

YOUTH MAGAZINE

ADVENT EDITION

GREEN HILL NEWS

**FRANCESCO
HAMILTON**

**BECOMING
ASLAN**

**MATTHEW
WARD**

**COMPOSING
AND HOW IT'S DONE**

**ALL THINGS
ADVENT!**

**SAINTS,
TRADITIONS,
FILMS AND MORE!**

PLUS PETS, CARTOONS AND GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS!

YOUTH MAGAZINE

ADVENT EDITION

GREEN HILL NEWS

**FRANCESCO
HAMILTON**

**BECOMING
ASLAN**

**MATTHEW
WARD**

**COMPOSING
AND HOW IT'S DONE**

**ALL THINGS
ADVENT!**

**SAINTS,
TRADITIONS,
FILMS AND MORE!**

PLUS PETS, CARTOONS AND GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS!

All our journalists attend
PUER IESUS COLLEGE,
a ministry of
The Virtue Academy
(UK Charity N. 1204268).
The College supports home
educating parents in raising
flourishing adults through the
formation and practice of the
theological virtues of faith, hope and
charity as well as the intellectual
virtues of knowledge, understanding,
wisdom and the moral virtues.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3** **BECOMING ASLAN**
An interview with Francesco Hamilton
- 5** **MATTHEW WARD**
Composing and how it's done
- 7** **ST NICHOLAS**
A Generous Saint
- 8** **PETS**
Axolotls need a Lo-ll
- 9** **GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS**
Christmas Edition
- 12** **HOW TO CREATE A CARTOON CHARACTER**
Bobbi-Baloo and Ax.
- 14** **ADVENT TRADITIONS**
Be inspired!
- 17** **FILM REVIEWS**
Family entertainment



Becoming Aslan

Helena Hamilton (aged 12)

What is the biggest challenge about taking on the role of Aslan in Glyn Robbins' adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*?

It is a great responsibility when you are asked to create a fictional character that represents Jesus, the Son of God. When I am on stage, I do my best to show the divine nature of the character as well as the animal nature of the lion.

Besides yourself, who would you like to see play this character?

My brother Anselm because he is the oldest and the most sensible person I know, and I think this role would suit him well.

What do you think makes a good scene partner?

Someone who says their lines properly, who can focus on what they are doing, and knows the cues to their lines, so the rehearsal can flow well.

What is your dream role?

The Grinch because then I could steal everybody's Christmas presents!



Besides acting, what do you do in your free time?

Football, pool, table football and playing cards.

What is your favourite stage show, other than this one?

A Christmas Carol at the Old Vic because it was a great - I also saw James May there and took a picture with him.

If you could rate *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* out of five, what rating would you give it?

Five out of five because it is the result of a community effort. We have all enjoyed the process and I am sure both shows will entertain children and adults alike.

If you could be anyone else in the play, who would you want to be?

Peter, because in the book he's meant to be around my age, and I would say that I am pretty good at acting as sensible people in plays.

***The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is at Green Hill Lodge, East Sussex, booking to 20 December.**

MATTHEW WARD

COMPOSING AND HOW IT'S DONE

Rose Ward (aged 10)

Where do your ideas come from, and do you have recurring sources of inspiration?

All composers rewrite the music of other composers, so my ideas often come from music that I have heard and played over many years and then interact with other art forms and non-musical ideas to create musical ideas.

Do your ideas start as musical themes or as something else, like an image or a concept?

Musical ideas often come from images or concepts, so, it's a bit of a chicken and egg question.



What is your daily or weekly working practice?

I compose when I have time or when I must. Sometimes I can compose in a few hours of one day, but sometimes it takes months of chipping away at a piece of music to get it right.

Do you compose at the piano, or do you have a different method?

I used to compose at the piano, and sometimes I still do, but now I usually compose at my computer or even just on paper.

MATTHEW WARD

What was the most challenging aspect of writing the soundtrack for the stage production of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*?

I was surprised at how easily the piece flowed. Despite this, I always find the ending of any piece of music the hardest part.

What do you want the audience to feel when they listen to your music for this play?

I would like my music to contribute to the sense of being in another world and to heighten the magic of the experience.



How do you handle a situation where a musician or director disagrees with you?

No musician or director has disagreed with me yet, but I have occasionally adapted a piece on hearing it in a rehearsal.

Do you feel that university-level composition studies helped or constrained you?

I found studying at Cambridge completely stopped me composing for a few years, and I only started again as I left Cambridge.

***The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is at Green Hill Lodge, East Sussex, booking to 20 December.**

Saint **NICHOLAS**

A Generous Saint

Dominik Szarowicz (aged 10)

We know Saint Nicholas as the saint who brings presents to children at Christmas. I personally find him inspiring as he often shared his wealth with the poor: his acts of charity show us how not to be selfish.

Nicholas was born toward the end of the third century. He was ordained priest and appointed Abbot of a monastery. His generosity led to the repentance of many people. Once, he heard that a man had become very poor and intended to sell his daughters. At night, St Nicholas threw a bag of gold through the man's window. Upon receiving the money, the man changed his mind and repented. Later, the man thanked St Nicholas for delivering his soul to God.

Saint Nicholas died in Myra on 6th December in the year AD 342. He is now a patron of children, of bakers and of Russia.

You might laugh if I told you that this spectacular saint is also a patron of Aberdeen in Scotland!

Hundreds of years after his death, nuns would get presents the day before his feast day (which is on the on the 6th of December) and put them on the doorsteps of poor families.

Now tell me, has this lavish saint inspired you?



AXOLOTLS NEED A LOT-L!

MARCUS LIGHT (AGED 10)



How to care for an axolotl

Axolotls are a type of Mexican salamander. They live under water and breathe through a frilly collar around their neck. This frilly collar is their gills, although they also have lungs. (Above left: my axolotl Alex)

They live in one lake in the world! Lake Xochimilco (above right). As this has a sandy bed, you'll want to put sand in instead of gravel.

You should feed your axolotl once a day and clean the water once a week. You can feed them all of the following: Blood worms, regular worms and axolotl pellets.



Ho, ho, ho!

Christmas Guinness

World Records!

LUCY HUTTON (AGED 10)

The Largest Christmas Tree Structure (Ever!)

The tallest ever Christmas-tree structure recorded by Guinness was an amazing 127.99 metres. This large tree was unveiled in Aracaju, Brazil, and was decorated with more than 25,000 red lights and over 3,000 strobe lights. (how cool is that?)

Largest Human Christmas Tree

On the 19th of December 2015, 4,030 people in Chengannur, India, came together to form the biggest human Christmas tree ever recorded by Guinness. Many of the people were schoolchildren from the local community.

(wow)

The Largest Christmas Ornament Exchange

In December 2024, 360 people took part in a gargantuan Christmas-ornament swap in Portsmouth, Ohio, USA.



Largest Christmas Pudding

The biggest Christmas pudding ever recorded by Guinness weighed 3.28 tonnes. It was made in the village of Aughton, Lancashire, UK, and officially unveiled on 11 July 1992 at the local “Aughton Pudding Festival.” To assemble this colossal pudding, the villagers used enormous quantities: over a thousand pounds of raisins, currants, sultanas, candied peel and suet; hundreds of pounds of flour; thousands of eggs; gallons of milk and even brandy — all mixed together for 30 hours in a concrete mixer and steamed in a giant steel vat. **(That must have taken a long time!)**

Largest gathering of people wearing Christmas jumpers

During a US college basketball game in Lawrence, Kansas, on 19 December 2015, 3,473 people wearing Christmas jumpers gathered — setting the record for the largest group of people in one place wearing “Christmas jumpers.”

Before that, the record had been held by a UK group — Loughborough University — when 1,175 people donned festive jumpers in December 2014.



How my Father, Matthew Hutton, almost broke a World Record

Not long ago, my Father attempted the 'Most Jumpers Put On In One Minute' challenge. He did not succeed but survived to tell the tale!

How many jumpers did you manage to put on?

I don't remember exactly but I think it might have been 13.

Were you excited before you started?

Yes, I was very excited. It was a day when Guinness World Records came into the office and there were lots and lots of different World Records that we could attempt. The "most Christmas jumpers within a minute" was the one that actually I came really close to doing. I did actually beat the record, except for the fact that a couple of the jumpers I was wearing were not pulled down properly; it was part of a team activity and my teammate didn't manage to pull my jumpers down.

How did you find the experience?

Overall, I think it was a lot of fun. Slightly disappointed that I didn't get the record. But it was actually beaten later that day by other people at a different company that the Guinness people went to see.

Would you ever try it again? If so, what would you do differently?

I would practise beforehand with a team member, so the two of us would know exactly what we are doing and how we are doing it and probably try and get really thin jumpers and make sure they're organised in size order.

How to create a Cartoon Character

Lucy Light (aged 10) and Marcus Light (aged 10)

Most people think that creating a character comes from thin air but others say it comes from everyday life such as adorable pets, funny toys and the most random things people can think of!

The bear that is being saved is called Bobbi-Baloo. I got my inspiration for him from my old hamster Pompom because Bobbi-Baloo is small and fluffy just like her.

The axolotl that is saving Bobbi-Baloo is called Ax (you can probably tell from the side of the helicopter!) and he is based on my axolotl Alex. The fish tank around his head is to help him breathe on land.

These characters in our comic show virtue. Ax shows bravery by rescuing Bobbi-Baloo from the cliff when he could have been pulled down himself!

One sunny morning...



ADVENT TRADITIONS

Rose Ward (aged 10)

The Wreath



In our family, we always make our own wreath, and we usually do it a day or two before the first day of Advent. Firstly, the actual wreath. We have a whole hedge of holly, so we don't have to go far for the foliage. After we have collected lots of greenery, we wind it all around the oasis (florist's foam) until there are no gaps showing. Then, we make the candles. To make them ourselves, we buy sheets of beeswax (purple, pink and white) and roll these up tightly, but not too tightly. Finally, after we've done all of this, we stick the candles into the oasis where we left spaces for them, and we're done! Throughout Advent, on every Sunday we gather to light each candle one by one. First purple, then the second purple, after that the pink one and finally the last purple. Next, on Christmas Eve, we light the last one; the white.

The Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree takes its name after King David's father. It is a large twig or a small branch, off which you hang icons. These icons have on them painted or drawn images depicting scenes from different moments in people's lives, those who are in the Bible. e.g. Joseph and his coat of many colours, Samson and the pillars or Ruth and the sheaves of corn. They can also have something that is usually associated with that person, e.g. a rose for Mary or a lily for Joseph. In our family we have a big felt star with pockets for every day of Advent, each pocket containing a single icon. We take turns in hanging the icons on the twig/branch until Christmas Eve, when we place the last one on, Baby Jesus!



Joseph & Mary

In Advent we always get our crib out early and remove Mary, Joseph and the donkey. This is done because they need to go on their journey to Bethlehem. We then take them up to the highest room in the house, and every night we move them a little closer to the stable, which (if correctly timed) they will reach on Christmas Eve. While we are moving them, we sing the carol 'Little Donkey'.

The O Antiphons

The O Antiphons are the Magnificat Antiphons sung at Vespers from the 16th of December to the 23rd of December. We always hang ours around the fireplace each night and sing the Antiphon for that day. We finish on Christmas Eve.

Polish CHRISTMAS

Dominik Szarowicz (aged 10)

Our first Christmas tradition is the Christmas Eve supper. We fast the whole day and when the first star appears in the sky, we eat our festive meal.

Before the meal, we set the table and grace it with a cross, light the candles and place an extra plate symbolising our hospitality and remembering the people that cannot celebrate with us.

We pray, then we share the Christmas wafer, known in Poland as the “opłatek” (Op-wat-ek). We always have twelve dishes, as they symbolise the twelve apostles. The main dish is fish as we do not eat meat on Christmas Eve.



After supper, we open our presents, brought by baby Jesus in some parts of Poland, but by St Nicholas in others. Then, we spend time together as a family: we might listen to or sing Christmas carols, traditionally waiting to go to Midnight Mass..



In Poland, huge Nativity Scenes are on display. The most famous are in Krakow (Kra-coov): these are very elaborate models of the Nativity that contain a lot of architecture from Krakow. You can make a Nativity Scene and present it at the exhibition; however, not-surprisingly, the standards are very high!

If you want to learn more, visit Poland at the Christmas time! (Beware, it's very cold!)

Christmas Film List

The Muppets' Christmas Carol

LUCY LIGHT (AGED 10)

This film is a fun and engaging version of A Christmas Carol, starring the Muppets. It is a timeless holiday classic that expertly blends the heartwarming sincerity of Charles Dickens' original film with the humour of the Muppet version. Main characters include Michael Caine as the cold-hearted Ebenezer Scrooge, Kermit the Frog as the humble Bob Cratchit, Miss Piggy as the feisty but loving Emily Cratchit, Statler and Waldorf as Jacob and Robert Marley, Gonzo the Great as the narrator with Rizzo the Rat as his sidekick.

My favourite scene is when Gonzo scrambles over the gate but Rizzo is too scared to jump. Gonzo gets him down by saying he will catch him but he misses. Rizzo suddenly realises he left his precious jellybeans on the other side of the gate and with surprising ease, squeezes through to get them. Gonzo eventually asks, "You can fit through those bars?" Rizzo casually replies, "Yeah".

I think it is fun for all ages and especially people who love the Muppets!





The Snowman

HELENA HAMILTON (AGED 12)

A wonderful Christmas story for everyone to enjoy

A boy, maybe about 8 years old, builds a snowman in his garden. At midnight, the snowman begins to glitter, so the boy hurries downstairs with his pyjamas bathrobe on. Once outside, he sees the snowman walking towards him with a big smile. The two become friends and go on adventures together.

The story has no dialogue and is hand-drawn with colouring pencils, which makes the audience think of happy stories for children. The magical soundtrack has become a popular Christmas tune over the years.

The boy – the main character - is very adventurous: he travels with the Snowman to the North Pole, where they attend a party and meet Santa. The Snowman is friendly and funny: he does not really understand human things and ends up using them for purposes they were not built for. For example, he tries on a banana, a pear and a pineapple as a nose.

If we compare the Snowman to another animation film like *The Polar Express*, we notice that the Snowman is much shorter and has fewer characters – the story is simple and so is the message. Director Dianne Jackson and writer Raymond Briggs remind us that good moments do not last forever, so we should be grateful for what God gives us.

I think everyone should see this film in the winter season because the time of Christmas is beautifully described with wonderful illustrations and a heartwarming story. The soundtrack helps the viewers feel they are a part of the story – helping them to experience the joy of Christmas.





The Grinch

DOMINIK SZAROWICZ (AGED 10)

This animation film is set in the small city of Whoville – yes, the same Whoville in Dr Seuss’ “Horton Hears a Who”. Everybody is happy waiting for Christmas. But near the town, in a large mountain, lives the Grinch, and he is not happy. Christmas is coming soon and he loathes it. So, as you might expect, he tries to get rid of it! In his many attempts to stop Christmas from coming, one succeeds. How on earth did he manage to capture Christmas? Is it even possible to rob it? Was he pleased of his success? What lessons might the Grinch learn by stealing Christmas?

Luckily for the Grinch, he has a small and loyal companion: his dog Max faithfully helps his master through all his troubles. The Grinch’s fluffy friend even helped save his life! His helpful pal is also the Grinch’s servant. Every morning, he wakes the Grinch up and brings him coffee. At least the Grinch isn’t lonely!

One of the main characters in the movie is Cindy Lou. Her mother is always very busy as she has two babies and a daughter. She also has no husband. All Cindy Lou wants for Christmas is for her mother to be less occupied. Cindy Lou is a very popular “Who” and has many friends. Together with her friends, she tries to make a trap to capture Santa Clause, but unfortunately, the tests don’t always work.

I really liked the Grinch: he was definitely the funniest character. He was also very smart. He made a lot of gadgets. Another person I liked was Cindy Lou. She shows kindness, generosity and the virtue of love often. But the character I like most is Max the dog. He was so cute and helpful. Yet Cindy Lou’s mother shows the most virtues. She shows toughness and integrity when she has to clean up after the babies.

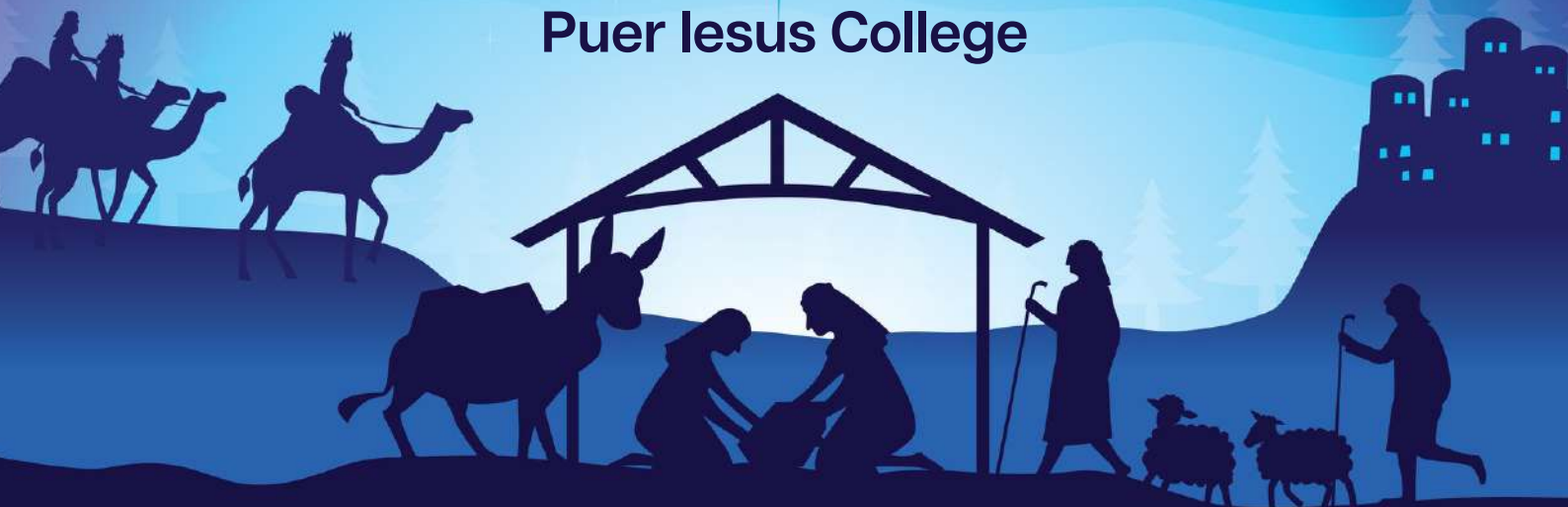
I really like this movie as it is hilarious and showcases a very snowy land. I would give this movie a 4 ½ out of 5 stars. I wouldn’t give it a 5 because it included an inappropriate scene and, like most good movies, ended very quickly.

Now you can watch the movie and tell me what you think!

A Blessed Christmas To All!



From Everyone at
Puer Iesus College



Will you support our mission?

Any amount, big or small, will make a difference and help create a brighter future for the next generations.

Thank you for your generosity!

Payee: Virtue Academy

Acc. No. 16387535

Sort Code 23-08-01

VIRTUE ACADEMY UK CHARITY N. 1204268