



# Applause

Volume 8 Number 3

School of the Arts

December 2006

## Holiday Issue

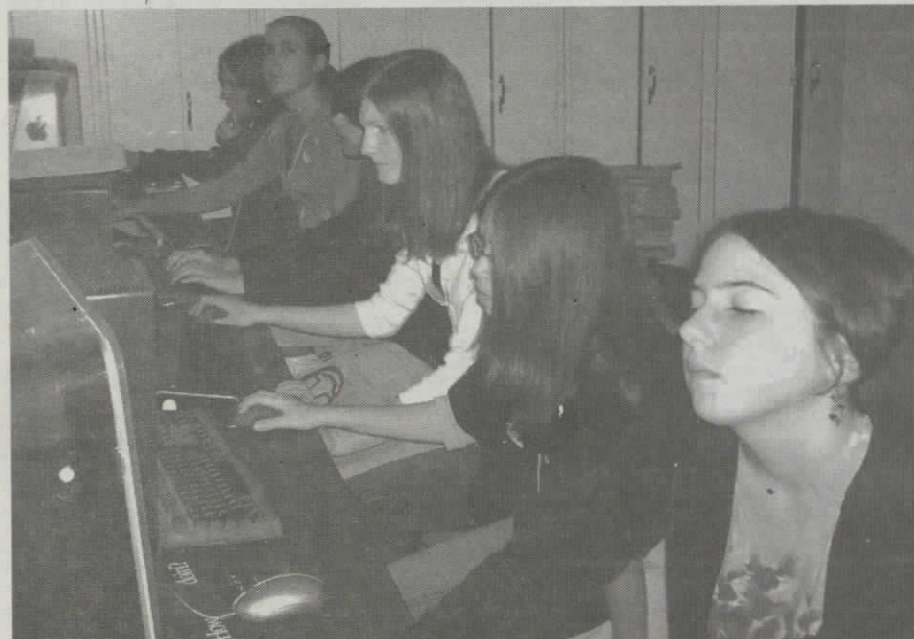


## Letter from the Editor



Welcome to the third issue of Applause! I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe Winter Break. We have some new features to check out this month: A contributing article by **Braden Joyce-Schleimer**, a "Where Were They Then?" retrospective on **Ms. Laura Tisdale**, and several new mazes in the "Student Interest" section. You will notice that our Question of the Month this issue focuses on some of more unusual vacation plans. Our centerfold this issue features part one of a two-part series on the Senior Thesis from each Art Major. We are constantly working to improve our layout and content through use of graphics and commitment to more in-depth articles. Please let us know how we are doing!

Sincerely,



Dr. Cusatis

The *Applause* staff is hard at work on the next issue

Featured cover art: "Concentration #1" by Rebecca Nicholson. Oil on matte board.



## Applause

the official student newspaper of

Charleston County School of the Arts



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# School Calendar

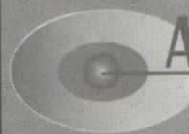
December 21-January 2: Winter Break

January 12: Teacher workday (No School)

January 16: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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## Dr. Cusatis finishes tenth marathon

By David Whitley

Well-known to avid *Applause* readers as SOA's resident English teacher/ marathon runner, **Dr. John Cusatis** has accomplished another goal of his. As of November 25, he has officially run ten marathons. He began the school year having run eight marathons, and completed two marathons with only eight weeks between them, a significantly shorter interlude than his usual schedule of one a year. He was able to run each of the ten marathons in under four hours.



Dr. Cusatis finishing the Reggae Marathon in Negril, Jamaica

Marathon number nine started in New Hampshire around Newfound Lake, and the terrain was very hilly. Ten was more relaxed, and Dr. Cusatis was able to cut twenty minutes off his New Hampshire time, completing the standard 26.2 miles in three hours and thirty-two minutes. "The ground was flat, but the weather was unseasonably warm; probably sixty degrees." To train for these events, Dr. Cusatis ran between twelve and twenty-one miles each Saturday. For one particularly memorable run, his wife dropped him off at the Windjammer in Isle of Palms

and he ran the twenty-one miles back to his home in West Ashley.

Looking back, Dr. Cusatis says that the highlights of his experiences were qualifying for Boston, raising thousands of dollars for St. Jude's Hospital and the Leukemia Society, and his marathon in Jamaica in 2001. With the year drawing to a close and with Dr. Cusatis' original goal fulfilled, he has made a new resolution. "I intend to run at least three marathons in 2007. My long term goal is to run a marathon in every state, each in under four hours."

### Dr. Cusatis's Marathons

- 1999 – Anchorage, AK, 3:49
- 2000 – Dublin, Ireland, 3:47
- 2001 – Negril, Jamaica, 3:55
- 2002 – Kiawah Island, SC, 3:52
- 2003 – Jacksonville, FL, 3:31
- 2004 – Scranton, PA, 3:17
- 2005 – Boston, MA, 3:39
- 2005 – Memphis, TN, 3:31
- 2006 – Bristol, NH, 3:52
- 2006 – Sparks, MD, 3:32

## Holidays @ SOA



Eighth-graders Mary Lee Carter, Emily Chong, Rebecca Witcher, Gabrielle Wolfe, Joyce Waggoner and Michelle Hillenius pose in holiday outfits.

Amber Caparas

## Student work:

### Visual Art

left: "Self Portrait" by Junior **Hanna Trussler**.

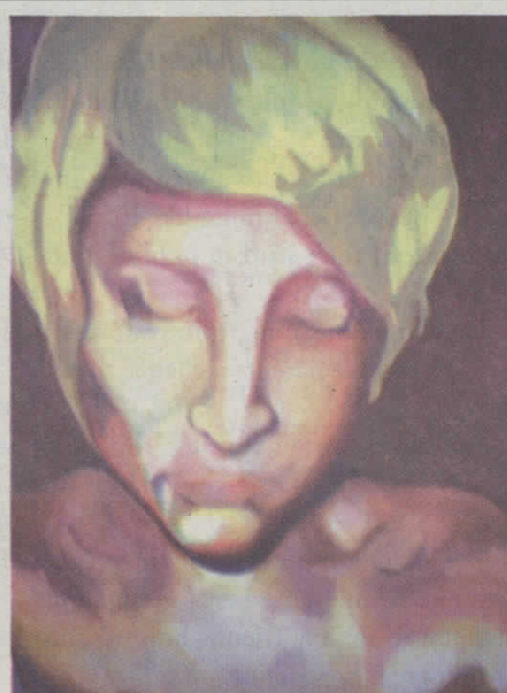
Oil on canvas.

right: "Self Potrait" by Senior **Robbi Amick**.

Oil on canvas.

far right: "Untitled" by Senior **Robbi Amick**.

Oil on canvas.





## National Honor Society Update

By Victoria Doose



The National Honor Society, in our spirit of service, has decided to hold beach sweeps every other month (or so) – and since our last one was in September, we felt it was high time we scheduled another. Thus, our next beach sweep will be taking place December 16, on Folly Beach. Also this month, select NHS members – a.k.a. those who will still be in town – will be dishing out dinners at

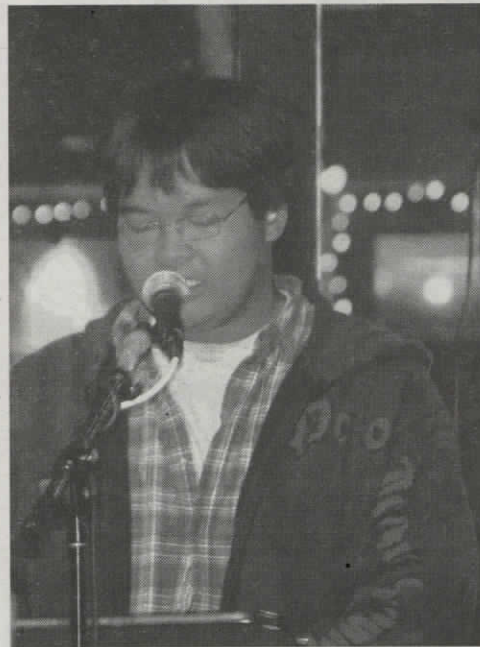
the local soup kitchen on December 22.

Happy Holidays! And don't forget to keep buying breakfast!

## Creative Writers share work Downtown

By Lucy Hunter

For Junior **Logan Wells**, reading prose and poetry with the Creative Writing Junior class at the East Bay Coffee House's "Monday Night Blues" venue on November 20 was "a comfortable and homey experience that I got a really good feeling from."



Jeffrey Cabiad reads his short story.

Jill Hunter

Students shared three minutes of their work following a performance by Junior **Harry Harrison** on the guitar. **Mrs. Rene Miles** concluded the event with one of her poems, "December Blizzard 1957."

"It was the first time that we went to the coffeehouse, where people who appreciate creative writing actually go," said Junior **Jeffrey Cabiad**, who read an untitled short story. "We read to a future audience, the people who would read our stuff if we actually got published."

"It used to be in the Black Box, so the only people who showed up were parents."

"Hearing everyone's writing brings us together. Creative Writing is introspective, so there's not many chances to see people performing like this."

"It's important for students to learn to read their stuff in public," said Mrs. Miles, who coordinated the event.

"To have people who don't know you extract meaning from your work is imperative. Plus, it builds confidence and gives your parents a chance to see you show your stuff."

"I read a poem so that the students could see me as a writer, someone who struggles with the same things that they do. If I ask my students to do something, I'll do it myself as well."

"Overall," said Logan, who read an excerpt from his short story "Everything on a Mountain," "I feel a lot better about myself when I get up and put my stuff out there. And it's something else to see my friends hop up and do the same thing. It's something else; a really great experience."

## Freshman Jonathan Heyward: First student to conduct the SOA Orchestra

By Amber Caparas

AC: When did you first decide that you wanted to conduct?

JH: My 7th grade Strings teacher, **Mrs. Susan Johnson**, gave me an opportunity to conduct at our Winter Concert.

AC: What sort of musical training have you had?

JH: I've been taking cello lessons with Tim O'Malley, a cellist in the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, since the 6th grade. I would really like to take lessons from David Stahl, the conductor of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

AC: What are your future goals as a conductor?



Amber Caparas

Jonathan conducted the SOA Orchestra at Convocation on November 17.

JH: To conduct the Charleston Symphony Orchestra before I graduate high school, to get accepted to Julliard School of Music, earn a Masters in Conducting, and live as a conductor in New York City.

AC: When were you introduced to classical music?

JH: I wasn't really into classical music until I was introduced to the cello at C.E. Williams Middle School.

AC: Are there any conductors that you look to for inspiration?

JH: All of them! I learn so much from every conductor that I see.

AC: What do you do to prepare for a concert?

JH: I practice conducting to a recording.

AC: What do you typically feel when you're up on stage conducting?

JH: Worried but controlled. Worried, knowing that I have the control of an entire orchestra.

AC: Do you have a favorite piece to conduct?

JH: My favorite piece is Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," which is the piece that I got to conduct at convocation.

AC: How has conducting affected your life?

JH: Well, I've found my passion!

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# Senior Rodney Liles: Rock musician

## Drummer for At Last Glance plays professional venues

By Lucy Hunter

*Senior Rodney Liles is in the Jazz Band at SOA and is the drummer for At Last Glance, a band whose latest performance was at the Oasis Bar and Grille in James Island on Sunday, November 18. Here, Rodney discusses his musical inspiration, professional aspirations, and the reasons why he and his band have resolved to be drug-free.*

*LH: How long have you been a drummer? Who are your biggest influences?*

RL: I've been playing for about ten years. I have been performing professionally for a little while now. I got \$300 for playing three hours in Myrtle Beach last year. I'm in a country band with my uncle, and we play gigs every once in a while for money. Our band is called Papa's Pride. I also play multiple jazz gigs. My influences are Saosin and Silverstein, because those bands are post-hardcore rock. At Last Glance incorporates rock, pop, and a little screaming and hardcore sounds. My favorite drummer is Alex Rodriguez [of Saosin].

*LH: Who are the other members in the band?*

RL: The members are vocalist Deslin Price, lead guitarist Philip Ward, guitarist Andrew Chalk, and bassist Logan Dodds. All of those guys go to Wando High School.

*LH: How did you all come together?*

RL: Andrew and I were in a band called One Hour Photo, and we've known each other since 9th grade. Philip and Deslin were in a band, and this past March we decided to play together. Somehow, Logan just appeared.



Philip Ward, Rodney Liles and Deslin Price at the Oasis

*LH: Describe your experience playing a professional venue like the Oasis.*

RL: It was awesome. We played with these two signed bands, Arms of Orion and Drive By. We pretty much got to hang out with the bands. It was cool. The two bands said they want to play with us more often. The guy that booked the show for us said he was very impressed, and he's going to try to get us way bigger shows.

*LH: At Last Glance is considered "straight-edge." Explain your band's decision to stay away from drugs, alcohol and tobacco.*

RL: When I perform in front of a lot of people, I get this incredible feeling, like a natural kind of high. It's adrenaline from playing music. We are straight-edge because we feel like if we get into alcohol and drugs it will distract us from our music, which is dumb. We get our good feelings off of playing music, not doing drugs. Bands nowadays do drugs and say "hey lets go get high" and it distracts from their practice because all they can think about is how to get their drugs.

*LH: What do you and your band want to communicate to the audience?*

RL: Deslin writes his vocals about his past, about getting older, and about life when he was young. What I am trying to say, mainly, is that you shouldn't give up. For example, if you play crappy shows, remember that that happens to everyone. You are going to have to play crappy shows to get recognized. There's a lot of discouragement in the music industry and At

Last Glance might not get recognized, but at least we can say we tried. And it's not about money. It's about playing music, which is the best thing ever.

*LH: What are your hopes for the future of At Last Glance?*

RL: I'm not going to say we're going to become world-famous or anything, because I don't know, but once we get our demo CDs out we're going to start sending our stuff out to labels and make merchandise and get picked up. If things pick up between now and college, I don't know if we're going to pursue college. But don't worry, we're not leaving Charleston any time soon.

*The release date for the demo CD of At Last Glance is not currently known, but Rodney anticipates that it will be available within a few months. Because they are not signed to a record label, the members of At Last Glance finance their studio time and expenses from jobs at the Palmetto Grande Cinema.*

## R. Bryan Whitley, AIA, Architect

R. Bryan Whitley, AIA

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# "Where Were They Then?": Ms. Laura Tisdale

By Amber Caparas

AC: Where did you grow up?

LT: My dad was in the Air Force, so while I was born in Landschtule, Germany, he moved us to Vermont, Washington, back to Germany, and finally to Montgomery, Alabama.

AC: What was your childhood like in general?

LT: Oh, I had a very happy, warm, loving, typical 1950's suburban type of childhood. My mother was the epitome of a perfect TV mom, and my dad was just so incredible. I have two sisters, Colleen and Kitty, and one brother, Kevin, and we were just always entertaining ourselves. We hardly ever had time to watch TV because we were too busy putting on plays, creating home circuses, writing music, and running around outside. Oh, and my house was always full of music! My favorite childhood memories would have to be bedtimes, when my dad would come up to Kitty and I's room and we would get to pick whether we wanted him to read a chapter out of whatever book we were reading at the time, tell us another story, or sing us a song. I am really grateful for my childhood!

AC: What would you say impacted you the most as a child?

LT: Definitely all of the traveling. My family and I vacationed and traveled all over the world, and so I was exposed to so many different cultures. I guess I started my life open to different people and I stayed open.

AC: Did you have any celebrity crushes?

LT: Oh yeah! At 4 years old, I totally had the hots for Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas. Oh, and Richard Harris when he played Arthur in *Camelot*.

AC: What did you want to be when you

grew up?

LT: I was really torn. I couldn't decide whether I wanted to be a nun, like Maria from *The Sound of Music*, or a saloon girl like Miss Kitty from the TV show *Gun Smoke*.

AC: What high school(s) did you attend? What would your advice be for us middle and high schoolers?

LT: I went to Montgomery Catholic High where our mascot was a snapping turtle and my graduating class had about 48 kids in it. My best advice would be to retain the relationships you make with teachers, friends, and mentors, because these are the sort of relationships that you will want to carry with you for a lifetime.

AC: What college(s) did you attend?

LT: I attended St. Mary's Dominican in New Orleans where I studied drama with an art minor. Long story short, I ended up moving to California to finish my schooling, where I fell out of a car window when my friends and I were on our way back from a bikini contest (which were cute and innocent back then, unlike the strip shows they have become today) and shattered almost half the bones in my body. I

had to drop out of school during the year of rehabilitation. Fast forward some number of years and I earned a history degree and a degree in education from College of Charleston.

AC: What kind of jobs did you have during your college years?

LT: The real question is, what kind of jobs *didn't* I have during my college years! I did pretty much everything from teaching at finishing school, to working as a makeup artist, to selling cars.

AC: What was your claim to fame during these years?

LT: Oh gosh, I was the disco queen in San Diego. My friends and I would go out with our Susan Summers double strand pony tails, spandex tights, and sequin tube tops.

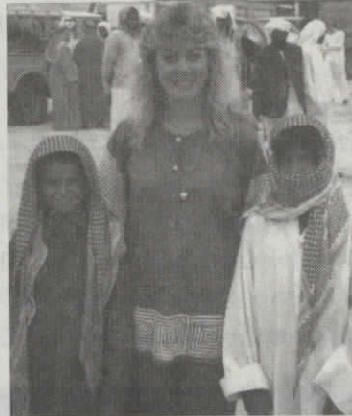
AC: What happened after college?

LT: Well, I was married and unmarried, then married to a Denver Bronco football player with whom I had my wonderful daughter.

When my then-husband retired from football, he began working with computer programming. His job allowed us to move all over the place with our daughter. I mean we lived in Saudi Arabia, Australia, Atlantic City, and everywhere we went, all expenses were paid for by his company. The last place he moved us to was Charleston, in 1989. That's when I really got in to the whole stay at home mom thing. My husband and I were eventually unmarried and I decided to stay here in Charleston with my daughter. I went to school for history and education, did some subbing, and then began teaching here at SOA in 1997.

AC: What are your plans for the future?

LT: I want to buy old houses in Park Circle. (I am also a realtor for Prudential Real Estate Group. I sell real estate so I can afford to teach. So, if you know anyone who is trying to sell a house come and see me!) I also want to do some more traveling: summers in Italy, winters in Switzerland, Asian countries, the Forbidden City, Greece, and all of this with my sweet, fine, jazz musician boyfriend.



Photos provided by Ms. Tisdale

## Ms. Sharp leaves SOA

By Blake Engel

Since September 5 of this year, **Ms. Amanda Sharp** had been in **Ms. Laura Tisdale's** cottage as a part of her internship, acting first as an aid before taking over instructional duties. Through examples in the classroom dynamic, Ms. Tisdale was able to teach Ms. Sharp about controlling a class. By the time she is done, she hopes to earn her teaching certificate. "I learned how to roll with things," she said. "How to handle situations."

Before she could come to SOA, Ms. Sharp had to first prepare herself. She was required to attend classes to learn the nuts and bolts of education. About a year ago, she worked with Ms. Tisdale for three weeks and



Blake Engel

Ms. Sharp left SOA on December 5

in doing so they began to form a friendship. Of their time together, Ms. Sharp commented, "It was kind of

like having a best friend."

Besides SOA, she has been to several other schools for her graduate program, including Moultrie Middle School, West Ashley High, and James Island Charter High School. She recalls that the student behavior there was less than desirable. "They weren't very nice," she recalled. "But at SOA, the kids are just so incredibly sweet. I can't say anything bad about it."

Once she has received her certificate, Ms. Sharp would love to return to SOA as a full-time teacher. Although she has been teaching U.S. History at SOA and enjoys the subject matter, she would prefer to teach psychology, which is what she studied as an undergraduate.

"I always want to stay in the classroom," she said. But where her career takes her, she said "depends on where I am in my life."



## How To... Deal With a Nightmare Date

By David Whitley



Let's face it - dating can be a lot of fun, but it can also cause a lot of problems, and we all have our 99 problems to deal with already. Here are two situations to help ease the strain in some difficult situations that may arise.

### The Expensive Eater

She's cute; she's funny. She's everything you want in a woman, but she always looks over the menu and orders the most expensive meal for herself and lets you pay for it. This can really put a strain on a guy's wallet, but the same situation can happen to girls in those "rare" times they're dating a deadbeat.

1. Only order yourself a salad and a glass of water, but drop a few hints about how hungry you really are.
2. When she asks why you're eating so little, sadly mention that you only have enough to pay for one meal.
3. She will likely respond in one of two ways. She may offer to pay for her share, which shows that she is a caring person and is more concerned about your well-being than a free meal; this means she's worth it and that you should look forward to many happy dates together. She may also ignore you, which means she's in it more for the free candlelit dinners and movie tickets than for you as a person. In this case, proceed to step four.
4. Tell her that you have to go to the bathroom... and leave the restaurant. Don't wait outside; drive away. (This only works if you are the one who picked her up.)

### Won't Stop Talking About Her Ex

Seriously, are we supposed to try and emulate somebody she didn't think was good enough for her? Every time she brings up her ex, mention something irrelevant that you know annoys her. If her IQ is above 80 she'll get the pattern pretty quickly.

## November Convocation featured music, dance and French language

By Liz Gildea

This year's second Convocation on November 17 showcased special diversity within the SOA talent tank. Five of the eight art majors, as well as the French IV class, gave presentations that were in most cases at least somewhat unconventional. The dance majors' semi-improvised routine had a sort of tribal feeling to it. The saxophone quartet, which provided jazzy interludes during technical transitions, was - no offense - a refreshing departure from the full band. The symphony (which consists of both band and strings majors) played Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony," and, most interestingly,

was conducted by Freshman strings major **Jonathan Heyward**.

Sophomore piano majors gave a stellar ensemble performance of "Perpetual Commotion" by Kevin Olson. Even the non-theatrical visual artists were able to exhibit senior work via slideshow. And the French IV



Juniors Ally Bing, Jeffrey Cabiad and Liz Gildea perform a skit in French

## Southend Brewery offers more than beer

By Lucy Hunter

With a menu that boasts gourmet barbeque and an energetic wait staff, the Southend Brewery offers much more than a variety of microbrewed beer. So while SOA students are underage, they should not be discouraged from dining on the first floor of this interesting restaurant. The second floor, accessed through a glass elevator that overlooks massive brewing tanks, is solely for bar patrons.

From the in-house smokehouses of the restaurant, which also has locations in Charlotte and Raleigh, the BBQ Pork "St. Louis" Ribs reign supreme. The Southern Sampler appetizer offers barbequed wings that are so heavily slathered they should only be tried by the truly brave. Creamy grits, which accompany several appetizers and entrées, are cooked to perfection. Waiters often suggest the Garlic Rubbed Pork Tenderloin, served with grilled apples and grits, which is the star of the menu. The make-your-own pizzas have an interesting variety of toppings, but are doughy. Of the extensive selection of sandwiches, the Fried Crunchy Grouper with tartar sauce is tender and the french fries are well-seasoned.

One of the most attractive qualities of the restaurant is the price. At anywhere between \$5-\$20 per person, the Southend Brewery is a fun destination for groups of friends or family dinners. And for those who are over 21, the bar menu includes six types of beer nightly, all brewed on site.

161 East Bay Street, Charleston SC 29401. Open Mon.-Thurs. and Sun. 11:30 AM to 10:00 PM, Fri. and Sat. 11:30 AM to 11:00 PM.



The Southend Brewery on E. Bay

## Bill Hunter

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Amber Caparas

skit, performed en français and then in English, represented not only the foreign language department but also Creative Writing and Theatre - leaving only Vocal unrepresented. As always, the sights and sounds of convocation were worth the first-period class time we missed for it. (Once again, no offense...)



# Senior Thesis over Creative Writing, Band

## Band majors choose from a variety of Thesis options

By Blake Engel

By Blake Engel

Every year, senior Band majors have the opportunity to take part in a monumental project that will test their skill and knowledge as musicians. Their senior theses involve months of study, preparation, composition, and finally execution as they either perform an entire piece or supervise the recital of another student.

The band's senior thesis is divided into two main choices, each requiring equal amounts of dedication and perseverance.

The first involves the seniors performing a selection of music in its entirety. They begin by

choosing from selections that would usually be performed for college auditions at schools of music. Because this is a senior thesis, the students do not have the luxury of playing just one movement

from the selection. Rather, they must perform the piece in its entirety. While they prepare throughout

the year, the students will undergo three auditions, each of which will be presided over by a panel and held at the end of the grading period. Along with the performance, each senior must write a paper to support the composition, which will include

background information concerning the piece and discussion of technique for the performance.

The second choice requires the student to become a teacher, working with a student who is just beginning to play an instrument. Using weekly assignments and a record of their lessons, the student teachers can keep track of the beginning student's progress through

goals and objectives decided upon by the student teacher. In April, the beginning student will give

a recital. Evaluations by the director and a final summary serve as the conclusion to the thesis.

"It demonstrates the ability to prepare and perform independently," says band teacher and director **Mr. Basil Kerr**. Or the students "experience the

challenge of teaching the skills they have mastered to the students who are beginning to learn."

Some of this year's theses include **Cody Nelson's** performance of a work for saxophone and piano that he composed; **Caroline Rowell's** acting as a student teacher in a North Charleston school; and **Eric Black's** performance of a timpani concerto.



Senior Cody Nelson rehearses for Senior Thesis.

Photos by Kristin de Hender



Senior Michael Kay plays the piano.

## French horn player prepares audition, will play Dukas

By Blake Engel

Since the beginning of the school year, Senior **Matthew Johnston** has been practicing for his Senior Thesis in Band. Because he likes to play music as opposed to teaching kids, he has chosen to perform. As his piece of music he has chosen "Villanelle" by Paul Dukas.

He has chosen Dukas's piece because it's "a little bit of



Matthew gives a thumbs up.

everything." Also, he notes, it is a very hard piece and he wants a challenge.

Later in the year he will face auditions in front of a jury. If he fails these auditions, Matthew will not be allowed to continue his Senior Thesis. While this prospect is daunting, he said he's "not really nervous

about it."

Matthew said everyone should come to his concert, not only because it will be an enjoyable experience, but also because it will be "a life-changing experience." He has not yet scheduled his performance as the event is still in its preliminary stages, but the concert will happen some time in the spring. Matthew will be playing the French horn alongside the SOA symphony orchestra.

From the first week of March, C over their first novel handle a task," says Rene Miles. The p (or roughly 27,500 requiring weekly j reviews. According helps the students busy.

As they wr

**Novelist w**  
By Blake Engel

One of M Seniors this year is the class of '07 as a least, Dan is working mysterious novel for

Inspired by book is what he desc like a stream of co respect, Dan takes real characters, per explained. "I have but the book is re things." With the e middle of the book t



Senior Dan Hanf w



# Reviews, part one: and Theatre

## The Writers are 50 pages into their works Theatre Thesis:

### Writing, directing and acting in one-person show

Blake Engel

week of school to the first  
Writing majors labor  
his helps their ability to  
ive Writing teacher Mrs.  
s of writing their novels  
rds) is very structured,  
als and monthly book  
Ms. Miles, the structure  
se their senior year is so  
students must meet with

their mentors, who are all published authors. Some of them, such as Mary-Alice Monroe and Beth Webb Hart, are nationally esteemed, while others, such as Jonathan Sanchez, are local literary figures. Over time, Ms. Miles has noticed a clear change in maturity in the students. "They start out as student and mentor," she notes, "and end up as two writers."

Past Creative Writing works include *Pulling Up the Roots* by Ryan Groudin, *Out of My Hands* by Meredith Jones, and *Second Try* by

### es semi-autobiographical, comedic piece

Miles's Creative Writing  
a Hanf. Known among  
of a comedian, to say the  
an equally humorous and  
enior thesis.

*Catcher in the Rye*, Dan's  
s an "internal monologue,  
usness." Unusual in this  
n further. "There are no  
besides the narrator," he  
aces to other characters,"  
somebody's thoughts on  
ion of a portion near the  
rves more as a short story,

Dan's book contains no dialogue.

He's been toying with different titles, which is also a work in progress. At first, he was going with *Moby-Dick Part 2: This Time It's Personal*, but recently he was calling it "something like *The End is the Beginning*." Because the book is somewhat autobiographical, the narrative can begin and end wherever he chooses. Throughout his thesis, there is a recurring theme of death, hence the title.

With the help of his mentor, writer Elle Davis, whom he describes as "amazing" and "encouraging," Dan hopes to finish his book on schedule so that he can begin the process of formatting it into a novel for publishing during the spring of 2007.

"Because of the style, writing is easy, but occasionally I'll get frustrated with it." He says his overall experience of writing the book has been relaxed.

Dan feels that a career in writing interests him, but it's not his top priority in life. He wants to keep writing, but said of a career in writing, "Unless I get on Conan O'Brien or Oprah – not right away."

Jessica Atkinson, which, along with a portfolio of her other writings over the years, won her a \$10,000 prize from the annual Scholastic Art and Writing Contest.

Currently, they're about fifty or so pages into it, depending on the rate that they write. This year, the writers will read from their books in the black box on May 22. A book signing will follow.

### Check out next month's issue for a summary of Visual Arts, Band, Strings and Vocal majors!



Painting by Senior Rachel Epstein

"All of my Seniors are in the midst of creating some wonderful pieces," said Theatre teacher Mrs. Megan Link. As to the subject of these pieces, she won't give away too much information, but she did provide some clues, saying, "We have; canines, Hollywood stars, poet wannabes, poets, Barbies, comedians, girls, Health Crew, and heroines."

The Seniors' final product will be a twenty to thirty page one-person show. Their year begins with a three-month writing session wherein the students conceptualize their theses and begin to work it into an end product. Some days are devoted to just writing, while on other days the class forms a reading circle so that the writers can get feedback on their progress. Through analysis of each other's pieces, the seniors manage to create a truly unique work.

Once the writing is completed, they move to a phase of rehearsal, where acting exercises help to train the actor for his or her final performance. Throughout the creation process, Mrs. Link serves as a guide to the seniors.

The thesis "reminds them that they can in fact do whatever they set their mind to," she said. "It is what they make of it."

The mandatory thesis ends with a 25-minute performance by the writer/actor.

From March 27 to March 30, the Senior Theatre majors will be performing their pieces in the Black Box starting at 7:00 P.M. Each night, a different work will be performed. Said Mrs. Link, "I can't wait to see what unfolds."



n his novel in class.



# More than just entertainment Creative Writers go on retreat

**Ms. Dodie Marshall leads therapeutic activities with books**  
By Victoria Doose

Therapy is generally stereotyped as being either sessions in which the patient lies on a couch and cries to a psychologist or group support sessions where members greet one another in a collective monotone and listen sympathetically to life stories. But there are many different forms of therapy, not all of which are necessarily structured or overseen by "professionals," and each appeals more to certain types of people than others.

So then what, exactly, is bibliotherapy? Bibliotherapy is based on the idea that reading can be therapeutic, helping a person understand his or her own life problems and situations. For this process to be successful, the reader must first be able to identify with one or more characters in the novel, usually because the nature of the character's conflict parallels a similar conflict of the reader. As the character comes to resolve his or her issue, the reader then is able to apply it to their life and come to a resolution – actually overcoming the problem, in some cases. This experience of catharsis, or emotional purging, allows the reader to recreate himself in a sense, altering their perspective and approach to life.

**Ms. Dodie Marshall**, one of SOA's librarians, was inspired to create a survey on the effects of bibliotherapy at SOA after attending a workshop dealing with the needs of academically gifted and talented students, where the subject of bibliotherapy was raised.

"Academically talented kids have complex concerns," Ms. Marshall said. "Because there is so much written text available that addresses a wide variety of issues, it really is the best way to address these students' problems."

Her survey gathered responses from 6th and 8th graders, as well as from the students in the high school speech class and 11th grade English classes.

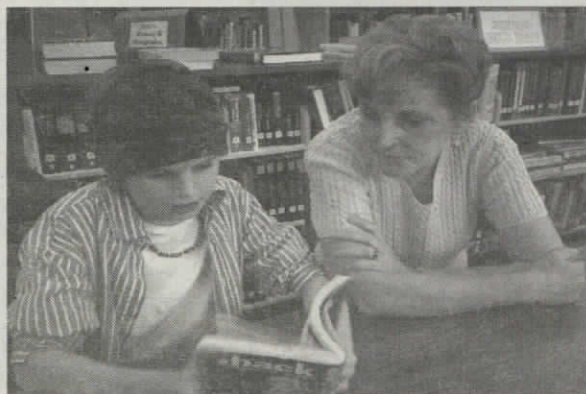
Below are some responses that Ms. Marshall received from students at SOA regarding the therapeutic value of books they had read:

"*Esperanza Rising* helped me cope with losing my daddy because the main character lost hers too. The experiences that she had with her dad help her with her problems throughout the book. I always miss my dad when people talk about their dads, and when Fathers' Day is close. Whenever I'm really down I pick up this book and read and read and read."

- Serena Townsend, 8th grade

"I read *The Wedding* by Nicholas Sparks while I was having lots of 'boyfriend problems,' and it paralleled almost exactly the situation that I was going through. Seems silly, but it actually helped me because I could almost totally relate to the characters within the novel."

- Anonymous



6th grader Gregory Caudill reads with Ms. Marshall

Ashley Sagan

By Lucy Hunter

"Now I know that if I threw up, everyone in my major would hold back my hair," said Junior **Zan Isgett** after attending the Junior and Senior Creative Writing retreat to Canton, NC, on October 25-27.

Students spent two nights at the Lake Logan Episcopal Center, taking workshops on poetry and Senior Thesis-writing from Creative Writing teacher **Mrs. Rene Miles** and local writer Jonathan Sanchez.

"Being away in a natural place allows Seniors to focus on their theses," said Mrs. Miles. "This was the first year I took Juniors, so that they could see what other kids are doing and get a head-start for next year.

"To have a good writing community you have to trust one another, and being away with each other builds trust."

"[The retreat] inspired me to break away from the typical crap poetry about teen problems and drama. Being in the mountains, and seeing how seniors battle writer's block, helped me get out of that," said Junior **Virginia Pfahler**.

"When I'm writing, I think about being in the mountains, so [the trip] was a great inspiration," said Senior **Dan Hanf**.

In the workshops, Seniors shared their current progress on their Senior theses, while Juniors brainstormed topics and genres for the following year.

"Students create a real meritocracy," said Mr. Sanchez, who writes a classical music column for the Charleston City Paper.

"There was no cattiness; no one dogged anyone's writing over personal issues. The writing of less talkative writers was praised just as

much as the writing of the more popular kids. It's an atypical high-school group.

"The workshops at College of Charleston are no better than these."

"It's fun for me to see everyone work and play together," said Mrs. Miles. "Everyone took the workshops very seriously."

On October 26 the group hiked to the top of a peak on the Blue Ridge Mountains. "We were all either miserable together or loving it together," said Zan.



Group photo on a hike in the mountains.

Mrs. Miles

"It wasn't so much a physical challenge," said Senior **Olivia Henderson**, "but going on a journey with people who I usually just sit in class with

and never see outside of class helped me see them in a more casual light."

That night, students participated in the Suppressed Desires Talent Show, which was judged by Mrs. Miles, Mr. Sanchez, and **Ms. Andrea Awkerman**, who chaperoned the trip. "I learned that the group of Creative Writers is just as crazy, if not crazier, outside of school as in class," said Junior **Tristan Richardson**.

"They're so silly!" said Mrs. Miles.

At Lake Logan Episcopal Center, students slept on bunk-beds in lodges. "It's the first time I've done anything like staying in a lodge, and it helped me relate to the Seniors a lot more," said Olivia.

"If I weren't a Senior, I'd definitely like to go back again."

"Being stuck in cabins with no TV and no phones meant that I had to get to know a lot of people better," said Junior **Maddie Wood**. "I really liked it though, and the food was really good."



# Senior Jackson Holder joins Outlaw Poets

By Kristin de Herder

**KH:** *Who are the Outlaw Poets?*

**JH:** The Outlaw Poets consist of 5 or 6 local poets. The two main outlaws are Matt Hampton and Marcus Amaker. Matt Hampton M.C.s an open mic on Monday night at 8pm at the East Bay Coffee House and Thursday nights at the Kudu Coffee House at 7:59pm.

**KH:** *How did you become an Outlaw Poet?*

**JH:** It was my first open mic at Monday Night Blues at the East Bay Coffee House. I went there not knowing what to expect. I had written, over the past three weeks, a poem that was based on Allen Ginsberg's "Howl", which is 13 pages long. My poem was 6 pages long, and that is single spaced, with no line breaks. I was encouraged by the people with me and signed up to read. First, I read one of my poems, that is around a half a page long. Then I read my poem, titled "Slash" or "You Better Watch Out Mr. Ginsberg, Because You're In This Poem, Too." It took me 8 minutes to read and I finished to a standing ovation. After I read, the M.C. came up to me to congratulate me and extend an invitation to become an Outlaw Poet. It was not something that I expected at all. It was quite a surprise, and a good one.

**KH:** *In terms of philosophy, what does it mean to be an "Outlaw Poet"?*

**JH:** Throughout each generation of artists in every discipline, there have been people who have reinvented what that discipline means to modern culture, whenever their modern was. For a long time, poetry has had strict, fixed meter forms, and were judged by how elegantly you could make a statement within a given meter. Then we have people who began to deviate from that, who began to break meter, who began to use more substitutions than was ab-

solutely necessary. Those people who break the rules, who do what they are not supposed to do according to the formal poetry that is being taught at that time, those are considered the outlaws. An Outlaw Poet is not some who is not simply trying to do well with what is already there, but try to introduce something new.

**KH:** *What are the Outlaw Poets trying to accomplish?*

**JH:** We are trying to keep the spoken word tradition alive, especially in Charleston. That has actually been pretty exciting for us because we've found that people are starting to come to these open mics and not be afraid to get up and read. Poets are coming out of their shells where you would least expect them.

**KH:** *Do they meet regularly?*

**JH:** Unless we are doing a show where we are the main attraction, so to speak,

we don't meet regularly. When we do have rehearsed shows, we do meet once or twice a week, but typically, no. Usually two or three of us will show up to any given open mic and we'll talk then. We do whatever we can to meet here and there.

**KH:** *What happens during these rehearsals?*

**JH:** We get together and critique each other's poetry and set up the actual things that we are going to do. Some of them are more serious, like reading ballads that Matt penned, and some of them are more frivolous, for example we are doing something we call "pop culture poetry," where each outlaw poet picks a song from pop culture and recites it as poetry.

**KH:** *Do you have any rehearsed shows coming up?*

**JH:** We have two shows coming up on January 8, and 15 or 16. I can't

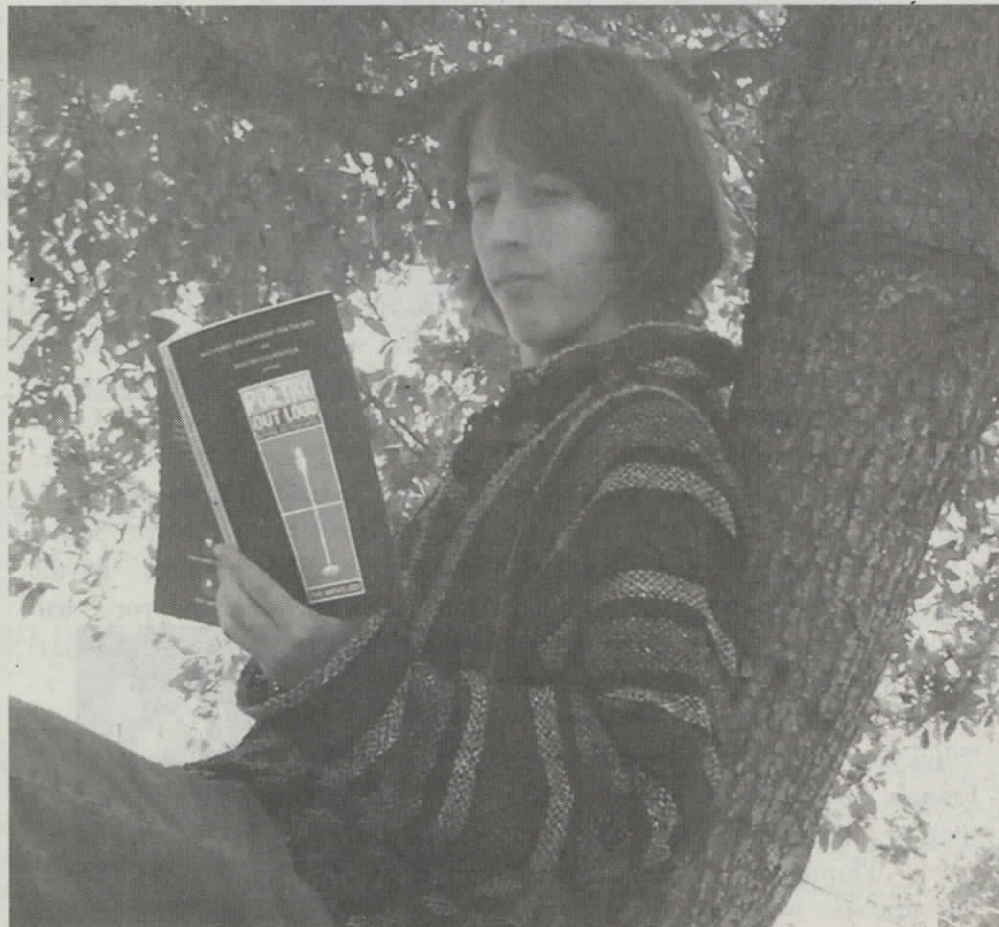
remember. What we are trying to achieve with these shows is to send a group of poets to the National Spoken Word Competition, presented by the National Association of Spoken Word Poets. Teams of spoken word poets are sent to slam and the top group receives a large cash prize. The Outlaws are looking to send a team of two or three.

**KH:** *How do you feel that being an outlaw will help you develop, as a poet?*

**JH:** The experience of being around poets who have traveled and hosted events nationally, who have slammed in places across the country, who have nineteen years more experience writing than I have, has already been such a great opportunity for me and a great avenue for expansion, in terms of what I am doing as a poet.

**KH:** *Do you have any advice for future poets or poets honing their craft?*

**JH:** You have to keep writing. You have to keep studying other poets and reading up on the masters. Come to open mics! There are open mics at the East Bay Coffee House on Monday at 8pm and at the Kudu Coffee House on Thursday at 7:59 pm. These open mic nights are such a great opportunity for anyone who is interested in writing. The M.C. is a really approachable, nice guy. It's a really warm, friendly, welcoming atmosphere where no one feels out of place. You can come to the open mic to read poetry, prose, you can even play music. You have to go out and do it. You can't sit at home and write poetry and show it to all your friends if you want to get involved, and you do want to get involved. Trust me. It is an experience that you will value for the rest of your life.



Jackson learns "A Supermarket in California" by Allen Ginsberg for the Poetry Out Loud Competition

Kristin de Herder

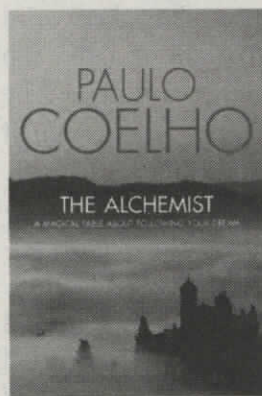


## *The Alchemist* by Paul Coelho is a tale of discovery

By contributing writer Braden Joyce-Schleimer

*The Alchemist*, Paul Coelho, Harper Collins, 192 pages. \$13.95.

After being translated into fifty-six different languages and selling twenty million copies worldwide, it's no secret that Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* has become an interna-



tional bestseller of mammoth proportions. But, like many other questions posed in the story, how and why would a meager volume of 167 pages be vaulted to such

success? Could something so small readily hold such momentous meaning between its covers? The answer, you'll find, is an irrefutable "yes."

Santiago, a young shepherd boy from Andalusia, lives a simple life, herding sheep throughout the rolling hills and verdant valleys of southern Spain fills him with utmost contentment; that is, until he dreams of a great treasure waiting for him at the Pyramids of Egypt. A meeting with

an old man claiming to be an ancient king (which Santiago assumes to be by chance) sends the boy on an adventure of a lifetime, rocketing away from the ascetic shepherd life he had grown to love.

The novel, in two parts, is written in a way to suggest a traditional oral tale being passed down through the generations. Never separated into distinct chapters, only an unobtrusive, star-shaped symbol divulges the progression of the story. Coelho, who has been deemed one of the most influential authors in the world today and viewed by many as "an alchemist of words," explores the deeper meanings of human passion. Through the naïve and inexperienced Santiago, Coelho shows us that our loves, desires, and destinies go hand in hand with our search for understanding the world around us.

At the beginning of his journey, Santiago sells his flock and travels across the Strait of Gibraltar to the port city of Tangier in Africa. Once there, a thief steals Santiago's money, so he is forced to take up a job with the crystal merchant who, without knowing it, teaches him many impor-

tant lessons for the journey ahead of him. After working in the shop for a year, Santiago has enough money to join a caravan across the desert with an Englishman who is in search of a two hundred year old alchemist who lives in a desert oasis. Upon arrival there, Santiago falls desperately in love with Fatima, a young woman of the oasis. He believes he has found his treasure. However, with the help of the alchemist, the shepherd-turned-explorer completes the final and most dangerous leg of his journey, learning that the treasure he's been searching for has been waiting for him all along in the place he least expected it.

*The Alchemist* is indispensable to anyone who wants to be well-read. This tale, simple yet evocative, ageless yet entertaining, has become a hallmark of modern literature whose effects are sure to be felt far into the future. It bears a message of faith, audacity, sheer power, and the ability of all people to trust in their hearts, while following the often obscure and uncharted paths of our personal treasures. After all, "to realize one's destiny is a person's only obligation."

## On the roster:

local (and not so local) concerts

By Kristin de Herder

### December

- 29 Cowboy Mouth @ the Windjammer in Isle of Palms
- 29 Cheetah Girls @ the North Charleston Coliseum
- 30 Blueground Undergrass @ The Pour House in James Island
- 30 Edwin McCain @ the House of Blues in Myrtle Beach
- 31 Perpetual Groove @ The Music Farm

### January

- 6 Collective Soul/ Josh Kelley @ the House of Blues in Myrtle Beach
- 16 Bob Seger @ Charlotte Bobcats Arena
- 22 John Hiatt/ Lyle Lovett @ the Peace Center in Greenville
- 23 Red Hot Chili Peppers/ Gnarls Barkley @ Charlotte Bobcats Arena

## Music majors and teachers put on successful Elton John/Billy Joel Concert

By Blake Engel

Under a full, yellow moon, the High School vocal, strings, and piano majors shook the stage to its core on Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> as they played twenty-seven songs by Elton John and Billy Joel. Although the seating was limited to about two hundred, by the end of the night it seemed like thousands had packed the Park Circle Recreational Center.

On each side of the auditorium there were rows of brightly lit Christmas trees, each separated by life-size nutcrackers, and three immense wreaths surrounded the stage. The stage itself was decorated with a bright-white Christmas tree, which sat alongside a wall-sized

painting of a snowy scene.

A band comprised of a guitar, base, a drummer, and a saxophone player accompanied the students as they rolled through each song, giving spectacular performances, one after the other.

The performances included "New York State of Mind," sung by Junior **Heather Jones** with Junior **Jesse McGinty** on the piano and strings majors as accompaniment; "She's Got A Way," sung by Freshman **Francis Smalls**; and "Movin' Out" sung by Junior **Cordell Mosteller**.

Throughout the event, the teachers took the opportunity to perform themselves, with **Mr.**

**Charlton Singleton** singing a beautiful version of "Tiny Dancer," **Ms. Ann Marie Fairchild** displaying a rousing melancholy with "I Guess That's Why They Call It the Blues," and **Mr. Joseph Clarke** practically breaking down the walls with "Scenes From an Italian Restaurant." By the time he was done, everyone had



Students dance in the audience.

Blake Engel

crowded in front of the stage, joining in the song and doing a bit of crowd surfing.

Overall, the concert was incredible. While most of the audience members over the age of 35 remained seated, by the middle of the show, all of the High School kids were dancing in the back of the room, creating one giant mob of swing-dancing and tangoing teenagers. An occasion not to be missed, the evening was punctuated with astonishing vocal solos, unbelievable piano fingerwork, and the lasting memory of a wonderful night.

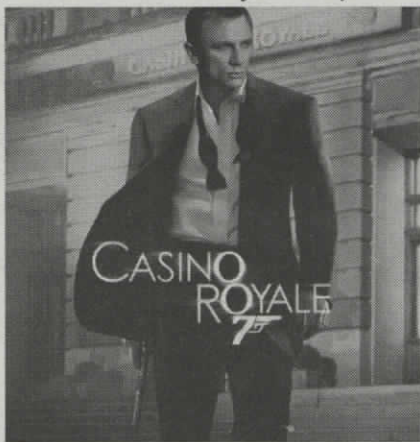


## Casino Royale delivers action, lacks plot

By Blake Engel

It seems in every new Bond, there's a villain more hideously deformed than the last, and while *Casino Royale* scales the gruesomeness back from the (literally) diamond-faced nemesis from *Die Another Day*, the previous 007 movie, this one still has his fair share of quirks. His name is Le Chiffre and he's an asthmatic, European Scarface (sporting the same distinct mark as Al Pacino in his famous 1983 film) with a penchant for poker. And it is an extremely high-stakes game of Texas Hold 'em (with a \$10,000,000 buy-in) that serves as

not only the centerpiece of the movie, but also as the location from which the title takes its name. At the Casino Royale in Montenegro, James Bond, played by blond, blue-eyed newcomer Daniel Craig faces off in a game of wits, rather



than guns, with Le Chiffre, played with the right blend of dramatic nuance and unmitigated malevolence by Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen. This comes somewhat as a surprise in a Bond film flush with action sequences, including a gritty hand-to-hand fight in an already beat-up bathroom; an on-foot chase sequence

between James and a mercenary bomb-maker (played by Sebastien Foucan, the creator of the sport of free-running); and a car chase on the tarmac of a Miami airport. In reality, these merely function as set-pieces to move the audience from A to B (or, rather, from minor villain A to minor villain B) to get to Le Chiffre and the big showdown. Adapted from the very first *James Bond* novel, by author Ian Fleming, and directed by Martin Campbell, who also directed the 17th James Bond film, *GoldenEye*, *Casino Royale* may be the 21st addition to

a four-decade old franchise, but it is still a healthy rebirth for Bond, much in the same way as *Batman Begins* was for the Batman franchise a year ago. Although this one is about 75% nearly-mindless action (which will undoubtedly please many, and perhaps justifiably so), at least Campbell gave this film one female character who is a bit more than a mindless "Bond Girl." Maybe this means James Bond will continue into a better, more complexly plotted future.

Rated PG-13

## King Crimson's *Red*: A lesser-known classic

By David Whitley

**King Crimson, *Red*, E.G. Records.**

The seventies was a defining era in the case of progressive rock. Pink Floyd released the spectacular *Dark Side of the Moon* in 1973; Genesis began bringing albums to the United States; ELP was in its heyday. Among these giants, some amazing pieces of music tend to be overlooked. Released in 1974, King Crimson's epic album *Red* is every bit as worthy of recognition as its more recognizable peers.

The King Crimson lineup for *Red* consists of guitarist Robert Fripp, the only constant member of the band throughout its entire career and who also plays the mellotron, Bill Bruford, better known as the drummer for Yes, and bassist John Wetton. David Cross provides accompanying violin and several studio musicians play alto and soprano saxophone.

The titular first track, "Red," is as loud and rousing as most metal of the era, but steers away from the traditional chorus / verse / chorus format of most songs of the period. The piece is an instrumental with heavy, memorable guitar ascents and descents and superb drumming. The opening riff is very catchy and I've caught myself humming it on several occasions. The second track, "Fallen Angel," is a poignant ballad about the darker side of urban living, comparing impoverished city dwellers to fallen angels. The third song, "One More Red Nightmare," describes the singer's nightmare of a plane crash. It is a rowdy fusion of progressive rock and jazz, with an aggressive saxophone accompanying the usual bass, guitar, and drums. The fourth track, "Providence," is an entirely

improvisational piece that was first performed live. In the beginning it is more of an atmospheric piece than an actual song, relying heavily upon ambient sounds and distant violin. Later, the guitar joins in for a frantic climax that winds down to meld with the opening of the final track.

The final – and I think the most aurally pleasant – song on the album, "Starless," opens with melancholy mellotron strings and a soothing guitar. The first three minutes are punctuated by beautiful, poetic lyrics, and as the piece progresses the distortion effect on the guitar increases and the sound of the song becomes louder and harder. Sometime around the ten minute mark (it's a twelve minute song), the piece breaks out into a fast-paced jazz/rock fusion that runs until the climax. "Starless" is a masterpiece; even my mom, who



King Crimson

usually hates everything about King Crimson because of their loud aggressive sound, agreed that it was impressive.

All in all, King Crimson's *Red* is an album to own. Although it has been so overshadowed by more mainstream blockbuster albums of the period, I would absolutely recommend an immediate purchase of this CD. Because it is not as well known, music stores might not carry *Red*. Order it from Amazon.com or just download it from iTunes if you're lazy.

the gift that grows

what if the gift you gave grew? and one gift grew into two? needs could be eased and poverty replaced with the possibilities that are born of a gift from you.

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# Jill Hunter Pig Photographer

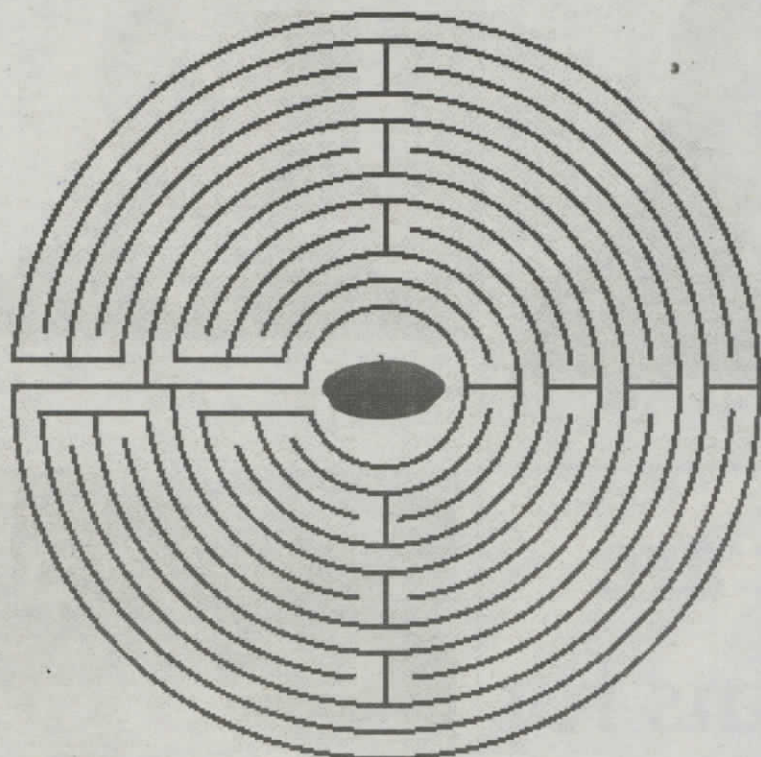


[www.jillhunter.net](http://www.jillhunter.net)



## Help Ms. Matthews find her beret! Stylewatch:

By David Whitley



## Test your logic with SuDoku

By David Whitley

	8	4				2	7	
9			8		2			4
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## SOA graduate to host release party for new album

By Amber Caparas



SOA's very own **Corey Webb** (a.k.a. the beloved Huck Finn in the 05-06 school production of *Big River*) has announced the release of his first full-length album, *The Greater Good*. A CD release party will be held on December 28<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm at the Village Playhouse, 730

Coleman Blvd, Mt Pleasant. The night will open with a performance by singer/songwriter Tim Giles of Columbia along with cellist Michael King. Corey will be joined by Steve Heyward and beloved SOA graduates, **Taylor Raffield** and **Trevor Murray**. All are invited to come celebrate the release of *The Greater Good* and enjoy an evening of some great folk-rock acoustic. For more information visit [www.purevolume.com/coreywebb](http://www.purevolume.com/coreywebb).

## Nail polish

By Kristin de Herder

Since it's not exactly flip-flop season, showing off your newly painted toes is a bit out of the question, but don't let the cold winter season get your creative painting down; paint your fingernails! From clear to neon yellow, nail polish comes in every shade of the rainbow, making the sky the limit on your designs. Here is an idea: get together with a



Seniors **Brittney Harrington** and **Casie Fennell** apply nail polish.

group of friends and have a "manicure night." Tell everyone to bring her favorite bottles of nail polish and let the creativity flow. Maybe even have a contest to decide who has the most original design.

Of course, if you want to prevent your masterpiece from chipping, try applying a clear basecoat before the color polish, and topcoat after the color polish. Manicures are a great way to spend time with friends and have fun, so why not give it a try?

## Horoscopes

By the SOA Astrologer

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** If you ever build a time machine, try to avoid arriving on the Hindenburg.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** The path of your life changes with the passing of each year, so you better start stocking up on calendars.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Befriend all the bums on the street because one day they will form the greatest marching band the world has ever seen.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20):** If you need something, you will have it; if you don't, it is already gone.

**Aries (March 21-April 19):** Gather your friends and form an avant-garde band. Play the electric kazoo!

**Taurus (April 20-May 20):** Start a campaign to elect Steve Buscemi as the sexiest man alive.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21):** Band majors are people too.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22):** If you don't celebrate Christmas, be thankful that your year-end holiday has not been overrun by rampant commercialism.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22):** [insert snappy one-liner here]

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sep. 22):** If you're on a magical mystery tour and your guide is John Lennon, get out of there, because he's dead.

**Libra (Sep. 23-Oct. 22):** When in doubt, why should you expect us to help you?

**Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21):** Go to the Tower of London and shout "Freedom!" I bet no one has ever done that before.





"I'll be in North Carolina riding the Polar Express."  
-Morgan Watts, 6th Grade



"My plans are to go to Norway to see friends."  
-Anna Methais, 7th grade



"I'm going on a cruise to Mexico to get a tan while everyone else freezes."  
-Dylan Walsh, 8th Grade



"For three short, snowy days, I'll be in Montreal. I want to taste the snow."  
-Mr. Pezzeca, French Teacher

What are your plans for winter break?



"I'm going to Chicago."  
-Everett Pompeii, 9th Grade



"I have friends in England who I am going to visit."  
-Dan Hanf, 12th Grade



"I'm going spelunking in Alabama."  
-Ginny Summerford, 11th Grade



"I'll be on a ski trip in Canada."  
-Ian Gwinnup, 10th Grade

