovering what one truly wished to do with one's life in terms of career.

At Brockwood, examinations are seen as only a segment of educational endeavour rather than as an end target, and may not be necessary or relevant for some of our UK or international students. They may also mean different things to different people, so the final grade may in some cases be less important than the emotional and intellectual challenge of following through with exam preparation. Where enjoyable learning is happening, the exams are unlikely to prove an insuperable hurdle. In some respects Brockwood may be likened to other schools of the alternative strand, while retaining unique elements, principally its non-proselytising and non-denominational view of education as a deeply religious activity and its vegetarian kitchen.

All students in the main school take part in the process of creating their own individual learning programmes at the beginning of September. This process stretches over a number of days and students choose from a relatively



Petter Goldstine

Bill Taylor and Adrian Sydenham

wide variety of academic, hands-on, specialist interest, and sporting activities. Although classes are not streamed according to age as such, but rather by ability and emotional maturity, it is usually expected that younger and newer students will be steered towards a balanced, holistic diet of classes, whereas students in their third year or above may be given more leeway in narrowing their interests. Nevertheless, all students are expected to attend K-Class (small discussion groups looking at school issues with works by the founder), Care for the Earth (outdoor classes making use of the garden or estate as learning resources), and Inquiry Time (whole school discussion). In addition, new students are asked to attend one period of Human Development each week, focusing on personal, health and social issues, and including sex education.

Our chief purpose in maintaining a school based on educational inquiry, rather than on the more usual targets of easily measurable graded achievements, is to prepare and encourage the students towards taking responsibility for their own learning and simultaneously encouraging the awakening of their intelligence. This intelligence, while not denying the need and possibility for academic excellence, may also express itself in non-academic arenas, relationships and organisational or theatrical skills, for example, rather than just in an exam result.

## STUDENTS' INQUIRY

## QUESTION EVERYTHING

Vasudev Devadasan, *Student*

"None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free."

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832)*

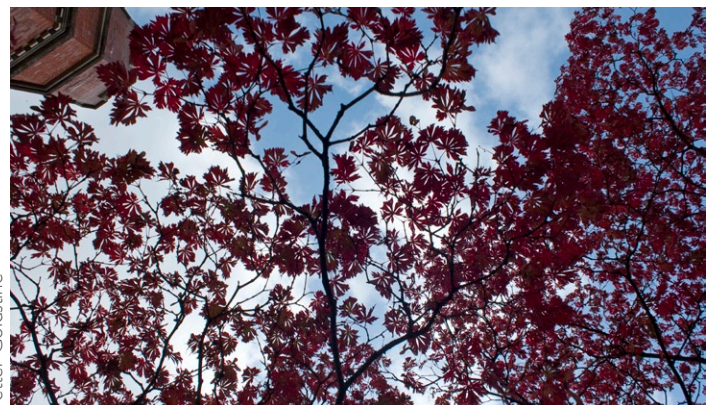
We live in a world of paradigms, whether they be utilitarian economics, democratic constitutions, environmental consciousness or the emphasis on individuality. These are our realities, and while we are constantly tinkering with and revising them (not to mention constantly complaining about them) we seldom stop to question the basis on which they are founded. In the world, at Brockwood and in my own life I often see how wonderfully creative we are at addressing and solving symptoms of bigger more fundamental issues. Is there a problem with avoiding issues that seem too abstract to affect our lives? None answers this question more eloquently than a certain Albert Einstein: "The problems we have cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that created them." A paradigm shift occurs when a question is asked within the current paradigm that can only be answered outside it. This brings to the forefront one of the resounding intentions of Brockwood: question everything.

As a student at Brockwood, I have had the privilege of witnessing this powerful idea in action. This term the students met for eight hours over two days to solve issues that caused division and controversy in the school. This charged atmosphere, created by the seemingly unpleasant situation, soon stripped away the superficial issues and had all of us questioning aspects of the school we take for granted. Namely our relationships, communication and community. After eight hours of dialogue with over seventy students, we had few answers, and were physically, mentally and emotionally drained. Maybe it was all in vain. Yet, in the next few weeks, the school was filled with a vibrant, radiant energy, created by a new kinship within the community that had more people speaking their minds than ever before.

How did this happen? For me it comes back to questioning. In the process of questioning the community we subtly knit the very bonds that create a community.

Eight hours of dialogue brought about an unprecedented understanding of communication. And realizing that we were all there, not for ourselves, but for each other, created a unity that is seldom seen among two individuals, let alone seventy students from all corners of the world. We may not have found any quantifiable answers, yet we found something far greater. To intellectualize about what constitutes a community can be done by anybody: to truly understand what a community is in the deepest sense requires you to be part of one. And we are privileged.

That the act or process of questioning can be as fruitful as finding a solution or answer is something that is rarely recognized nowadays. And as we leave Brockwood and go our separate ways, one can only hope that we carry this questioning attitude towards all aspects of life, whether at a personal, social or global level. As we questioned what we took for granted we were elevated to a new level of thinking that created a new level of community at Brockwood. As we see the current social, economic and political paradigms of our day fraying at the edges, maybe it is time to question them and elevate the world to a new level of understanding and thinking. A world where, rather than having a silent majority that accepts the status quo, each one of us sees the limitations of intellectual materialism, and questions everything. For this is the free world.



Petier Goldstine

## DO YOU WANT TO ACCEPT THE WORLD AS IT IS?

Jiddu Krishnamurti in dialogue with students at Brockwood Park, 10th October 1971

**K**rishnamurti: Here we are in beautiful countryside, living in a small community where relationship matters enormously. If we can live here with a quality of feeling and mind that is not wholly self-centred, then when we leave this place, as we must, perhaps we shall be able to live in the world at a different level, at a different dimension, with a different feeling and action and affection. And to live like that—not just occasionally but with a deep sense of significance and worthwhileness and a feeling of sacredness—I think one has to be free of fear, or understand what fear is. Do you know what you are afraid of?

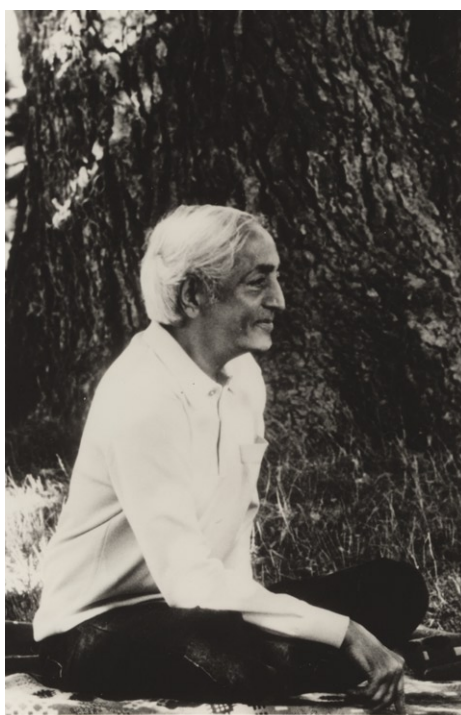
S: The unknown.

K: The unknown. My lord! What do you mean by the unknown? The tomorrow, what the world will be like when you grow up and you have to face all the noise and the racket and absurdity of it? Is that what you are frightened of? How will you be free of that fear so that you can face it without darkness, without withdrawal, without a neurotic reaction to what the world is? How will you meet it? If you are afraid of it, you can't meet it, can you? If you have any kind of belief about how you should behave in that chaotic world, if you have already set a pattern of behaviour with regard to that, won't that pattern, that idea, that conclusion, make it much more difficult?

Do you know what fear does? It makes you aggressive, violent; or you withdraw and become slightly neurotic, peculiar, resisting any kind of relationship with anybody, building a wall around yourself. If you don't solve these fears now, when you are young, fresh and have plenty of vitality and energy, later on you won't be able to, it will

become much more difficult.

So shouldn't we consider what our fears are and see if we can get rid of them now, while you are here, while you are protected, where we feel at home. If you don't feel at home here, it is your fault. If you feel disturbed and therefore you are inviting authority, then you are creating the authority, aren't you? While we are here, looking at each other practically every day, shouldn't we understand any kind of fear we feel?



Photograph by Mark Edwards  
© Copyright Krishnamurti Foundation Trust

Why do you think about the future? Why do you look at the future in terms of what you are now? You are young; how will you know what you will be in twenty years' time? Is it because you have an image of what you should be in twenty years and that image may not be right? Why do you have this image of yourself and the world?

S: We have been conditioned to have such an image.

K: That means what? Go into it. Examine it. You feel you have to conform, don't you. And you don't want to conform. Because you have long hair, short hair, you are different, you are young, so you say, "I don't want to conform". And yet you are conforming. You have the image of yourself which has been created by the culture in which you live, and you say that image must conform to the pattern which

is projected by that image. And because it may not conform, you are frightened.

So why do you have an image about yourself or the world? The world is cruel, brutal, harsh, violent, full of competition, hate, struggle, everybody trying to get a job. That is a fact, isn't it, so why do you have an image about it? Why don't you say, "That is a fact"? The sun is shining; that is a fact. You don't fight the fact. You say that is what it is. Right?

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# TASTE OF AUTUMN

## FRUITFUL LABOUR

Matthew Taylor, *Mature Student*

After watching so many apples go to waste in past years, we decided not to let that happen this year. So we put our heads together at the beginning of the season and bought a beautiful new apple press, along with pasteurizing equipment and bottles to store the juice through the winter. Once our new equipment arrived, we had a formidable task ahead of us—countless mornings picking, sorting and pressing our apples.



So, one might ask, was our project worthwhile? In one light, we finished the season with 450 litres of juice, which easily paid back the original cost of equipment that should last decades. However, for me the real answer came from watching the reaction of people tasting the juice for the first time: “Lovely!” “Gorgeous!” “Amazing!”, they would say, while savouring every drop. Anyone who tasted the juice knows that our time was well spent—more delicious and healthy than anything money can buy.



## THE TREES IGNITE

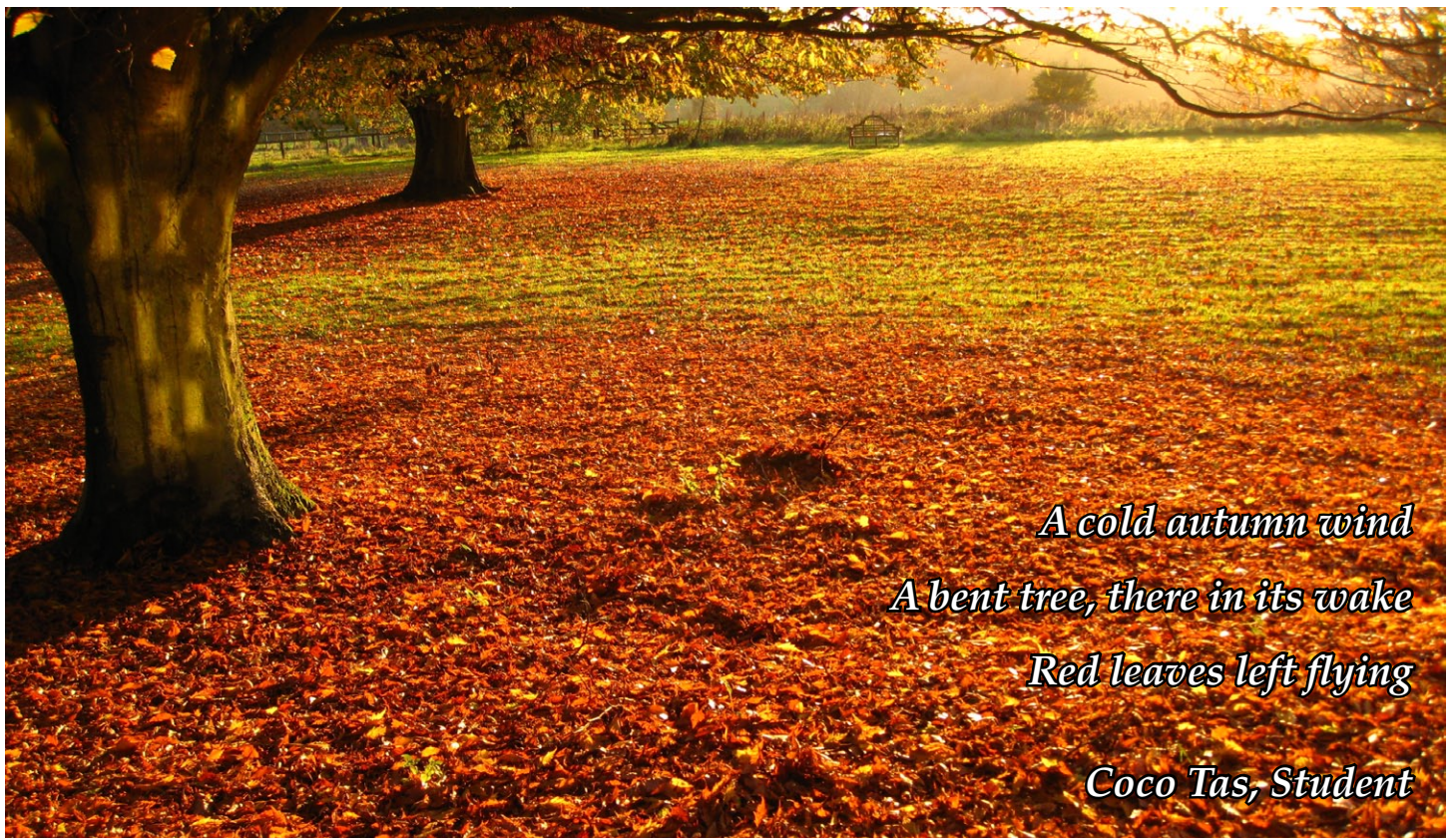
Sabia Smith, *Student*

The trees ignite,  
Engulfed in a mass of orange and red.  
The flames rise slowly beginning to lick the branches,  
Finally devouring the leaves.  
They fall, borne up in the air, their sins cast up to the heavens,  
Floating as a feather, drifting in the wind.  
The sea of fire burns before my eyes, an eternal Indian summer.  
The mist rolls up the foothills, Nature strives to hide her young from such horrors,  
And yet the flames are dimmed not, burning brighter still,  
Illuminating the glorious earth on which the leaves, dead, are aslumber,  
Waiting to enter the cycle of life once more.

The silence envelops all who enter the Sacred realm of Nature's Dreamland.  
One may slip unnoticed through the land of sleeping children, and rest  
Below the weeping trees who mourn the loss of their companions.  
Exposed they sit, and you sit too, and rest awhile  
Both awaiting the time when life begins again.  
And as you both begin to recline, the sun illumines the earth.  
The mist glistens while the flames rise in tidal waves,  
First red, yellow, orange, purple and then  
The sweet entanglement of them all,  
A disarray of Nature's perfect order.



Kara Taylor



Benjamin Hammond

*A cold autumn wind  
A bent tree, there in its wake  
Red leaves left flying  
Coco Tas, Student*

## ARTS &amp; ARCHITECTURES

## DUO DISCOVER DULCIMER

Rusbe Torkashvand, *Mature Student*

Since the beginning of the first term, Willie and Michael have been learning to play the santur. The santur is an ancient Persian hammered dulcimer, which was already being played in the orchestra of King Nebuchadnezzar in 1100 BC.



Nicholas Hennell-Foley

Willie, age 18, UK and Michael, age 17, Germany

It is a trapezoid-shaped box often made of walnut with 72 strings spanning three and a half octaves. It has a metallic sound, very bright and lucid. Iranian classical music relies on both improvisation and composition, and is based on a series of modal scales and tunes which are memorized. The Persian santur is primarily tuned to a variety of different diatonic scales utilizing quarter tones designated as 12 Dastgah's (modes). These 12 Dastgah's are the repertory of Persian classical music known as the Radif. Playing this kind of music is, in the beginning, like speaking a foreign language with a new grammar and different pronunciation. But, gradually, one starts to cherish the melodies and the variety of the different forms of expression.

Persian classical music combines the qualities of dreaminess, melancholy, wisdom and passion, which also echo the sentiments and atmosphere captured in the poems of Ferdousi, Hafez, Rumi and Khayyam.



## THE PAVILIONS PONDERED: THE CYCLE OF LIFE

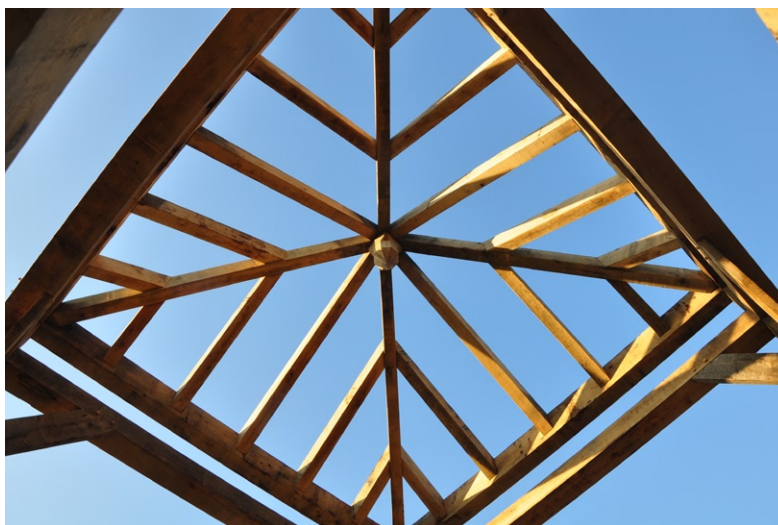
Mike Davies, *Construction Manager*

The year is 1950. The war in Europe has been over for five years, and someone in France is planting little oak saplings. Around that time, my little heart started beating inside my mother's womb.

It is now 2011. The oaks have been felled and transformed for a new life at Brockwood. I feel privileged to be here, witnessing their re-growth as the structural frames for the Pavilions project. The last two frames were erected by Carpenter Oak from Devon at the beginning of the month, and it is time now to get them covered in and weather-tight so that work can proceed on the interiors through the coming winter. We have already started to clean up the first ones, removing the tannin stains from months of exposure in the Devon yard by light sandblasting with a fine silica sand. It is

the tannins that give oak its resistance to fungal and insect attack, but when wet these same tannins leach out, causing

unsightly dark staining on the surface. Tannin, old High German for oak, has also been used for centuries to turn animal hides into leather, and its presence in the leaves of the oak is responsible for making them poisonous to cattle, goats and sheep. Yet, strangely, pigs, squirrels and jays can feed entirely on acorns—"One man's poison is another man's cake".



The glazed lanterns of the Pavilions will provide plenty of natural light.

We are also beginning to fit the first of the triple-glazed, timber windows from Sweden, followed by the untreated Siberian larch weatherboards for the external walls.

It truly is an international community we have here at Brockwood.



The green oak frames were constructed in Devon and erected onsite.



There will be seven interconnected Pavilions around a central landscaped garden.

# VISITING SPEAKERS

## PRESENT TENSE

A Series of Presentations by Former Students & Invited Guests on 

Be a part of it!

Lionel Claris, *Staff*

Brockwood has always benefited from visiting alumni and guests who have taken the time to share with students and staff something of their life's work and experience. These visits contribute immensely to the richness of the culture here and assist students in thinking creatively about their "life after Brockwood". They also help staff reflect on the education we offer and our ties with the outside world and our alumni. This year we have given a name to these special occasions in the School: "Present Tense" is intended to reflect something of the immediacy, relevance and sense of urgency that goes with a good presentation. We have also started recording the presentations for our YouTube channel for others to enjoy. There have been three during the first term:

- "Rainforest Etiquette in a World Gone Mad" by alumna and award-winning ecologist Suprabha Seshan.
- "What Brockwood was like in the Early 1970s" by alumnus and psychiatrist Reuben Weininger.
- "Make Sense of it Later" by alumna, teacher and welfare worker Martina Street.

A longer account of the first two presentations follows, and all can be viewed on: <http://www.youtube.com/user/BrockwoodParkSchool> If you would like to offer something for Present Tense, or know of someone whom you think would be a good speaker, please email us at [alumni@brockwood.org.uk](mailto:alumni@brockwood.org.uk), or give us a call. Most presentations will occur on a Saturday at 5.30pm, but other days and times may be possible.

## RAINFOREST ETIQUETTE IN A WORLD GONE MAD

Fiamma Borgni, *Student*

At the beginning of October, Brockwood's former student Suprabha Seshan, an award-winning ecologist as well as an educator at the Gurukula Botanical Sanctuary, tried to bring our focus to the connection we have with our beloved planet. She posed some fundamental questions with an engaging rhetoric. She captured our attention; I could sense the atmosphere in the room totally engaged with what she was saying.

I myself felt profoundly touched and challenged by what she said. What is the world I am going into once I leave my little bubble of paradise in Brockwood? What future am I walking towards? How do I react and what do I do?

She left me with the perception of an existing connection with the living beings of this planet that we often forget, although we can no longer afford to do so. Not only can we not live without a wild and healthy environment, but we can't survive. And this wild environment is collapsing as a consequence of our lack of ability to make this small connection. As she put it, "We behave as though we can have a biosphere and eat it too".



Suprabha Seshan, *Alumna*

## WHAT BROCKWOOD WAS LIKE IN THE EARLY 1970s

Oliver Belus, *Student*

Reuben A. Weininger visited our school on the 22nd of October. His lecture was truly enthralling as he explained what life was like in the early years of Brockwood, the influence the school has had on his development as a psychiatrist, and how Krishnamurti's presence influenced the students and intentions of the school.

When Reuben first arrived at Brockwood, he felt a "magical presence" tingling in the air. It seemed as though silence emanated throughout the school. It was a place where everyone knew that they could be alone when they wanted to and that it was all right to be alone with oneself. He also felt that there was a lot of "space", and that the school had an intimate family feeling. Sometimes the students would cook supper together with the staff, which created a warm collective experience. Everyone engaged passionately within Brockwood's atmosphere of sharing and cooperation among the staff members and the students. The fundamental intention of the school was freedom. Classes were quite unstructured, and most did not have many students. There was no set curriculum, and exam taking was completely optional. Brockwood was truly about questioning together. It was this process of inquiry that had an impact on Reuben's life, rather than the accumulation of information.

Reuben talked about how Krishnamurti's presence influenced Brockwood when he visited the school. Krishnamurti, known to the students as Krishnaji, came to the school for a couple of months each year and lived in the West Wing. There was always a sparkle of anticipation and anxiety in the air in the weeks prior to his return, which heightened upon his arrival. He would meet with the students twice a week without any staff members. When he was with the students, he was very gentle, generous, and kept everyone on their toes.

"It seemed as though Krishnamurti could see right through you, and when he said that he was nobody, he truly acted as if he were nobody. He would let people ahead of him while standing in line for supper, or he would carry things and help people around him. When he sat at the dining tables, he literally took up no space," said Reuben.

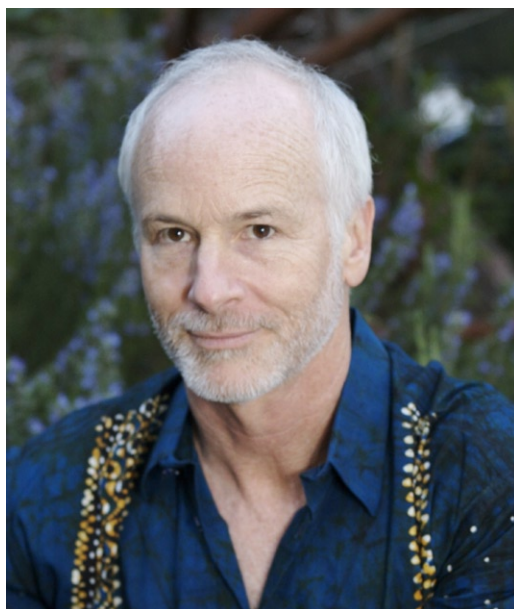
Krishnamurti also encouraged the students to persist in inquiry despite any doubts and distractions they might have, and to openly explore these questions. It was important for the students to develop their own opinions, as Krishnamurti did not accept people intellectualizing or using "second hand thoughts".

Reuben also mentioned how important meditation and yoga were at Brockwood, and how they have influenced his life. Brockwood had a meditation shed they called the "med shed". Krishnamurti would often take some students into it, not telling them anything about how they were to meditate. The students would sit there quietly, and after a while Krishnamurti would leave. He did not instruct anyone on what meditation was, encouraging exploration and

inquiry above all else. This helped the students develop a sense of inner reflection.

In the early years of Brockwood, every student did yoga, and this was one of the biggest influences on Reuben's life. It was an important process of getting to know one's body, reactions and attitude. The students would do yoga every day, and Reuben feels as though it has become a core practice for him. Krishnamurti believed that this helped the students develop good physical and mental hygiene.

The sense Reuben had was that the power of the place was greatly influenced by Krishnamurti's presence, and he strongly feels that it is still here today. Brockwood has helped him become open, attentive and alert, and, most importantly, it has cultivated in him the art of questioning life itself, and not taking anything for granted.



Reuben Weininger, *Alumnus*

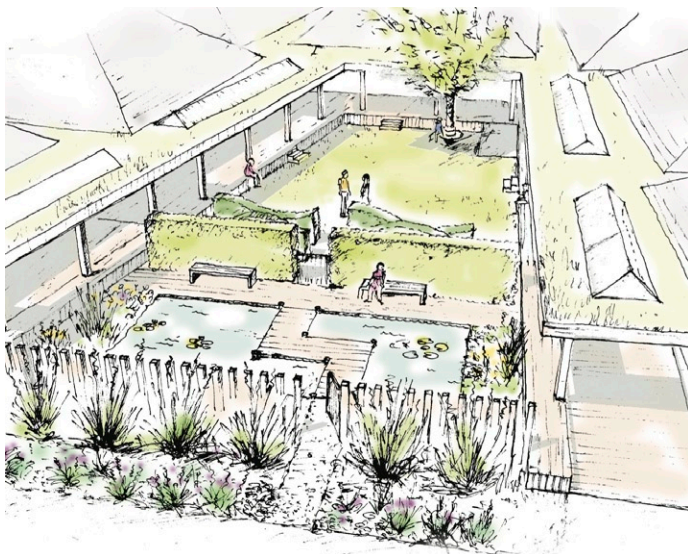
# BROCKWOOD ONLINE

## THE BROCKWOOD PARK SCHOOL BLOG Our Online Ongoing Narrative Re-visited

Why not connect to the Brockwood Blog regularly to get the latest news? You can access the Blog from the main school webpage at [www.brockwood.org.uk](http://www.brockwood.org.uk) or you can directly get to it at <http://blog.brockwood.org.uk>. There you will find a visually appealing, interactive, site that allows you not only to get the freshest news but to leave comments as well as see old and new pictures in our galleries. Here are some recent Blog posts as examples of what you will find there:

### New Garden at Brockwood

"The courtyard is a secluded, south facing space surrounded on three sides by the adjoining green roofed verandah that connects the seven Pavilions. It will be a popular, protected gathering and studying environment for students and staff." This is how former staff member and current Trustee, Gary Primrose, describes the space for which he has designed a beautiful new garden featuring sculpted yew hedges, a rectangular pond accessed by a board walk and all surrounded by native trees and perennial grasses.



### International Vegetarian Food Festival

Once or twice during the school year we hold a "Food Festival", in which groups of students and staff concoct dishes from their national regions to share with the whole school. This year our first food festival took place early, in the second week of school, allowing everyone to get to know one another better by cooking together. All staff kitchens were utilized, and students did all the organizing. It was an overwhelming success!

### Garden Rooms Get New Green Roof



Mark Apted

When our much loved nine old Garden Rooms, some of which are used as classrooms and some as bedrooms, were clearly in need of a new roof, we decided to go for a green solution. The idea is to preserve nature as much as possible when building, instead of destroying it. By having a "green roof" we are bringing nature back!



Mark Apted

# BROCKWOOD'S ONLY POP QUIZ

## A BROCKWOOD EDUCATION: Self-Reflection from Application to Graduation

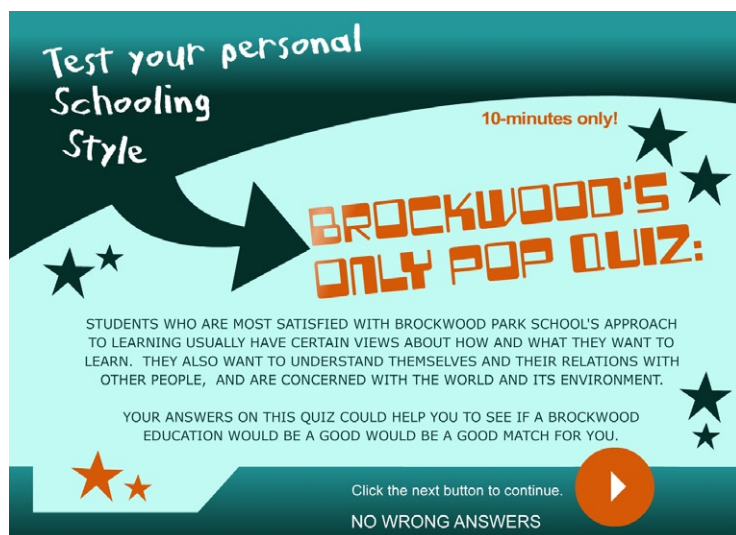
Lionel Claris, *Staff*

Do you prefer to do your learning in a classroom, or in a cozy space with six peers from six different countries and a teacher from a seventh? Would you rather be told what to read, watch, listen to and think, or figure it out for yourself?

Since this past September Brockwood has had an online questionnaire on its website's homepage. Over 500 people have already taken it! It is meant for prospective students and anyone interested in Brockwood's unique approach to education, not so much for them to test themselves, but rather to have a chance to be self-reflective about their learning and living preferences from their first contact with the place.

The reason we call the survey "Brockwood's only Pop Quiz" is because a *pop quiz* is a short exam given to students without prior warning, which is typically stressful and tends to be conducive to learning as memorizing more than learning as understanding. You may want to take the quiz yourself—it only takes 10 minutes or less! You can access it on our home page.

Honest answers on this quiz can help prospective students see if they might be interested in a Brockwood education. The quiz is divided into three sections: learning styles, living with others, and values. Brockwood students helped with the design and writing of the quiz, which itself was quite a self-reflective exercise!



[www.brockwood.org.uk](http://www.brockwood.org.uk)

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### *DO YOU WANT TO ACCEPT THE WORLD AS IT IS? (continued from page 5)*

Do you want to fit into that? Do you want to accept the world as it is? Do you accept it and join it and become like that? Do you want to be that? Do you want to conform? Do you know what it means not to conform with something? That means going against the whole structure of society, against the morality, business, religion, the whole culture, which means you have to stand alone. You may starve, you may have no money, you may have no business, but you have to stand alone. Can you? Will you?

You don't know, do you? So why are you frightened? You may or may not. One of the great fears in our life is to conform, and yet you fear what will happen if you don't conform. If you conform, then you become like the rest, which is much easier. But if you don't conform, then the whole world is against you. This is very serious, you understand? You use

your brains. Unless you have the intelligence to withstand the world, you will be destroyed. If you have fear, you cannot have that intelligence. Right?

So you have to look at the whole problem; look at it, understand it, go into it. Don't just say, 'I am frightened'. The culture in which we are born makes us conform. Conformity brings fear, comparison makes you fear. At home, in the school, in the college, in the universities and when you are out in the world, everything is based on it. If you are frightened, then you are caught forever. But if you say, 'I am not going to be frightened', let's examine it, then let's find out how to live in this world without being frightened, without conforming, without always comparing yourself with somebody. If you know how to live that way you will never be frightened.

*Krishnamurti in dialogue with students at Brockwood Park  
10th October, 1971*

## ALUMNI NEWS

DONKEY YEARS:  
TWENTY-THREE YEARS AFTER BROCKWOODSebastian Rudy, *alumnus (1986-1988)*

There is a fire burning, and the oil lamp on the table illuminates pen and paper. The shadows created by the moving flame are distracting with the beauty of their movement. It is a month already that I am without electricity. What kind of school gives you an education that leads you to a life without money, without a career? Brockwood does. If it wasn't for my experience at Brockwood Park School, I wouldn't be living the life I lead today, on a remote farm out in the sticks of the Umbrian countryside in Italy.

After leaving Brockwood, I went on to study at Art Center College of Design in Switzerland and Pasadena in California, where I got my degree as a designer. I wanted to create stories using animation and film. However, to pay for college I got into advertising, and the financial benefits soon took over and smothered what I had set out to do. A career took off; cars became bigger and suits were all tailor-made. Ninety hour weeks were normal, holidays unnecessary and rare. This was something a healthy body and mind will not accept, and I fell ill.



It took many years and an expensive sports car for me to realize what I was doing. The very day I bought the car, after only fifteen minutes, I came to a halt at a red traffic light for a moment. And so did my life!

What are you doing with your life? Where have all your values gone? What is important to you? This car? Like a refreshing bucket of ice water it became clear to me that this could not go on, that I was wasting time—and life. A drastic change was needed. I gave most of my belongings away, and with the little that was left I moved to Italy, a country I had not been to before, nor did I speak the language. But it felt right. An old, dilapidated farm out in the woods was to become my new home.



Today, ten donkeys, twenty goats and three dogs live with me here on the farm. I produce most of what I need myself (except electricity) and try to live off as little as possible. Besides producing herbal remedies and natural cosmetics, I would like to turn the place into a didactic farm for children to come to experience the countryside and the animals.

Currently I'm writing a book on wild plants and their medicinal and culinary use. The beauty of nature inspired me to do an eco-fashion project. I wanted to create a garment that reflects this pure and natural beauty: [www.right-as-rain.com](http://www.right-as-rain.com) gives a glimpse of this project. All this and many other plans were inspired by my time at Brockwood. Understanding the necessity of inquiring always into what one really wants to do provided me with a wealth that no career could bring.

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# BROCKWOOD in PARIS

Saturday February 18th  
3-7pm

Lionel Claris, *Staff*

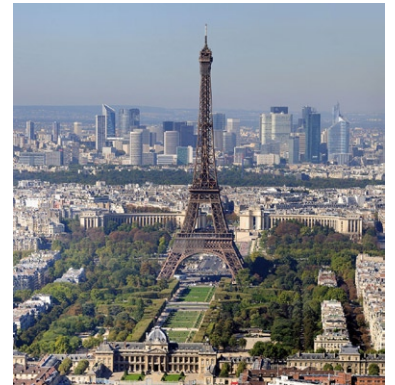
We are excited to invite you to join us in Paris and Barcelona for what promise to be memorable Brockwood alumni events! These will be the first gathering of its kind in these cities and we are inviting alumni to attend from all over.

The idea is for us to catch up with friends, network, exchange news, and brainstorm possible future contact. Last year we had such an event in New York City, Berlin and London where 50 former students and staff came together in inspiring ways. You may read an account of it and see pictures on our blog:

<http://blog.brockwood.org.uk>

Refreshments will be provided and those who are interested can stay back and we go for a meal.

Please RSVP quickly either on facebook or at [alumni@brockwood.org.uk](mailto:alumni@brockwood.org.uk) so that we have an idea of how many of us will be there in order to find the right venue. We are aiming for a central place in the city. Finally, if you would like to help in some manner with organising the event do let us know. We look forward to seeing you!



... and  
BARCELONA

All that is planned for Paris is also due to happen in Barcelona in May. We have yet to confirm the date, but it will coincide with a number of staff and students presenting the School at the Biocultura fair in Barcelona. If you can help us to arrange a central venue for the alumni meeting, or would like to get involved in the organisation of the event, we would love to hear from you. You can write to us at [alumni@brockwood.org.uk](mailto:alumni@brockwood.org.uk). We shall send out online further details of this event as soon as they are confirmed.

## THE ONLINE ALUMNI DIRECTORY

As former students or staff you can reconnect with old friends as well as network with new ones by registering in the Alumni Directory. You may do so by going to:

[www.brockwood.org.uk/alumni\\_directory](http://www.brockwood.org.uk/alumni_directory)

The Brockwood Alumni Directory is password protected, and the shared information is only available to other Alumni. The registration process has only a few mandatory fields; including 'your occupation', to enable work related networking.

## IF WE CAN ALL HELP...

All the staff who live and work at Brockwood do so for the minimum wage (prescribed by the government) helping to keep the overall expenses as low as possible, and in turn allowing us to set student fees at a level lower than those charged by most boarding schools. If we add to this the support available from our Bursary Fund, this means that Brockwood becomes an option for students from low-income families. If we can all help to keep the doors open for deserving students from around the world, Brockwood will remain the special place it is. We deeply appreciate any assistance you can give in the form of a donation or legacy. Contact: Co-Principal, Bill Taylor ([bill@brockwood.org.uk](mailto:bill@brockwood.org.uk)) for further details.

# BROCKWOOD IN BRIEF

## OF PLUMS, PUDDINGS AND PRESERVES

In our modern world of supermarkets, takeaways and instant processed food, many young people have never had the experience of baking bread, bottling preserves, or making jams. One group of students and staff have been busy countering this and as part of our Care for the Earth programme they have created a delicious selection of: green tomato chutney; ketchup; piccalilli; plum and grape sauce; raspberry jam and sorbet and wonderful organic bread.

Photographs by Petter Goldstine

## A REMEDY FOR THE WINTER BLUES

For many years Brockwood has reserved some days in the year when classes are cancelled and workshops abound. Invited guests join us to offer everything from film-making to dance, sound recording to cookery. Designed to support the school's intention of enabling students to discover what they love to do, the workshops generally run for 3 to 4 full days and enable total immersion in a discipline. This year occurring in February, our Winter Workshops will allow students to choose from 14 different activities with guests offering subjects ranging from Ceramics and Raku to Aerial Acrobatics, from Song-writing to Aesthesie.



Workshop photographs by Runu Rajkumar