

# Applause

Volume 20, Number 3

School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC  
[soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com)

December 2018



Happy  
Holidays

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## Letter From the Editors

Happy Holidays, SOA. We are proud to bring you the nineteenth anniversary issue of *Applause*!

We hope you were able to attend one of our many extraordinary holiday performances this month, which culminated with an incredible concert at the Gaillard Auditorium on Monday, December 17, featuring more than 200 students from the band, strings, vocal and deaf / hard of hearing majors.

We celebrate this anniversary issue with a new feature: "Influential Artist," in which **Luke Shaw** interviews an SOA arts instructor and one of his students about an artist who has influenced each of them. One of our most popular features in the October issue was the inclusion of work by middle school guest writers, so we've devoted two pages to these wonderful writers this issue. Read about their woes, joys, and 2019 plans on pages 11-12.

Continuing a long-standing December tradition, *Applause* polled the entire middle and high school student body, asking what book each would like to receive as a holiday gift. After compiling a list of the top 25 books for each school, four names were drawn from a hat and *Applause* purchased the books of their choice for the lucky winners. Congratulations to **Eloise Hastings, Brady Bishop, Abby Grace McLaughlin, and Sebastian Thompson** (see this month's centerfold).

With the holiday season comes chilly air, good feelings all around, and rest and relaxation. *Applause* wishes our readers a joyous and peaceful holiday season and a much needed break from the hustle and bustle of end of the year activities. Best wishes for a wonderful 2019!

Maya Cline, M. B. McConnell, and Tes Smoak



# Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of  
**School of the Arts**

*Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers*

### Editors-in-Chief:

Maya Cline

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Tes Smoak

### Cover Artist:

Jaden Brown

### Cartoonist:

Maddie Thomas

### Business Manager:

John Allen White Jr.

### Photographer:

Parker Thompson

### Staff Writers:

River Abedon

Galen Berger

Hannah Burton

Kyliah Catalan

Lou Collins

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Arden Dodge

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Katie Jo Gelasco

Maya Green

Evelyn Howe

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Adam Krasnoff

Roey Leonardi

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Chassee Palmer

Liv Provosty

Jayla Sanders

Luke Shaw

Zachary Shirley

Carson Stehling

John Cusatis, Ph.D., Adviser

Charleston County School of the Arts

5109-B West Enterprise St.

North Charleston, SC 29405

**soa-applause.com**

## Editorial: A Climate Shaped by Change

On Black Friday, the federal government released a congressionally mandated report on climate change, warning of the imminent dire consequences of ignoring climate change. While the news was certainly dark, it seemed conspicuous to many that the report was published on the busiest shopping day of the year, perhaps another attempt to blackout the inconvenient truth of climate change?

While scientists have known for decades that humans are destroying the planet, the denial of this fact by many of these same humans is compounding the problem. "One of the problems that a lot of people like myself," President Trump stated after the release of the report, "we have very high levels of intelligence, but we're not necessarily such believers." To what authority should one appeal regarding the condition of our planet if not scientists? Many other officials from the Trump administration criticized the facts in the report, press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders claimed they are "radical" and "not data-driven."

What is really "radical" are the claims made by Pastor Kevin Swanson on his Colorado radio show, who has attributed several natural disasters not to climate change but to divine wrath. Most recently he blamed the deadly California wildfires on the state of California for "legitimizing the sin of homosexuality." But even less extreme denials of human culpability regarding climate change are still denials and they impede progress. America's pulling out of the Paris Agreement struck a serious blow to international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is difficult for climate control legislation to be passed when a significant portion of the country, including many influential leaders, believes there is no reason to pass any. United States' carbon emissions are up 2.5% since last year and global emissions are up 2.7%. And the EPA recently abolished even more regulations on coal-powered plants.

Climate change is not an arguable claim. It is an urgent, real issue that will and already has affected us.

We have been warned that if serious changes are not put in place within a dozen years, it could be too late. This is not "our children's children's" problem: it's ours. And the evidence is at our doorstep. Will we ignore the expanding length the Atlantic hurricane season and the catastrophic power of recent storms? The record levels of downtown flooding caused recently by a full moon? The "once-in-a-thousand-years" floods have hit our state in three consecutive years? A six inch snowfall earlier this year? If we continue to let science be silenced by politics and self-interest, the blackest Fridays lie ahead.



## Dr. Cook's Corner

The month of December brings with it special events and experiences that highlight the arts throughout the holidays. While reflecting on the accomplishments and contributions of our students and teachers, I was reminded of phrases that Rutledge Hammes wrote several years ago. With a few minor revisions I'm sharing the phrases that descriptively capture the magic of our major classes and communicate so much with so few words:

Band: Where breath transforms into music...  
 Creative Writing: Where the written word becomes the blueprint for life...  
 Dance: Where movement is enough to move others...  
 Fashion: Where seams tell a seamless story...  
 Piano: Where we orchestrate a song, using only our fingers  
 Strings: Where we learn to speak without saying a word ....  
 Theatre: Where the world's a stage, and we have our parts...  
 Visual Arts: Where we leave our mark on the canvas of the world...  
 Vocal: Where hitting the right key is the key to everything...



Adam Krasnoff

One of the most valuable presents we can receive is an awareness of the gifts we possess. Being present at SOA is an invaluable experience with benefits now and long into the future. I wish you all Happy Holidays, and look forward to all that the New Year will bring!

*Dr. Cook*

## Angel Tree Project Brings Christmas Joy to Liberty Hill Students

by Arden Dodge

Every December, SOA's National Honors Society helps make the holidays much merrier through a program for children enrolled in the Liberty Hill Literacy Community. This program is known as the Angel Tree project, where students buy presents for one or more children at Liberty Hill, a North Charleston elementary and middle school. While students were given ample pre-approved community service hours for their efforts, the real incentive was gratification.

The Angel Tree program was created in recognition of the elementary students who come from underprivileged households, where a Christmas morning full of thoughtful presents isn't always an option. Unfortunately, this bleak picture is an annual reality for many children at Liberty Hill. Through Angel Tree, SOA students are able to bring a bit of extra magic back into the holiday season. What's more gratifying than that?



National Honors Society members show their dedication at a lunch time wrapping party.

This year, SOA students were able to give gifts to every single Liberty Hill (over 90 total), with many students generously bringing in extra gifts. All gifts were donated December 4th through December 11 in Ms. Greig's lab, and all were wrapped the following Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The project's head organizers, **Jessann Gentile**, **M. B. McConnell**, **Michael Moskos**, and **Molly Hunsinger**, were very pleased with all the help and generosity on the student body's behalf. The majority of students gave gifts straight from their hearts that they no doubt knew would make their sponsored child's Christmas magical. Jessann Gentile recounted some of the project's most thoughtful gifts, from "bicycles to science lab sets."

One of the best (and certainly most exciting) parts of every Angel Tree is the unwrapping ceremony. Every year before the holiday break, a celebration unwrapping is held after school at the Liberty Hill Literacy after-school campus for all of the adopted students. This year, on December 19th, SOA students were able to watch as more than ninety children tore open their gifts in sheer madness and excitement. "To use our resources to help those who do not have the same," as project leader **Katie Jo Gelasco** puts it, "really makes an impact on both the kids' and our lives." Needless to say, many tears of joy were shed!

I've sponsored seven kids since Freshman year, and every single year, I unfortunately missed the unwrapping ceremony. However, I've sent spies to recount the precious reactions of my kids, and that alone has killed the growing grinch inside of me. If you haven't donated this year, definitely do your best to donate next year. Even though this year's Angel Tree project has come to a close, be sure to ask next year's coordinators what you can do to help! The gift of giving warms hearts on all fronts, making this holiday season lovely for tons of families, children, and students.



The (literal) Angel Tree, trimmed with hand-made ornaments representing Liberty Hill children for students to pick.

Provided

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## An Interview with Senior SOA Musicians Interning at a Local Studio

by Cecilia Connelly

*While many would concur that no two music studios are alike, White Key Studios stands out especially due to one incredibly unique feature: the strong and sturdy tree that stands guard and supports branches full of a variety of musical instruments. From guitars to keyboards to saxophones, as well as a colorful piano placed outside the white fence for any passerby to enjoy, this feature makes the studio distinct to the area. It should come as a shock to no one that SOA is populated by many students interested in pursuing music as a professional career, whether that may be as a performer, a producer, a conductor, or something else. Upon learning of two students' ventures into their dream field, I was able to ask seniors **Zach Shirley** and **James Leprettre** about their time spent at the studio so far.*

**Cecilia Connelly:** How did you find out about this internship, and what initially drew you to it?

**James Leprettre:** White Key Studios is relatively new to Charleston, however it stands out because it has a bunch of instruments dangling from the tree in front of it. I have known for a while that I love music and want to pursue it as my career, so one day, completely by chance, I walked in to talk to the owner. He asked me what I did, and when I told him I wrote songs, he made me play one on the spot. The rest of it is history.

**Zachary Shirley:** I had been wanting to intern at a recording studio for a while because I'm going to college for music production, and when I found out that James had talked to White Key about interning, I figured I had to stop by. James was really annoyed when they contacted me back but not him, but it turns out they accidentally gave him the wrong email.

**CC:** How often do you work at the studio? What are your responsibilities?

**JL:** I spend about three to four days a week working at the studio. I clean and make sure everything looks well kept, help teach students guitar and songwriting, and I help record progress demos for students.

**ZS:** I used to spend about three days a week there where I did everything James did, but now, I've cut it back to one day a week.

**CC:** What skills are you gaining and developing from the internship?

**JL:** I can now comfortably record demos, write music and have even learned how to advertise for my gigs. I am recording an album at the music studio and I am understanding how to plan and produce an album.

**ZS:** I have a decent home studio, so I went into the internship with a fair bit of recording knowledge to begin with. The internship has mainly helped me make a lot of connections with other musicians in Charleston. James is much more of a songwriter, whereas I like to focus more on the sonic and instrumental aspects of music, so I've been able to find great bands to play with thanks to White Key. Sometimes, I'll sit in with a student who's learning something on guitar, and I'll play bass along with them to help them get used to playing with other instruments.

Provided



The view outside White Key Studios, famed tree and all.

**CC:** How has helping record and produce a range of music styles and genres impacted you as a musician?

**JL:** I have collaborated with musicians of a variety of ages and genres, and it's really diversified my sound as well as identify it. I have learned to take an interest in multiple genres and can see the value and experiences I can draw from a variety of genres.

**ZS:** It can help to diversify my musical pallet. If I'm ever experiencing writers block it always gives me something to draw from that I wouldn't normally think to use.

**CC:** What interesting experiences have you had while interning?

**JL:** The co-owner had the idea to do summer music sessions, and I was lucky enough to assist in selecting the talent and inviting people to come out and hear local songwriters perform original music. I also met an amazing pianist named Donny Meekel, who works for the Air Force. I was stunned when this massive guy sat down and played the piano so beautifully. It was really an eye-opening experience.

**ZS:** I became great friends with a lot of the students and parents, as well as with the drum instructor, Josh. He really helped me improve my pocket, especially when it comes to playing bass.

**CC:** What has your internship taught you about the music industry that can assist you in your own pursuit of a music career?

**JL:** Planning and networking are essential to moving forward in a musical career. Follow up on contacts and connections that you make, because you never know where they are going to take you.

**CC:** What do you like most about the a music studio's atmosphere? How would you describe it to someone who has never experienced it before?

**JL:** Creativity is utterly contagious. At the studio, music is everywhere, whether it's plastered on the walls or in front of you on a stand. I have written more in the past few months working at the studio than I did in the previous four years that I have been writing music.

Imagine being a kid in a candy store. Now imagine someone giving you one hundred dollars and cavities no longer exist.

**ZS:** It's just electric. There are so many instruments out there. It's always a great day when I find a new instrument that I didn't know about. One time I found this really terrible late 90's Yamaha keyboard that had the most lo-fi boutique sound! Whenever I'm having writer's block, I sometimes try using a different guitar to help formulate a song idea.

**CC:** What are your personal goals in the music business? How do you intend to achieve them?

**JL:** I want to be a successful musician and live a life surrounded by music. I would love to be able to tour and see the world while playing and sharing my music with people. I write whenever I can and as much as I can because I don't see myself being more fulfilled by anything else. I have a responsibility to music because of how much it has done for me in my life.

**ZS:** Music is pretty much the only thing that I feel like I really understand. It's the only thing I can really see myself doing for as long as I live. I just want my music to have some kind of meaning to people. As long as I can, at the very least, make a living wage off of doing what I love, then I'll be happy.

## Face-to-Face with Talent: Legendary Trumpeters Doc Severinsen and Phil Smith Rehearse at SOA

by Tes Smoak

On December 3rd, the Charleston Symphony brass and percussion ensemble, the former Principal Trumpet of the New York Philharmonics, and legendary band leader of the Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson, performed an open dress rehearsal in the Rose Maree Myers Theater. Both trumpeters, Phil Smith and Doc Severinsen are world-renowned, Severinsen in the jazz world and Smith in the classical.

The ensemble included trumpets, french horns, trombones and baritone, tuba and percussion. It was a great experience. We got to witness how a professional band rehearses, and how much work goes into a major show. Not only did we get to see great musicians, we also got to hear instruments that some people didn't know about, such as a piccolo trumpet. They switched between classical and jazz, the latter very rare for french horns and baritones to play. Their music selections included "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "Greensleeves," "Joy to the World," "Deck the Halls."



Phil Smith (third from right) proudly shows off his trumpet alongside other members of the New York Philharmonic trumpet section in 1980.

After the rehearsal, Severinsen, who is 91 years old, and Smith answered questions from the crowd of local middle and high schools from the Charleston area. When someone asked Severinsen if the music business was for them, he replied that "you shouldn't go into the music business if you have to ask." He added that the money that came with playing on the Tonight Show didn't really matter that much to him: "If they didn't pay me a nickel, I'd still be playing right here." Smith also told the story of his challenge with focal dystonia: a neurological disorder characterized by involuntary muscles contractions and posture. It usually happens in one part of your body. Your brain knows what to do, but your body does not respond. He recalled how long it took to relearn the trumpet; his main focus in conquering this obstacle was to "be better today than you were yesterday," eventually working up his range and technique.

He played the final song with the ensemble, proud to do what he loves once again. Severinsen added to Smith's story, reminding the audience that "it doesn't matter what you do, you can lose it, but you can get it back."

John Cusatis



Doc Severinsen, seen here in the RMMT, rehearsed for his show the following night at the Charleston Music Hall.

Provided

Kyliah Catalan



7th grade Theatre majors perform an improv show on November 27th and 28th, while seniors perform their theses, "Why Avoid What's Inside of You" on December 13th and 14th.



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## On Change and Progress: Senior Dancers Give Moving Thesis Performance

by Galen Berger

Provided

The Senior Dance majors have been working on their first Senior Thesis show since the start of the school year. Each choreographer chose a specific social issue that they were passionate about and crafted a dance about it for their fellow classmates. As a result, each dancer acted as both a dancer and a choreographer. The show took place on December 4th at 6:30 in the Rose Maree Myers Theater.

**Kailyn Evans'** piece is about panic disorder and the fears and struggles associated with it. She explained how she chose her topic: "Although I don't have the disorder myself, I do struggle, like many people my age, with occasional panic and anxiety attacks." Kailyn is hoping that in her dance, she has conveyed what she's learned about the disorder from her research and that it resonated with the audience.

In her thesis, **Galen Berger** focused on LGBT mainstream acceptance. She chose her topic after hearing a news story about the suicide of a young boy who was cruelly bullied by his peers after attempting to come out. Galen hopes to "give hope to those who are struggling to feel truly accepted by their community" and wants "to show the light at the end of the tunnel."

**Anna Lipke's** piece is focused on sexual assault, misconduct, and harassment within the armed forces. Although systemized sexual assault occurs across many industries, it occurs at an astonishingly high rate within the military due to the low reporting rates and ineffective systems in place that encourage sexual assault to be covered up. During this process, Anna conducted interviews with active and former members of the armed forces in order to understand how this tragic cycle functions in such an isolated industry. Anna explained her aspirations with this dance: "I hope that creating my senior thesis based off this social issue, I am able to more accurately represent and shed light on this issue and offer support to survivors of sexual assault everywhere."

**Jessann Gentile's** dance, titled "Feel My Love", is based on the self-love she believes everyone should have. Jessann believes that "In society today there is a lot of pressure on how we do everything and sometimes we just need to remind ourselves that having respect for yourself goes a long way." She has conveyed this by having her dancer, Kailyn Evans, explore her body parts through dance movement and then releasing that confidence into the audience through outward movements. She hopes that the audience goes away from the piece feeling more confident and having more appreciation for themselves and those around them.

**Patricia Pena** centered her thesis on how negative body image can distort one's mind and relationship with oneself. Her dance primarily focuses on the daily struggle one encounters with the mindset of self-hatred. Patricia believes that her topic can "reach out to those who battle with having a negative body image and may also encourage others to not only respect their body, but nourish it with a positive mindset."

For her dance, **Jai'lyn Jones** covered human trafficking which is defined by the trade of humans for the purpose of forced labor, sexual slavery, or commercial sexual exploitation for the trafficker or others. Jai'lyn chose this because in today's society more and more young females and children are experiencing some form of harassment and even being taken off of the streets in broad daylight. Jai'lyn made a dance about this to "shed light on the billion dollar industry that is mentally scarring innocent people every day."

For her thesis, **Hannah Powers** concentrated on the experience of having cancer. She hoped to explore every aspect starting with being diagnosed all the way to overcoming it. Hannah said that "the sole focus of the piece is the triumph in overcoming cancer as well as the hope and faith which are involved in that healing."

**Maddie Robertson's** piece is about Dissociative Identity Disorder, also known as Multiple Personality Disorder. She used a variety of dance styles to show the different personalities and emotions associated with the disorder. Maddie "wanted to show the struggles one can have with this disorder, including the days where they feel depressed, happy or angry." DID affects a small number of people and Maddie hopes to show the struggles of their daily lives.

**Bri Bell's** Senior Thesis is entitled "Hidden Colors" and focuses on the battles and racial inequalities African Americans, especially black women,

face every day in America. Racial inequality refers to social advantages and disparities that affect different races within the U.S. which may be manifested in the distribution of wealth, power, and life opportunities afforded to people based on their race or ethnicity, both historically and modern. According to Bri, she "chose to focus on women more specifically because it is said that African American women are at the intersection of both sexism and racism."

In her thesis, **Imari Jones** studied the issue of homelessness. She chose to focus on the current pattern of society tearing down these disenfranchised members of our community instead of trying to help them out. Imari believes that "it is our duty as a people to help those in need no matter their background. If we all took on this responsibility, the homelessness crisis would be greatly reduced."

**Parker Thompson's** thesis centers around climate change and the sub-issues surrounding this broad topic. According to Parker, his piece "explores the fundamental connections between humans and climate change and explores how that can be translated into movement."

*Applause* extends its upmost congratulations to the senior dance majors for a wonderful performance and looks forward to their second thesis performance in the spring.



The senior dance majors, in the midst of a fun time together.



Provided

Kailyn Evans, performing a particularly emotional part of Jessann Gentile's "Feel My Love."

## High School Band Rings in Holiday Cheer with December Concert

by Tes Smoak

The December High School Band Concert on the 7th opened with the SOA Jazz Ensemble in the pre-concert, playing classics such as “Skating” and “Christmas Time is Here” from *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, along with Andy Williams’ “The Most Wonderful Time of the Year.” Then, the Symphonic Band played the traditional “Ukrainian Bell Carol,” the Christmas classic “All I Want for Christmas Is You” by Mariah Carey, and “A Christmas Festival” as a nod to the upcoming SOA Symphony Orchestra Concert on December 17th. Next was the Wind Ensemble, performing “The Polar Express,” featuring piano and harp, the symphonious “Russian Christmas Music,” and “Sleigh Ride,” another nod to the SOA Orchestra. The concert featured many beautiful songs and brought holiday cheer to the Rose Maree Myers Theater.



A few dedicated clarinetists work hard during the performance.

## Junior Bassist Awarded Prestigious Position

by Cecilia Connelly

Junior **Jake Hoch** started playing the bass after enrolling at SOA in the sixth grade. On the first of this month his six years of dedication paid off in a big way when he traveled to Orlando, Florida to participate in the All National Honors Ensemble Symphony.



Jake performs at the Gaillard Auditorium on December 17th.

Jake, the only bass player chosen from South Carolina, was picked after performing with the All State Orchestra. Jake was excited to see so many passionate musicians in one place. He told Applause that, since the bass “plays more of a supporting role in the orchestra,” bassists are much less likely to receive recognition for their contributions to performances.

So, it was a welcome surprise for Jake to receive national recognition. Jake plans to attend a music school or conservatory for college and would like to one day join the International Society

of Bassists, whom he watched perform live in 2017. He also hopes to pursue a career as a bassist for a professional orchestra. Congratulations from *Applause*, Jake!

## The Reality of the Hawaiian Islands

by Evelyn Howe

The postcards aren’t lying to you: Hawaii is one of the most beautiful places on Earth. I travelled to all the major Hawaiian Islands over Thanksgiving break and can safely say that I would be hard pressed to find a more beautiful landscape. I enjoyed scuba diving in coral reefs and hiking to waterfalls, all new experiences to me. However, what I didn’t expect to witness was an aspect of Hawaii not shown in the postcards or advertised in the brochures. Lurking beneath these depictions of paradise is the harsh reality affecting thousands of Hawaiian residents.

When I first landed in Hawaii I was spellbound by the huge green mountains and the lush jungle surrounding Honolulu, Oahu. I stepped outside of the airport and was greeted by a huge banyan tree that towered over the parking lot and a rush of warm air. I was so excited and ready to explore. As we loaded all of our luggage into the taxi and began to drive into the city, my attention drifted away from the landscape and began to focus more on Honolulu itself. We were stuck in regular mid morning Oahu traffic when I looked to my left and saw a row of dirty, broken tents barely standing up on the side of the road. I dismissed it. Regular city downfalls, I assumed. But as we continued into the center of the city, I saw an increasingly troubling amount of “city downfalls.” And it didn’t end once we continued our trip. On our way to tour Pearl Harbor, I saw a young woman sleeping on a beat up mattress by a dumpster. When we were in Maui, my mom stopped our taxi to give a old man a sandwich she had bought because we had seen almost a dozen people in the same position just that morning. I was horrified at the sheer amount of people living in such poverty. Wasn’t this supposed to be paradise?

Not for everyone. According to the 2016 Census Bureau, 15.1% of Americans live in poverty. That number goes up to 16.8% in Hawaii, making it have the ninth highest poverty rate in the country. And the most horrific statistic? One in six people live below the poverty line. To give you some perspective, that means that in a regular classroom of thirty people, five people are existing in barely livable conditions, with some even being homeless. What is so jarring about this is how uneducated people are about this epidemic on the mainland. I would expect this number in Chicago or NYC, but never in Hawaii. And I think that’s one of the major problems. We are so blinded by the magic and beauty of the islands that we never stop to open our eyes to the possibility that maybe not everyone is having such a wonderful experience as we are. Even in the number one tourist destination in America, Charleston, this disparity between the beauty and the squalor exists. And the first step to alleviate it is to acknowledge it.

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## Wordfest 2018 a Success for Creative Writing Department

by Roey Leonardi

On Saturday, December 1st, the creative writing department held its annual fundraiser, "Wordfest," at the Barnes and Noble in Town Centre. Students from grades six through twelve read selections from pieces of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and scripts written during first semester to an audience of friends, family, and strangers browsing through the bookstore. A percentage of purchases made at Barnes and Noble all day long was contributed to the program, as well as sales from t-shirts, sweatshirts, and other creative writing merchandise.

Aside from its value as a fundraiser, Wordfest is arguably the most important event of the year for creative writers because it is one of the few times we are able to share our work with the public. For sixth graders, who kicked off the day at nine o'clock, Saturday was, in fact, their first ever reading. As a senior writer who participated in my seventh and final Wordfest, I can attest to the fact that the nerves that come with sharing one's work with a live audience do not go away. It was our class's first experience sharing pieces from our thesis and promoting our books to the public, which increased both our stress prior to the reading and our fulfillment afterwards.

Of her Wordfest experience, freshman writer **Hannah Pulaski** shared, "As I get older, I realize how special it is that we get to share our writing with the community while also helping raise money for our program," followed by, "Also it's fun making random people at Barnes and Noble cry." This last part was no exaggeration; tears were shed throughout the day, particularly after the seniors' reading, both due to the power of the work and the sentimentality of our time in the program being nearly at its end. Overall, Wordfest was another success, with an excellent turnout to attest to the writing department's startling level of talent and creativity.



The senior creative writers take a bittersweet final Wordfest "family photo" after the reading.

## High School Piano Takes On the Big City

by Lisa Fimian

High School Piano started off the month of December with a quick trip to New York City. We enjoyed four days in Midtown Manhattan, with a diverse itinerary that balanced piano-based musical activities and typical tourist visits. The heights of the skyscrapers and the bustle of the city were a great contrast to our lives in Charleston, but these new surroundings were nevertheless intriguing and electrifying.

Jazz emerged in New York City in the early 1920s, and the city remains the epicenter for that art form well into the present day. Home to late jazz legends Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, and Fats Waller, the city is teeming with local musicians fulfilling what they left behind. The band at the Swing 46, a restaurant known for nightly jazz performances, showcased their talents while our group received a swing dance lesson. Another one of the highlights of the trip was the tour of Louis Armstrong's former home in Queens. Armstrong and his wife resided there for several years, and they chose the area because it enveloped the culture of music and art in a tight-knit community, insisting they didn't have to "move out in the suburbs to some big mansion with lots of servants and yardmen and things."

While New York City truly encapsulates the legacy of jazz, it is also a place where classical music continues to flourish. On our first day, we attended a student performance by twelve year old Jun Shimada, who played selections from well-known classical composers, including Beethoven and Brahms.

Our trip to New York City may have centered on its musical significance, but the Big Apple is an ideal destination for any SOA major's field trip. It's a hub where art timelessly thrives.



The piano majors and Ms. Benson sport big smiles at Rockefeller Plaza as Mr. Clarke strikes an impromptu pose.

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## Op Ed: Remembering George H. W. Bush

by Parker Thompson

This month, the nation lost one of its most humble servants and kindest souls. George Herbert Walker Bush was much more than a “statesman”, as the 41st President spent over 70 years steadfast on bettering the United States of America. In 1944, as the youngest American Navy pilot, Bush was shot from the sky over Chichi Jima. As a result, Bush would continue a devotion to public service as a member of congress from Texas, ambassador to the United Nations, the first United States envoy to China, director of the C.I.A, and Vice President under Ronald Reagan.

George H.W. Bush’s dedication to family and country serve as a representation of his distinctive legacy. Where Bush led, prosperity followed. As the 41st President, Bush spearheaded a battle for civil rights for our fellow Americans who suffer from disabilities, extended the nation’s hand to over 700,000 immigrants, led the first successful military engagement in nearly half a decade, oversaw the end of the Cold War, and helped broker economies in a burgeoning Eastern Europe.

As a devoted husband of 73 years, Bush was fondly remembered by Barbara Bush as “the most beautiful creature [she] had ever laid eyes on.” Bush and his wife were the parents of six children, including 43rd President George W. Bush, former Florida governor Jeb Bush, and a daughter Robin, who passed away at the age of three from Leukemia. There is bittersweet solace in knowing the three have, much like John Gillespie Magee Jr. told in his poem “High Flight,” “slipped the surly bonds of earth” to “touch the face of God.”

Perhaps George H.W. Bush is best remembered as the bastion of what it means to be a champion of this nation — to be a single point in, as Bush once put it, “a brilliant diversity spread like stars, like a thousand points of light in a broad and peaceful sky.”



Barbara gives George, then newly-elected as Texas U.S. Representative, a loving kiss in this famous 1966 photograph.

## Music Throughout the South: An Interview with Ms. Abigail Kent, Renowned Local Harpist

*Twenty-four-year-old harpist Ms. Abigail Kent, a Charleston native, recently performed with the Lowcountry charter of the American Harp Society as a part of her US tour for winning the Pan-American solo competition. Applause’s Tes Smoak spoke with her after the performance about her beginnings as a world-renowned harpist.*

**Tes Smoak: What is your musical background?**

**Abigail Kent:** When I was in music class in first grade, the teacher’s mother came in and played the Celtic harp, and I came home and said I wanted to play the Celtic harp. I couldn’t find any teachers who would teach me harp in the area, so I started on piano. When I was ten, we found a harp teacher who had moved to town, Judy McCoy, who lives in Isle of Palms. I started out learning Scottish and Irish traditional harp from her, but switched from traditional harp to the pedal harp when I was fifteen, so I have been playing the pedal harp for eight years. I was homeschooled, but I would play in orchestras like the Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestra (CSYO), which was called Youth Orchestra of the Lowcountry (YOLO) at the time, and the Charleston School of the Arts Orchestra if they needed a harpist. Before I played pedal harp, I learned how to play the cello, the mandolin, the tenor banjo, the penny whistle and the Bodhran, which is an Irish drum.



**TS: How did Charleston influence your playing style?**

**AK:** The teachers that I’ve had in Charleston taught me very well and provided great foundations of music that I was able to take with me to college. Also getting to play on the stage with professionals for the first time was really eye-opening to how playing professionally can be.

**TS: What is your opinion on people who are discouraged from performing at a professional level because they started playing later in life?**

**AK:** If someone is really motivated, they shouldn’t be discouraged. I started when I was fifteen, and I know people who started when they’re much older than I am, and they still perform professionally. It doesn’t mean anything starting at the age of five. It just really depends on how motivated you are and how much you love it.

**TS: Do you have advice for any instrumentalists out there?**

**AK:** Enjoy what you do. Don’t do something if you really hate it because you’re just going to make yourself miserable. I mean, pushing yourself is great and you need to push yourself, motivate yourself to do more, but that comes naturally. Love what you do, and all the work is easy.

## Woes of the Holiday Season

by Ruby Varallo, 6th grade guest writer

It's finally December! Although some believe the Christmas season begins the day after Halloween, I feel it isn't truly official until December. Christmas carols now play nonstop and lights are strung around houses everywhere. Yet, with all the joy of the season, there are some troubles you may have.

First, stressing over what gift to get who. If you have this problem, I suggest not getting the person anything. You're teaching them that Christmas is not about receiving – and you're saving your money. Warning: the victim of this tactic may not like you as much after Christmas.

Next, there's eating way too many sweets. I mean, there are festive cookies in every grocery store, so it's hard not to get tempted. Also, parties galore! Maybe some pretty cake catches your eye, or you just have to try that homemade gingerbread man. By the time the party is over, your teeth hurt and your stomach's churning.

Another irritation is hearing that Christmas song you hate over and over again. There are so many great carols out there, but a few just don't cut it. ("Santa Baby" anyone?) You hear it so much it gets stuck in your head, and bam! Before you know it, you're singing along with the song you hate.

Finally, something that happens at the end of the season – taking down the Christmas tree. You feel melancholy as you remove each individual ornament. Now even "Santa Baby" brings a tear to your eye. Though there are quite a few woes of the holiday season, you are still sad to see the beloved tree go.

## Creepy Christmas Songs

By Acadia Reynolds, 6th grade guest writer

Christmas. The merriest time of the year – at least to people who celebrate it. For those who do, then this can be an inside look at the holiday. For those who don't, this is what you're *not* missing.

Most people love decorating a Christmas tree, eating cookies, being with family, and singing Christmas songs. But when you sing those songs, what you are really doing is engaging in an age old tradition of creepiness: for example, the song "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town." Some of the lyrics are, "*He sees you when you're sleeping, he knows when you're awake.*" If that's not stalker material, then I don't know what is.

Another song, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," starts off innocent enough with, "*We want some figgy pudding, please bring it right here!*" But the song quickly takes a dark turn. "*We won't go until we get some, so bring it right here!*" Nothing screams Christmas like refusal to leave someone's house!

Even songs that seem nice enough can be deceptively dark, like the song "Jingle Bells." "*Oh what fun it is to ride a one-horse open sleigh!*" That sounds very dangerous! What if you fall out of the sleigh?! Not to mention the poor horse, pulling the sleigh all alone! *And* a bobtail, like in the line, "*bells on bobtails ring, making spirits fly,*" is a tail cut very short in order for it not to get caught in the sleigh. So, they cut off the horse's tail! Plus, the song was originally written for Thanksgiving, *not* Christmas.

Call it nitpicking if you must, but why don't you take a closer look at *your* favorite Christmas songs. My personal favorite is "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer."



## Daddy Showdown

By Grace Reuben and Caitlin Sandifer

Ladies and gentleman! Welcome to the Daddy Showdown! In this competition, we will quiz the baby knowledge of two teachers who recently welcomed new members to their families. **Mr. Michael Morelli**, the seventh, ninth, and twelfth grade English teacher, has a child, Mia Morelli, who is three years old and just had his second child, Bennett Morelli, on November 15th. **Mr. David Southwick**, the seventh grade science teacher, had his first child Jack Southwick on November 7th. We will see which dad will *bottle* up the competition and prove they were *born* the best daddy. Without further ado, let the games begin!



### Questions:

1. How many diapers does an average newborn go through each month?
2. How many hours of sleep do newborns need?
3. How fast is the average newborn's heart rate?
4. How many bones does a newborn have?
5. What temperature does a baby's milk need to be?
6. Which month are the most babies born in?
7. On average, how many taste buds does a baby have?
8. At what age do young children usually start to speak?
9. How many babies are born a day?
10. Which of the following can a baby not taste until they are 4 months old?  
A. Sweet B. Salty C. Bitter D. Sour

### Mr. Morelli

1. 140
2. 16-20
3. 100 bpm
4. 206
5. Room temperature
6. July
7. No idea - 1000
8. Nine months to one year
9. A lot...
10. D. Sour



3/10

### Mr. Southwick

1. 310
2. 20
3. 125 bpm
4. 260
5. 90° F
6. July
7. 43,000
8. Two Years
9. 1.3 million
10. B. Salty



6/10

### Who's the Champion?

What a game! We have counted the points and are ready to announce the Daddy Champion! It was an exciting game, but the winner charged forth and conquered the competition! Was it experienced Mr. Morelli? Or scientist Mr. Southwick? We are glad to announce that the winner is...

### Mr. Southwick!

He came out with a whopping six points, while Mr. Morelli only took home three! They both did very well; they even tied on one question! However, Mr. Southwick was a bit closer and a bit more confident. Congratulations to both teachers, and daddy champion, Mr. Southwick! Thank you for reading!

### Answers

1. About 320
2. About 14-17
3. About 130-160
4. 300 bones
5. Around 98.6° F
6. August
7. About 10,000
8. About 6 months
9. Over 350,000
10. B. Salty

## How to Correctly Celebrate the Countdown to 2019

By Natalie Blakeslee

Most of us celebrate New Year's. I try to, but I am also lazy and tend to just get in my PJs, have a Harry Potter movie marathon, and fall asleep halfway through *The Prisoner of Azkaban*. So this year I have created an ideal, foolproof and mostly- parent-approved plan to make it till midnight.

### 1. Raid the fridge. Eat sugar. And then eat more.

Most of us understand that to get through the whole night, you must become hyped up on sugar until your parents fall asleep on the couch because they are too tired from trying to make you calm down.

### 2. Dress up in your Halloween costume.

Congrats, assuming you followed step one correctly, your parents are asleep. Because you're hyped up and will regret it all later, get in your costume and, as they say, live in the moment.

### 3. Blast music (preferably *Hamilton*) in your room while jumping on your bed.

You don't have to jump on your bed, but I would because I am not allowed to.

### 4. Get ya violent movies on.

How else to make sure you stay awake till midnight...or the morning. Make sure the movie is extra scary so that you won't even want to think of curling up in the dark in your bed. You can thank me later.

### 5. "Experiment" in the kitchen.

Instead of a glass of milk and cookies, try cooking foods you've never heard of like: Bourguignon, Chateaubriand, or Madeleines. Sounds easy enough, right? Make sure to make a mess in the process and to not ask parental permission. Remember: if it does not come out perfect, just add marshmallows!

### 6. Look back at all the things you did not get on your Christmas wish list and write an angry letter to Santa.

Looking back at everything you wanted this year, you may realize how much stuff Santa missed. The only way to solve this is to, obviously, write hate mail to Santa. This or make it incredibly professional and serious.

### 7. Watch a boring documentary.

Well, even after all the sugar and scary shows, you are still tired. So pop on a movie about some dead guy's life and promise yourself not to fall asleep.

### 8. Fall asleep.

Sadly, you have broken your own promise.

### 9. Wake up at 12:01.

Welp, you missed the first few seconds of New Year's. Go ahead and cheer and shout, "Happy New Year!" only to realize that your watch is going one minute back. Continue to shout and yell so loud that your neighbors (and parents) wake up.

### 10. Get in trouble.

Now that your parents are awake and realize what's happening, prepare for no cell phone for a month or some other punishment.

Now you are an expert at having the best New Year's ever. But what are you doing still reading some "tiny" sixth grader's article? Go out and do something! Are you still reading? Go!



## What Type of Person Are You During the Holidays?

By Isabella Pineda

### 1. If it were to snow, how would you react?

- A. Awesome! Maybe I can have a snowball fight, drink hot cocoa, build a snowman, make a fort...
- B. Wow! So pretty...
- C. Who's going to shovel all this?!?
- D. I guess it's supposed to snow since it's winter...



### 2. Your house is magically decorated for the holidays! What would you think?

- A. This is so pretty! I am definitely ready for the holidays!
- B. Nice.
- C. WHO DID THIS?!
- D. At least I don't have to decorate.

### 3. Putting up decorations is...

- A. Really fun and gets me in the holiday spirit.
- B. It's okay.
- C. I never put up decorations.
- D. A bore, but worth it.

### 4. Christmas music is...

- A. Really amazing and I can't ever get enough of it!
- B. Nice.
- C. Terrible.
- D. Okay, but it can get tiring.

### 5. This time of year is...

- A. A ton of fun and is my favorite time of year. I countdown the days until the holidays start again as soon as the holidays end!
- B. The most wonderful time of the year!
- C. The absolute worst.
- D. Okay, I guess.

### Results:

**Mostly A's:** You are absolutely obsessed with the holidays!

**Mostly B's:** You enjoy the holidays. You don't go overboard, but you don't hate it.

**Mostly C's:** Is Scrooge taking this quiz? Bah Humbug!

**Mostly D's:** You are neutral. You don't hate the holidays, but you don't exactly like them either...

## Calendar

**Dec. 21,** Early Release

**Dec. 22-Jan. 5,** Holiday Break

**Tue. Jan. 8,** 8th Grade Theatre Presents: Bard in a Box, 6:30 PM, Black Box Theater

**Thur. Jan.10,** Dance Student Choreography Showcase, 6:30 PM, Rose Maree Myers Theater

**Mon. Jan,** 6th Grade Theatre Showcase, 4:00 PM, Black Box Theater

**Tue-Wed. Jan. 15-16,** 9th and 10th Grade Theater Showcase, 4:00 PM, Black Box Theater

**Tue. Jan. 22,** Orchestra Senior thesis Performances, 6:30 PM, Rose Maree Myers Theater

## Basketball More Than Just a Game for SOA Students

by Kyliah Catalan

It's winter, which means basketball season, and sophomore band major **Kyla Conyers** and senior piano major **Solomon Adams** are competing in the South Carolina League. Both Kyla and Solomon have been playing basketball for ten years. Kyla's mother has told her ever since she could walk she loved to play ball, so when she was old enough, her mom signed her up to play for the North Charleston Recreation Center. Solomon credits his older brother with inspiring him to play the game. He is playing this season for the Lowcountry Wildcats, and Kyla is playing for R.B Stall.

Before Stall, Kyla played for several teams in the North Charleston Rec League. Solomon played travel ball while living in Chicago, competing nationwide. He also played in Indiana and Kentucky, as his family has traveled quite a bit. Solomon's goal this year is to "win as many games as possible while having fun." Kyla wants to score 1000 points in her high school career, "and this will remain my goal until it is accomplished," she says. Her team is off to a great start, having won their first game against Berkeley, 32-26. Unfortunately, Solomon's team lost their first game, "but things are still looking promising for our group of guys this season," he says. When it comes to balancing arts, sports, and academics, Solomon likes to keep a strict schedule. He dedicates his time to homework and music before 7 p.m., then to basketball between 7 and 9.

"I understand that being a student comes first; prioritization is a must," says Kyla. "However, hard work pays off in the end." She tries to avoid conflict between her major and her sport by comparing her schedules and making sure her coaches are aware of when she has concerts. "I'm thankful that I have coaches who understand that I am a member of more than one team." At home, Kyla works on her free throws, layups, and jump shots. She also tries to pick up a few moves that she sees from watching professional games on TV. Basketball is not just a sport to Kyla, but also a lesson that teaches you to work together as if you are a family. "You have to be willing to encourage each other, teach and learn from one another, laugh and have fun together," she says. "What do I dislike about the sport? Jamming my fingers." "While it has only happened twice, the memory of the pain still lingers," she says with a smile. Sebastian has no reservations about his affection for the game. "I love everything about the sport. It's competitive, lively and amazing in every way." Solomon hopes to play basketball for the University of Chicago or Oglethorpe, while Kyla is looking forward to the rest of her high school career. She hopes to play college basketball and possibly go on to the WNBA.

Let's wish Kyla and Solomon good luck this season and for many seasons to come.

## "Fueled By Challenges": Junior Belays Her Way Through Competitive Climbing

by Katie Jo Gelasco

When she's not leading Model UN or completing service hours for National Honors Society, junior creative writer **Loulou Hranowsky** can be found climbing. She started the intense practice in second grade but began competing in 2013. Although she had participated in other sports such as softball, soccer, and basketball, "they felt like chores," she says. "I never felt that way about climbing." Loulou was drawn to the variety in climbing and the fact that it was always uniquely challenging. "I'm fueled by challenges and with each new route, hold, or rock face there seems to be an infinite amount of these," she says. "To me, there's nothing more satisfying than completing a route, standing at the very top and looking down at everything from a new perspective."

Loulou practices three times a week. Weekday practices consist of running, an hour of climbing, and then conditioning. After each practice, her coach sets a goal for the next one, adding to the climbing motif of small challenges being "just another piece of a larger puzzle." Saturday practices are longer and include team building exercises. "While climbing may seem like an individual sport," Loulou says, "trusting the people you climb with to 'belay' you to keep you from hitting the ground is extremely important." Belaying, Loulou explained, is a climbing term that refers to placing tension on the rope to alleviate the seriousness of a fellow climber's fall.

Being able to trust one's belayer is extremely important in climbing. "Most injuries are caused due to the climbers/belayers personal mistakes and not the sport itself." Loulou recalls an unnerving story of a competition where she was lead climbing, meaning the climber must clip herself to the climbing rope as she advances the wall and fall five to seven feet before being caught by the clip. "I fell right before clipping one of the last hooks and the belayer was not prepared either, resulting in a 33 foot fall; however, this didn't result in any injuries other than a bruise from hitting the wall."

The first half of competition season is characterized by bouldering, where climbers complete difficult courses approximately fifteen feet high. This is done without a rope. The second half of the season is leading, as described earlier. At all competitions, whether bouldering or leading, climbers are kept in an isolation room beforehand, awaiting their names to be called over a loudspeaker which lures them into the main room. Once there, they wait five minutes with their backs to the course. After this, they face the wall to access it before beginning their advance.

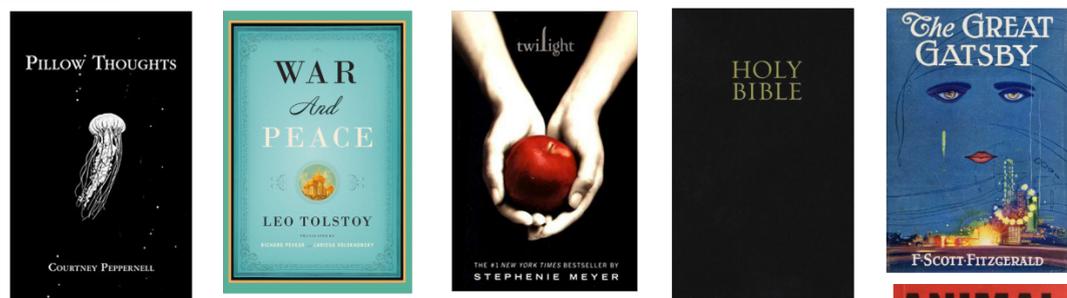
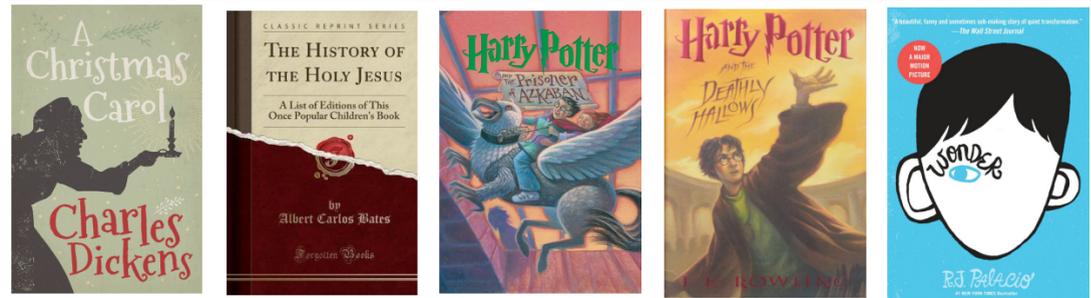
Loulou has an astonishing amount of extracurriculars and challenging classes but still loves climbing. "Stress does build but I've found that climbing is a perfect way to escape that and do something that makes me happy and feel good." She has adopted many time management skills to combat the limited time she has, and she uses free time to complete assignments.

As for life lessons she has gained, Loulou has a number of them: "Climbing has not only helped me learn to take initiative in all kinds of situations, but also realize how important it is to work well with and trust others." She says that it is difficult to be a leader without having trust and respect for your counterparts. "While my hands and feet against the holds are what help me move forward, progress, and grow, it's important to recognize that there will always be someone on the other side of the rope ready to catch my fall." Belay on, Loulou!



In a feat of courage and strength, Loulou scales the treacherous 1,625 ft Crowders Mountain.

Provided



### Middle School Top 25 Books

1. *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
2. *Extreme Encounters* by Greg Emmanuel
3. *The History of the Holy Jesus* by Albert Carlos Bates
4. *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
5. *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins
6. *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
7. *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio
8. *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens
9. *Becoming* by Michelle Obama
10. *Divergent* by Veronica Roth
11. *Forged By Fire* by Sharon M. Draper
12. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* by J. K. Rowling
13. *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton
14. *A Dog's Purpose* by W. Bruce Cameron
15. *A Map of Days: Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs
16. *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle
17. *Bluestar's Prophecy* by Erin Hunter
18. *Born To Dance* by Jordan Matter
19. *Dork Diaries* by Rachel Renée Russell
20. *Harry Potter And the Prisoner Of Azkaban* by J. K. Rowling
21. *It* by Stephen King
22. *Love, Simon* by Becky Albertalli
23. *Milk and Vine* by Adam Gasiewski & Emily Beck
24. *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
25. *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan

# SOA's Top 50 Winter Reads

Applause asked SOA students "If you could receive one book as a gift this holiday season, what would you request?" After collecting the responses, we drew four names and purchased each student's choices. Below are pictures of the four students receiving their top requests.



Chassee Palmer poses with Eloise Hastings after giving her a new copy of *Becoming*.



Abby Grace McLaughlin happily accepts her new copy of *Eleanor and Park* from Lisa Fimian.



Cecilia Connelly flashes a smile as she gives Cebastian Thompson a new copy of *Love, Lucy*.



Brady Bishop poses with Lisa Fimian as she gives him his new copy of *Amelia Lost*.

### High School Top 25 Books

1. *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas
2. *The Holy Bible*
3. *It* by Stephen King
4. *Becoming* by Michelle Obama
5. *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur
6. *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
7. *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
8. *Turtles All the Way Down* by John Green
9. *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
10. *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
11. *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon
12. *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss
13. *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy
14. *Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer
15. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
16. *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera
17. *The Orphan Master's Son* by Adam Johnson
18. *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
19. *The Mist* by Stephen King
20. *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
21. *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare
22. *Mortal Engines* by Philip Reeve
23. *Pillow Thoughts* by Courtney Peppernell
24. *Beautiful Boy* by David Sheff
25. *The Holy Meme Bible* by Jason Wong



## Road Trip to Nashville

by Maya Cline

To kick off December, my friends and I took a road trip to Nashville, Tennessee. Our trip was inspired by the chance to see the one and only Childish Gambino in concert. Considering we all love the rapper/singer-songwriter, we were thrilled by the idea of watching him perform. The concert was on a Sunday night, so we planned to leave Saturday afternoon and come back Monday night. That gave us a day to explore Nashville, as well as the next morning to tour Vanderbilt. Unfortunately for the parents who were driving, there was steady rain for the majority of the 8 hour drive. Our two car caravan arrived at the Nashville Airbnb around midnight on Saturday.

We woke up early the next morning, excited to see “Music City” in the daylight. We were dropped off near Broadway, the main street packed with live music, bright lights, and tourist shops. One store that caught our eye boasted \$450 red sparkly cowboy boots; they were very hard to resist. For lunch, we stopped into Jason Aldean’s Kitchen + Rooftop Bar. The gaudy restaurant was plastered with paintings of the country music star’s face and featured a big green tractor as homage to Aldean’s most famous song. To bring our afternoon to a close, we stopped in a few souvenir shops and worked off our extravagant lunch with a roll down Capitol Hill.

After a few hours of rest, we began to get ready for the main event: the concert. The opening act was underwhelming, as many people were still filtering in and not giving the performer, Vince Staples, much attention. But the arena was very engaged throughout the main act. Childish Gambino sang many of his classic songs like “Worldstar,” “Sweatpants,” and “Sober.” He also performed his recent release, “This is America,” and gave the crowd a taste of an unreleased song he has been working on. He ended the show with an incredible performance of his hit song “Redbone.” When Gambino first came out on stage, he told the crowd that his concert would be less of a show and more of an experience; he certainly stayed true to that statement.

Monday was another early start; we had a 10:00am appointment for a Vanderbilt tour and we were hoping to get home at a reasonable time. After the college visit, we began our long trek home, tired and happy.



A glimpse of downtown Nashville



Six of the friends gathered for a post-concert picture.

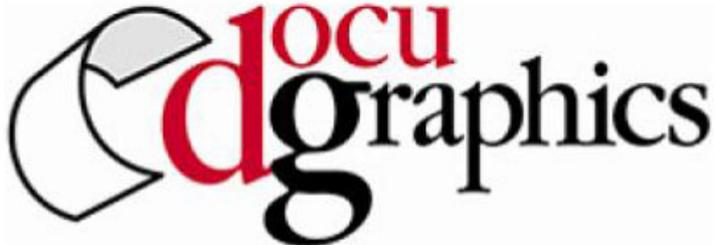


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## Thomas Fimian

[thomasfimian@docu-graphics.com](mailto:thomasfimian@docu-graphics.com)

# (843) 200-1722

## Influential Artists: Piano

by Luke Shaw

Each issue **Luke Shaw** asks an arts instructor and his/her student about an artist who has inspired them.

### Mr. Joe Clarke: Frank Sinatra

Frank Sinatra (1915-1998) is a giant of American culture, leaving an indelible imprint on both popular music and film. He won an Academy award for his role in *From Here to Eternity* (1953). Sinatra sold over 150 million records and is known for his performances of such hits as “Fly Me to the Moon,” “I’ve Got You Under My Skin,” “Love and Marriage,” “New York, New York” and “My Way.” His jazz influenced phrasing, wide vocal range, and ability to prolong a note, are hallmarks of his distinctive original style.



**Luke Shaw: When did you first start listening to Sinatra? Is there a certain time or feeling you connect him with?**

**Joe Clarke:** I started listening to Sinatra when I was 8 years old. We had an 8 track player. In my father’s collection, I found a recording of the 1966 Concert “Sinatra at the Sands” For some reason, it resonated with me and I listened to it when ever I could. It began to be a sort of soundtrack for me. Not only was there music, but he spoke to the audience and told amusing stories about his life. I got my first kiss singing, Gershwin’s “I’ve Got a Crush on You.” I picked up another record, “Frank Sinatra Sings the Select Cole Porter” I loved the lyrics of Cole Porter but Frank’s renditions with Nelson Riddle’s Arranging were iconic. Those recordings follow me into every performance.

**LS: How has Sinatra influenced or inspired you as an artist?**

**JC:** I spent some time in my 20’s emulating his sound vocally, but also while listening to various bands that he worked with, I began to absorb the stylistic choices of the pianists, mostly Count Basie sparse approach to playing that left me to vocalize more freely. I learned to take what I was hearing and make it my own. But there are times when I feel like I am channeling the man. It’s inevitable that I will turn a phrase or bend a note the way he did. It’s not an attempt to imitate but some sort of muscle memory I have a tendency to repeat.

**LS: What draws you to Sinatra?**

**JC:** I am drawn to his ease and charisma on stage. His ability to make you feel good even during a sad song amazed me. I listened to Tony Bennett, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr, Mel Torme, but no one came close to his natural phrasing. You didn’t get the feeling he was even singing. Just talking to you and connecting but in a musical way.

**LS: If you could have a conversation with Sinatra, what would it consist of?**

**JC:** I would like to talk to him about the sacrifices he made. Being the greatest celebrity of the 20th century but having such strained personal relationships seems to be a major trade. I’d like to know if he felt it was worth it. I would also have liked to pick his brain about the music business. What lead him into the various lucrative deals he made over the decades of performance.

**LS: Why is Sinatra your favorite artist?**

**JC:** He just seemed to always be reaching and trying to get better. He never stopped having a great time and helping his audience have a



great time with him. He was generous with his time and money with up and coming artists. From the beginning of his career, he was a proponent for equality and civil rights long before the 60’s. He used his celebrity and power in the industry to bring everyone up.

**LS: What do you think people can learn from Frank Sinatra?**

**JC:** Frank Sinatra lived a bold and exciting life. But it wasn’t without it’s ups and downs. He battled depression and a suicide attempt. He worked in stage, radio, movies and produced TV specials. He danced, sang, produced, directed and acted. He did it all in the same 24 hours that everyone else had without a cell phone. His story and life shows me that all things are possible if you put the proper work and attention to your goals. It seems these days that most celebrities are manufactured and having actual talent is just a bonus. Sinatra had tenacity and talent to grab the life he wanted. Anyone can assert themselves in the same way. It’s up to each person to do it their way no matter what you choose to do.

### Lisa Fimian: Billy Joel

Billy Joel, who dropped out of high school to pursue a music career, garnered international attention with his second album, *Piano Man* (1973), whose title track became an instant American classic. His 1977 album *The Stranger* produced four hit singles including “Only the Good Die Young,” His ninth album “Innocent Man” was also a colossal commercial success and included such hits as “Uptown Girl.” Joel has been awarded several honorary doctorates.



**Luke Shaw: When did you first start listening to Billy Joel? Is there a certain time or feeling you connect him with?**

**Lisa Fimian:** My mother used to play Billy Joel at home in the kitchen when I was a young child, and it was likely some of the first music I had ever heard. I cannot pinpoint a specific feeling or time to connect his music with, since it’s so diverse and has shown up again and again at different times in my life. However, some of the most vivid memories I have (of listening to Joel’s music) are from times spent in New York.

**LS: How has Joel influenced or inspired you as an artist?**

**LF:** With an immaculate balance of symbolic lyricism and genius musicality, Billy Joel exquisitely captures the essence and emotion of the everyday man. He manages to pull off every music genre with originality and quality, which never ceases to amaze me and inspires me to experiment with different music genres.

**LS: What draws you to Billy Joel?**

**LF:** Since I was exposed to his music at such a young age, I can’t be sure whether or not I would have eventually been drawn to him, had I not learned about him as a child. I do think it is likely, since he plays such a big role in jazz, and music in general, that it would be strange to never hear his music.

**LS: What do you think everyone can learn from him?**

**LF:** From his music, I think that everyone can learn to be true to themselves and live each day as it comes. Lyrically, I have found that those two themes are most prominent in his music. I think that Billy Joel’s music is appealing to everyone, not just one specific group of people, which means that his lyrics are general “lessons” to everyone.



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## Where Were They Then?

*Lisa Fimian spoke with one of SOA's teachers Mr. Michael Morelli about his background leading up to SOA.*

**Lisa Fimian: Where did you grow up? What are your favorite childhood memories from that place?**

**Mr. Michael Morelli:** I grew up in Highland, Michigan. It is a very small town near Detroit/Ann Arbor. I grew up on 50 acres of land so some of my favorite memories are playing in the woods around my house with my friends or brothers, building tree forts or playing games like "Kick the Can."

**LF: Where did you go to elementary school and what do you recall most from your early education?**

**MM:** I went to Highland Elementary. I remember my third grade teacher offering stars for any "good" behavior. Once you reached 10 stars you would get a pack of bubblegum. I remember really getting into writing during that same year; I wrote several detective stories which have, thankfully, all been lost.

**LF: Where did you go to middle/high school and how does it differ from the high school environment at SOA?**



Mr. Morelli on a middle school field trip.

**MM:** I went to Highland Middle School. I was not arts-focused when I was in school - that middle school never really offered anything other than Band or Chorus. After middle school, I followed my brothers to a Catholic School, Brother Rice High School, about 45 minutes away from where I lived. I went there more for the education. They also had a very good soccer team ranked nationally which appealed to me as well.

**LF: Was English/ELA your favorite class throughout grade school? If not, which was your favorite?**

**MM:** English was my favorite subject. I have always loved to read. I started out loving *The Boxcar Children*, collected a lot of books from the *Goosebumps* series. My reading life changed forever when I was introduced to *Harry Potter* in sixth grade. I was already hooked with literature, but those novels changed everything for me.

**LF: What hobbies or activities did you enjoy as a child?**

**MM:** I was very big in soccer. A lot of my life revolved around that. I also played a lot of video games.

**LF: Were you involved in the arts as a child? If so, what major at SOA would have suited you most?**

**MM:** A little! I played piano for a little bit. At a point though I had to choose that or soccer. If I could go back, I would have gone with piano - that would have been my major although I never was talented enough to get into SOA.

**LF: Where did you go to college and how were your college years spent?**

**MM:** I went to Western Michigan University. I spent my college years studying very hard. I played soccer in college as well.

**LF: How have you been balancing a teaching career with raising young children?**

**MM:** I never do anything school related when my kids are active and awake. When they go to sleep, I will work on grading or lesson planning if I need to. I have set up a good routine to get the majority of my work done when I am at school. Really the only grading that comes home with me are major papers.

**LF: What made you want to become an English teacher?**

**MM:** When I was a Sophomore in high school, my English teacher had us read a book called *The Great Santini* by Pat Conroy. I loved that book. I loved the freedom with which he wrote. I went on to read all his other books. I have always wanted to have that impact on another individual. The funny thing is I didn't know much about Charleston, South Carolina growing up in Michigan. This city never really crossed my mind even when I was looking for teaching jobs after college. Reading Pat Conroy's novels introduced me to the south and Charleston, a place I can't imagine leaving now.

**LF: Where did you work before coming to SOA? What drew you to SOA and how do you like it?**

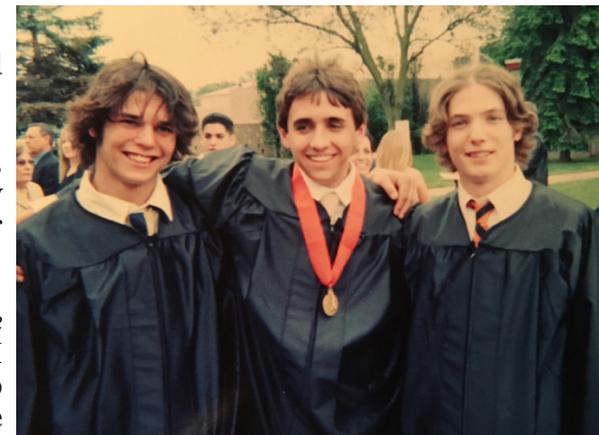
**MM:** I worked at CE Williams for four years prior to working at SOA. I got lucky getting the job here and I still feel lucky to be able to work with such talented students. I worked with Dr. Cook at CE Williams for one year. I am thankful that she trusted in me enough to hire me here. I was interested in the dynamic of the school. The campus is not bad either.



Mr. Morelli at a wedding in high school.



Mr. Morelli discovering his passion for English in kindergarten.



Mr. Morelli (right) at high school graduation with his best friend (middle) and brother (left).

## Where Are They Now?

*M. B. McConnell spoke with SOA alumnus Michael Johnson to catch up after his graduation.*

**M. B. McConnell: What have you been up to since graduation?**

**Michael Johnson:** After graduating I went to Full Sail University in Orlando for a recording arts degree. Now I'm back in Charleston mixing and working on live shows. Eventually, I would like to move to a larger city, but there is certainly a budding music scene here.

**MBM: How did you transition into college life and, after graduating, an engineering career after an education based in the arts?**

**MJ:** Moving out of state was definitely a drastic change. After attending SOA from 6th through 12th grade you settle into a routine and develop a close group of friends so it's bewildering when you don't know anyone around you. At the same time, it's refreshing to meet new people and have more independence.

**MBM: Even though you don't explicitly use the arts in your work as an electrical engineer, how do you think your arts education at SOA helped to prepare you for the future?**

**MJ:** I'm very fortunate to have a career where I work with artists every day. Often times I have to be a medium or a translator from the technical to the artistic. In my opinion, anybody can learn the technical side given the right resources, but an understanding of the arts and their importance is not so cut and dry. The countless hours of rehearsal leading up to a performance have taught me that you get out what you put in. The collaborations between majors taught me that when we communicate and work together we can be greater than the sum of our parts. And now that I can look back and reflect on my experience at SOA, I've learned not to take anything for granted.

**MBM: What's a particular memory or moment from your time at SOA that you particularly cherish?**

**MJ:** The Vocal trip to NYC. It was my first time seeing a Broadway show, my first time in a big city, it felt like a movie. I remember emerging from the subway into Times Square and just staring up at the skyscrapers with my jaw dropped.

**MBM: What advice would you give to students who are hoping to pursue careers outside their artform?**

**MJ:** Do your research, take advantage of every opportunity, and follow your instincts. You're going to learn a



Michael with his friends on graduation day



Michael with his sister, Laura, on his college graduation day

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## Clubs of SOA

By Zachary Shirley

Applause explores three clubs in each issue.

Mock Trial is a recurring club at SOA in which students participate in a rehearsed trial to learn about due process and the justice system. Led by student **Sam Feingold** and sponsored by **Mrs. Grieg**, it's a great way to dip your foot into the American legal system. This specific trial follows a murder case that must be pieced together and argued for by the student group in their court on February 23rd, 2019. Within the trial there are six witnesses (three prosecution, three defense), three lawyers on each side, a bailiff, and a timekeeper (both positions so far yet to be filled) and the judge will be real life trial attorney Julian Allen. The trial is different each year, last year it was a civil case which was reported by Mrs. Grieg as being "kind of boring" but this year she has been quoted as saying that the case is in fact "super exciting!!" Mock trial meets Thursdays and Fridays during lunch and after school in Mrs. Grieg's room.

Black Student Union was founded at the start of this year; it is a student based group sponsored by **Mr. Hill** and lead by **Thomas Polkey**, **Peyton Smalls**, and **Simone Geathers**. BSU helps sponsor cultural and social events, provides leadership opportunities, and encourages networking and relations among African American students, faculty and staff. BSU President Thomas Polkey explains that "Black Student Union is all inclusive and includes any race, gender, sexual identity and background. We talk about the politics of both the past and present and how it connects us." Considering the current political climate, now is the perfect time to have an accepting and non-judgmental group like this. BSU meets every Thursday after school in Mr. Hills room.

Whether you decide to be a Paladin, Druid or Bard, SOA's new D&D club will strap in for the ride and take you through one of their various campaigns. Run by **Grace Estes** and **Julien Kucklick**, "The purpose of D&D Club is to expose new people to the game. If you're interested in playing but don't know how, then don't let that scare you. It's what we're here for!" said club member **Jonathan Yi**. The club is divided into three groups with three different dungeon masters. The campaigns are usually done outside of school, but at the lunch meetings, it provides a good and welcoming community. D&D Club meets every Monday and Friday during lunch in Mrs. Greig's lab.

## Arts Outside Their Major

by Kyliah Catalan

Each issue of Applause features students who practice an art form outside their major.

"Creative writing and dance are two art forms that tell stories," says Junior creative writer **Katie Dorn** who, along with Junior strings major **Katie Jo Gelasco**, dances for the Charleston Dance Institute. This is Katie Dorn's second year dancing for CDI, having danced for ten years with the company Just Dance. Katie has also been dancing for approximately twelve years.

While Katie is a dedicated dancer, she views dance "more as a hobby." Writing is still her predominant passion. "I knew I was better at creative writing and that it would help me more with where I'm going in life."

Katie works with various styles of dance including ballet, tap and jazz, but her favorite style is modern. "It is so unique and keeps evolving in style," she says, "having no set technique to restrict it." Jazz and tap come in as a close second for Katie. Both, she claims, are upbeat and



Katie Jo (middle right) and Katie (right) performing.

fun, more so than ballet, which she enjoys, but finds a bit too "technical and restrictive."

Katie values the connection between her dance and her writing. "Dance expresses and illustrates a story through movement," she says. "I can see how these emotions were conveyed, and I can translate them into words."

When Katie was ten she began competitive dancing, going on to win a national competition and also earning the top prize for best costume.

Katie insists her academics and art major always come first. If she has a lot of homework or a major test to study for, she will forgo her dance classes. "I am very lucky that my current CDI teachers understand that," she says.

Dance has inspired Katie in many ways, but most notably it has improved her confidence. "When I can confidently go on stage and dance in front of a crowd, it really isn't all that different from doing a presentation in class."

In many ways dance is a demanding solo activity; however, when collaborating with other dancers, Katie says, one needs to be able to rely on a partner to maintain the beauty of the dance and often to protect her from injury. At times, that reliable partner has turned out to be Katie Jo.

This is Katie Jo's fourth year dancing at CDI. When Katie Jo was four years old, her mom signed her up for dance classes and she's been dancing ever since. While she, too, is passionate about dancing, the cello is her first love. "I was always much more serious about the cello."

Katie Jo also prefers modern dance: "I love the freedom it offers," she explains, "I feel ballet has its limits, due to the specific way in which technique and movements must be performed."

Like Katie, Katie Jo believes the two art forms she practices complement one another. "I think being in touch with music through playing cello helps me to focus on syncing my movements with the music."

Katie Jo's major comes before anything else, however. Prioritizing her art major, her academic studies, and dance can become hectic, she admits. "You need to learn how to find a balance." Both dancers intend to keep dance in their lives, even if it remains a pastime. Katie Jo shares Katie's view of dance as a form of storytelling, which—like a cello performance—wordlessly connects the artist to the audience and evokes a sense of unity. "With a dance piece, you communicate with others with just your movements," she says, "and a deeply shared trust among the dancers."



Katie Jo (left) and Katie (right) practicing.

## Album Review: *Oxnard*

by Hannah Burton

Anderson .Paak has released his third studio album named after his hometown of Oxnard, California. Multi talented Brandon Anderson has been making music under the name Anderson .Paak since 2014. However, he has been producing music since high school. His job as Haley Reinhart's drummer launched Paak into the industry, where he began working on his own material with artists in the rap and hip hop genre.

After his last album *Malibu*, Paak started to gain a following, even catching the eye of Dr. Dre, who signed him to his label Aftermath. *Oxnard* is the first album produced by Paak on the Aftermath label. Jay Z and Kanye West are just two of the artists who inspired the sound behind his new album, providing a more old-school hip hop vibe to his usual neo soul sound.

With songs written all about women, confidence, and swagger, his lyrics scream twenty-first century masculinity. Not only that, some songs on the album have subtle political undertones, such as "6 Summers." His approach to delivery differs from his past albums, seemingly incorporating larger amounts of rap than usual. He also features huge names on his tracks, such as Kendrick Lamar, Pusha T, Snoop Dogg, and Dr. Dre. Each song has a funk bassline and clean guitar, in the style of bands like Parliament, and incorporates drum lines and synth for a modern twist on the classic funk sound. His voice is distinct and recognizable, with an old soul rasp similar to Michael Jackson.

Anderson .Paak seems to make it his mission to create music with high energy and groove; tracks like "Tints," "Cheers," and "Mansa Musa" stand out the most. Encompassing Paak's signature retro/funk style, blended with contemporary rap and R&B, *Oxnard* is a gift for the winter season.



## Resturaunt Review: Poke Bros

by Maya Green and River Abedon

Name: Poke Bros

Location: Mt. Pleasant (644-H1, Long Point Rd, Mt Pleasant, SC 29464)

Grade: B-

Maya and River took a trip to Belle Hall to get some Poke bowls at a trendy new location of the franchise restaurant Poke Bros. While it certainly is no McDonalds, it has almost 20 locations around the country.

Trendy and impersonal, this storefront did not get any points for personality. Communal tables do allow you to hearsomeinterestingWandogossip, which could be a pro or con depending on how you look at it.

Maya ordered the Johnny Utah bowl with sushi rice and spicy salmon, which cost \$9.50. River made his own bowl for \$13 with sushi rice, spicy salmon, tofu, avocado, green onions, sweet onions, ginger, OG sauce, and sriracha aioli. Maya had no expectations beyond a good, light meal. River wanted sushi in a bowl: a little spice, authentic flavor, and yummy ingredients, plus sticky rice that helps hold everything together.

Maya picked the Johnny Utah because it was literally the first option on the menu and she felt overwhelmed by the choices. Honestly, if she's craving raw fish and rice, her go-to will be sushi every time. She finds it fun and bite-sized and generally just a better dining experience. Her bowl definitely felt like a nice Instagrammable meal, though, so she understands the appeal.

River actually liked the numerous options on the menu and thought that the Subway style build-your-own-bowl helps you craft your ideal dish but can certainly be overwhelming if you make the wrong choice. He thinks you shouldn't be afraid to add some spice, as not all of their ingredients were seasoned fully and the Sriracha aioli was his favorite part of the bowl.

Make sure you indulge in some Mochi



Maya and River's poke bowls

for dessert, which are ice cream balls covered in rice dough. They come in numerous flavors and don't break the bank at \$4 for three. Maya and River highly recommend the mango, green tea, and, if you're looking for a more savory twist, red bean flavored mochi.

They give this establishment a B-, since it was good for a quick bite, but relatively expensive for something that would be better as sushi. If you want Maya and River to review your favorite eatery, let them know; they can be found frequenting Cafe Diem during most lunch periods.

## Movie Review: *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs*



by Lou Collins

This is the latest example that the Coen brothers are still working on beautiful and compelling visual stories even in their 60s. It's an anthology movie composed of six short stories all taking place in the Wild West. Every story supposedly has its own moral that isn't always obvious or even a moral at all. One story, which shows a character avoid a hanging only to die later from a hanging, has the classic meaning of fate is inevitable. Another expresses the harsh realities of show business; it features a man with no limbs who is treated only as a money-making scheme that must be fed but never talked to.

Even with the weak morals the stories are reminiscent of classic fairy tales for 21st century adults. Staying true to their style, the Coen brothers' *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs* plays heavily into things that have been done before. The Coen brothers invent brilliant new storytelling techniques by playing into old cliches.

Most of the praise this movie has received is well deserved, yet it doesn't feel like a movie that was made in 2018. Popular movies this past year have made great strides towards diversity with blockbusters like *Black Panther* and *Crazy Rich Asians*. With *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs* having been released so close to Thanksgiving its portrayal of Native

Americans stands out. Although every story takes place in the Wild West (an overdone and incredibly whitewashed setting in Hollywood) Native Americans are only seen a handful of times and each time they are shown they're attacking the protagonists and scalping white people. This movie manages to continue whitewashing American history while still perpetuating the stereotype that indigenous people are violent warriors that are less intelligence than the white men. This doesn't contradict the fact that this is a brilliantly made movie. At the same time, just because it is a well done movie made by well known people doesn't mean that it should be excused from criticism concerning its representation of minorities.

## Classic Book Review: Jane Austen's *Emma*

by Elle Hueske

For this issue of *The Applause* I will be reviewing *Emma* by Jane Austen. I distinctly remember the first time I read this novel. It was the summer before sixth grade and I was anticipating starting what would become my seven-year-long education at School of the Arts. Since then I have read it again and it has not lost its distinct charm. The setting of the novel and the events that occur seem idyllic and the narrative opened my mind to an earlier era of history.

This novel follows Emma Woodhouse who believes she will never marry, but finds contentment in organizing matches for her friends and relatives. Her first attempt at bringing a couple together was successful so she believes that future endeavors will be as well. She is a bit misguided in this expectation as she experiences several dilemmas on her venture to match her friend, Harriet Smith, with a man named Mr. Elton. For the sake of fully enjoying the novel, I will not divulge more information, but encourage you to read about the mistakes that can arise from trying to do what one thinks is right.

Throughout the course of event, the novel addresses the sometimes unintentional flaws of interfering with others' relationships. Emma is somewhat of a hopeless romantic and

feels it is her duty to arrange her friends or acquaintances with partners. While sometimes this is lucrative, all too often do her efforts result in unsuccessful attempts with misled individuals.

Marriage as well as societal norms are explored throughout this novel. In every scenario, women (including Emma herself) believe that a woman cannot live a fulfilled life until they are properly suited with a man. In fact, this is the driving force for the entire novel as Emma feels an obligation to find a counterpart for her friends. Women were expected to marry and spend their lives catering to the demands of a family without higher academic or artistic pursuits. This belief is evidently antiquated and the reader can find many flaws in Emma's intent, but it is important to consider the time period as well as what subject matter could have appealed to women in the early 1800's. With numerous full-bodied characters, vibrant imagery, and exciting scenes, *Emma* portrays the plight of a figure trying to stimulate happiness for others while avoiding her own fleeting pleasure. I recommend this novel to anyone who is interested in a light, entertaining, and charmingly constructed narrative.

## Fashion Update

by Adam Krasnoff

Earlier this year, up-and-coming British designer Charles Jeffrey introduced his "Loverboy" campaign, giving audiences their first look at the new direction in which the enigmatic 27-year-old was pushing his brand. In the past, Jeffrey's work was always boundary-pushing and difficult to categorize, utilizing bright colors, unique shapes, and a healthy dose of theater to celebrate London's diverse LGBTQ community.

The Loverboy campaign represents a shift for Jeffrey, as the clothes he presented here were far more direct than his work has been in the past, showing a more clear sense of branding and wearability. Among the standout pieces in the collection are sweaters emblazoned with Loverboy branding—the sort of work which embraces high marketability while maintaining the messaging and outside-the-box thinking which exists in all of Jeffrey's best collections to date.

As usual, there is wildly-colored tartan patchworking (a reference to his Scottish heritage), which has become a Jeffrey signature. In this case, it is presented in the form of kilt-inspired garments and suits. Particularly striking was a gray collarless suit jacket, considerably more minimalistic than audiences have come to expect from the designer.

Of course, it wouldn't be a Charles Jeffrey show without at least some theatrical extravagance; here, he sends models down the runway in unnerving facial prosthetics, and adds massive, eye-catching protrusions to some of the pieces. Herein lies the beauty of his work: it refuses to be compromised or categorized, choosing instead to present a no-holds-barred look at queer identity.

Once again, Jeffrey has proved himself to be one of the most creative and essential voices in modern fashion. His work exists in a strange, celebratory, and escapist realm, a neofuturist reimagination of what our present could look like.

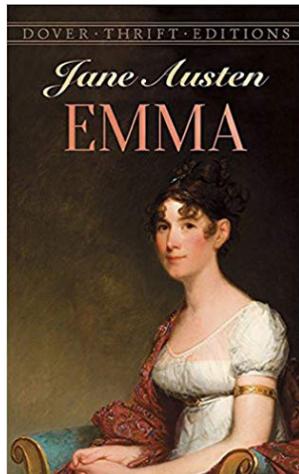
## Annual Holiday Concert a Success

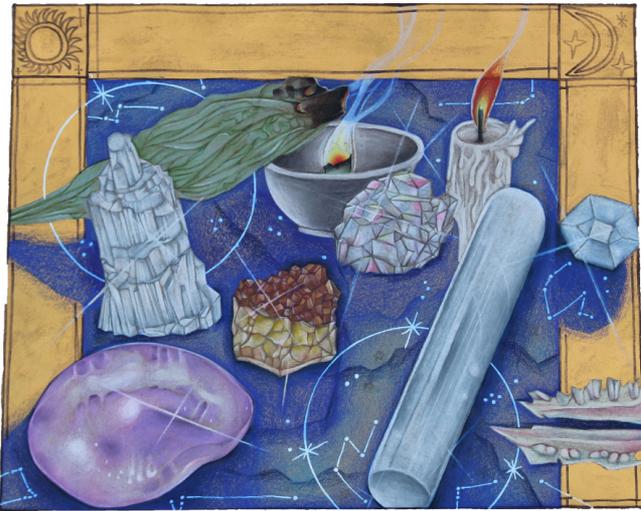
by Katie Jo Gelasco and John White

For the past two months, the strings and vocal department have worked meticulously to prepare for their annual holiday concert. While previous concerts have been held in SOA's own Rose Maree Myers Theater, the departments performed this year's concert at the Gaillard Center on Monday, December 17 for an audience of over 1600 people.

On Monday morning, students met at 9:30 to begin an arduous day of rehearsals. With nearly 200 performers, the first challenge was making room for everyone on stage. There were many highlights to the nights loudly lauded performance, which garnered at least one standing ovation.

In honor of the 200th anniversary of the composition of "Silent Night," SOA's deaf students partnered with the ensemble to perform a heartwarming rendition of the classic piece (see photo on page 25). The students signed the first two verses as the choir sang. On the third verse the choir began signing with them. As a surprise, the last verse was signed in complete silence. Even the instrumentalists put their instruments down to sign with the other students. The ensemble also performed beautiful arrangements of other classics such as "O Holy Night," "Hallelujah Chorus," and the instrumental "Sleigh Ride." Dr. Cook made a welcome appearance to accompany the ensemble on such songs as "O Nata Lux," a piece originally written for piano and choir, this time being performed with full symphony in the world premiere of a symphonic arrangement written for School of the Arts. The evening was a tremendous celebration of the season and its music and the capacity crowd showed its approval, both signing and clapping their applause.





"Sorry, I Can't Talk to You. Your Chakra is Not Aligned."



Kenna Steele  
Tenth Grade Visual Artist



"Black and White Symphony"



Leighton Webb  
Tenth Grade Visual Artist



"Bite the Hand That Feeds You"



Ella Waldron-Noren  
Tenth Grade Visual Artist

### "The Monarch Butterfly"

by Charlotte Griggs, 6th Grade

An intricate design,  
Shining in the sunlight,  
Wings flapping against the warm summer air.  
Simple, yet complicated.

A golden canvas,  
Charred black spots scar the flaming surface,  
A remnant of many adventures.  
As the fragile work of art floats above the ground,  
It seems to radiate rays of sunshine,  
As it glitters in the fresh morning air.

The butterfly sparkles as though in a spotlight,  
And sends laughter through the Earth,  
And the world stops and holds its breath,  
As it fades away over the horizon.  
I can't help but stare, transfixed,  
As the creature dances through the air,  
And then flies up, up, up,  
Away into the unknown.

### "Dark Things Are Lovely"

by Annalee Mullins, 6th Grade

Dark things are Lovely  
A sincere farewell to fall asleep  
The song of a whale in the ocean deep  
The smell of a campfire on a warm summer night  
A sweet goodnight kiss to set the heart alight  
Pleasant pitch black silence of a power blackout  
A charcoal dog pushing your palm with his snout  
Savory candlelit dinners with an easy chuckle  
Outside, under the dark sky, smelling like honeysuckles  
A soft purple blanket, to protect you from the darkness  
Looking up at the sky, usually starless  
The moon reflects raindrops on the glass  
Twinkling like stars or brass

Light things are Lovely  
The shimmering splash of an ocean spray  
A long hot hike in the middle of the day  
A stringy jellyfish, trying to float  
The thrill of leaping off a boat  
Into the water, salty and cool  
Pale thread spinning off the spool  
The sudden flash of a thunderous rainshower  
The simple bloom of an aromatic flower  
Beautiful and majestic, a blood-red rose  
Swaying as the cool wind blows  
Ear-to-ear grins of a three year old  
Innocent and bold

**SOA Sudoku**

	5			1		6		
	9		2	5			4	
		6					3	
				6			1	
3		9						
		5			4	8		9
8	6				2	5		
	7		5					
		4						

### Then and Now

Zachary Shirley investigates:  
**What was/is at the top of your Christmas wish list?**

Zachary Shirley



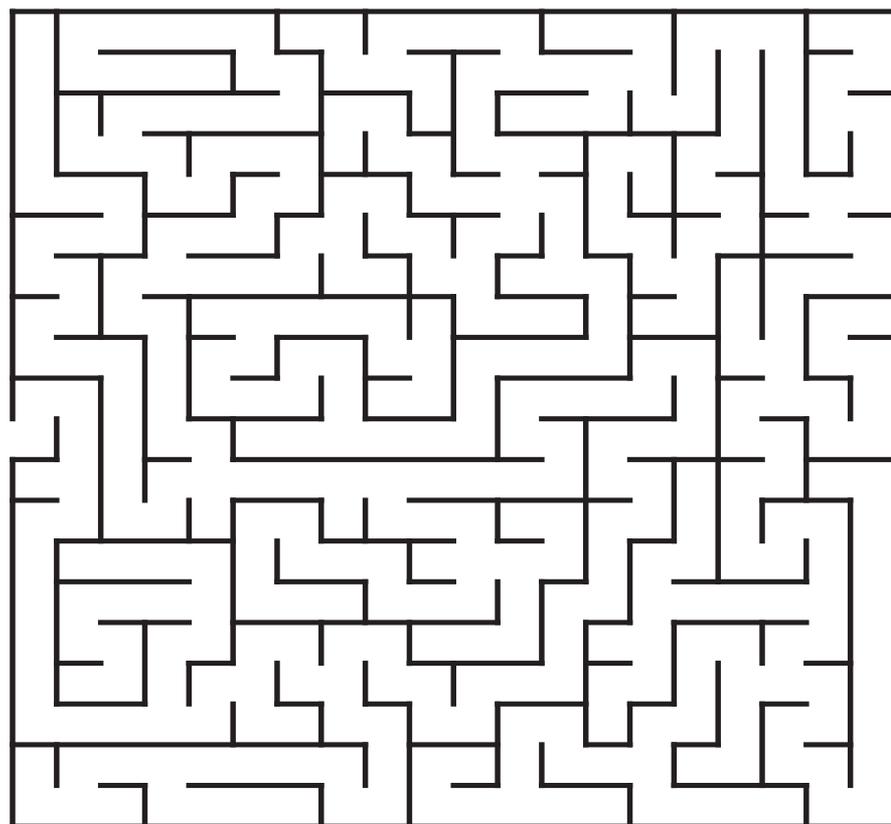
Zachary Shirley



12th grade Band major **Cameron Wescott** wanted some video games like Ratchet & Clank or Madden 12 for his Playstation 2.

6th grade Visual Artist **Luka Hoffman** wants a new pair of adidas Pro Bounce.

**Help Mr. Morelli find his son's pacifier!**



**High School and Middle School celebrate the holiday season with magical concerts.**



## Horoscopes

by Liv Provosty

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22- Dec. 21): If you are able to postpone doing something big and drastic...like proposing, accepting a job in a different state, buying a house. Who am I kidding? We are children and the most important decision we have made in the past month may have been whether or not to cave to Cyber Monday “deals”. My point is just chill out and embrace this time as a way to reset before the new year.

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22- Jan.19): Embrace the classic, timeless elements of life. No, not the “classic and timeless” Gucci belt or whatever the people are lusting over now. But you know, just sitting by the fire, surrounding yourself with the people you love, and then getting really excited about your gifts. It's all about balance folks.

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20- Feb. 18): Watch your mouth. That sounds very threatening. I mean that in a nice way because I am warning you that you may be accidentally speaking others' secrets. Just be careful about trying to articulate what you're feeling in a way that is actually getting across what you wanna say.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19- Mar. 20): You should be feeling yourself, feeling beautiful and popular and attractive and if you don't because let's face it who walks around just thinking amazing things about themselves...then manifest those feelings. At least the fact that you are exuding cool, popular energy is in print now.

**Aries** (Mar. 21- Apr. 19): This year has had it's challenges for you...I mean it has been one of the longest feeling years ever but it is important that you take this month and just focus on yourself and make December a month that makes the year feel less 'ehhhh' as a whole and try and turn this year around.

**Taurus** (Apr. 20- May 20): You will be able to see the future this month. Well obviously not That's So Raven style but your intuition will be heightened. You might feel more claustrophobic and stuck in your own life but I recommend screaming in a wide open field. Trust me it's super liberating.

**Gemini** (May 21- Jun. 20): This might be a time for you where you have to deal with this lack of concentration and focus and you have to exert a conscious effort to get your life together. Keep your expectations realistic about what you are able to accomplish and plans you can make.

**Cancer** (Jun 21- Jul. 22): This is the time to wake up, look at yourself in the mirror and remember that you capable of being “extra” if you really want to be. And if not the holiday season, then when? You can even incorporate this new sense of energy into a resolution, can't guarantee it will last any longer than normal though.

**Leo** (Jul. 23- Aug. 22): You might be feeling really overwhelmed with the amount of tasks that are piling up on your plate but not in the exciting holiday dinner sort of way, more like

the can someone shatter this plate on the ground for me sort of way. The most important thing is to remember that you will be okay and you have a whole break to sort yourself out.

**Virgo** (Aug. 23- Sept. 22): Don't let memories hold you back. They are super clever and have this way of making us think that everything was absolutely nauseatingly perfect when in reality it may have just made you nauseous. At the same time though don't let past judgements hold you back, you know just trust your gut. Avoid the nausea.

**Libra** (Sept. 23- Oct. 22): While I was doing research I stumbled upon an article that predicted that the “strength of libras' bones will be tested.” This sounds very ominous and scary (and definitely a little ridiculous) but I want to reassure you that whatever risk you experience in life (like breaking a bone) is worth the reward of gaining new experiences.

**Scorpio** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): To quote the great Kendrick Lamar, “Be humble, sit down.” While this advice might also be said by your mother at the holiday dinner table, I am here to be yet another giver of this sound suggestion to reflect on your life and just appreciate it for all it's worth.

## Christmas Playlist

Head over to [@soaapplause](#) on Spotify for some songs that will put you in the holiday mood.

by Jayla Sanders

“Jingle Bell Rock” by Bobby Helms

“Blue Christmas” by Elvis Presley

“Winter Wonderland” by Aretha Franklin

“Here Comes Santa Claus” by Gene Autry

“Little Drummer Boy” by Harry Chorale

“Rockin Around the Christmas Tree” by Brenda Lee

“The Chipmunk Song” by Alvin & The Chipmunks

“I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus” by the Ronettes

“Snoopy Christmas” by The Royal Guardsmen

“Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer” by Elmo and Pastry

“Home for the Holidays” by Perry Como

“Twas the Night Before Christmas” by Fred Waring

“Frosty the Snowman” by Gene Autry

“May You Always” by Harry Harrison

“Jingle Bells” by Singing Dogs

“Merry Christmas Baby” by Otis Redding



Spotify

## Sign of the Month: Happy New Year!

Demonstrated by Everett Ladson



**1. Start with your hand on your chest.**



**2. Bring the hand down to meet your other hand at your waist.**



**3. Raise the upper hand and curl fingers upwards.**



**4. Put hands into fists and roll them against each other.**

Photos by Galen Berger

## The Trivia Challenge

by Carson Stehling and Loulou Hranowsky

### Holiday Questions:

1. In what country did the myth of Saint Nick originate?
2. What year was the first Kwanzaa celebrated?
3. Which film holds the record for the highest grossing Christmas movie?
4. Hanukkah is often also referred to as the \_\_\_\_\_?
5. In which US state is the world's largest Christmas stocking located?
6. What did the Three Wise Men bring?
7. What classic Christmas hymnal did Justin Bieber and Busta Rhymes adapt for Bieber's 2011 Christmas album "Under the Mistletoe"?
8. Can you name four of the reindeer who pull Santa's sleigh in the poem "Twas the Night Before Christmas"?
9. What does the word "Hanukkah" mean in Hebrew?
10. What song does the Peanuts gang sing at the end of the 1965 Christmas TV special: "A Charlie Brown Christmas"?

### Sam Clarke 11th Grade

1. Norway
2. 200 BC
3. *A Christmas Story*
4. Festival of Lights
5. Alaska
6. Frankincense, Myrrh, Gold
7. "Little Drummer Boy"
8. Dasher, Dancer, Comet, Blitzen
9. I'm sorry Dad
10. "Christmas Time is Here"



5/10

### Olivia Bouknight 11th Grade

1. Germany
2. 1632
3. *It's a Wonderful Life*
4. Festival of Lights
5. Montana
6. Frankincense, Myrrh, and Gold
7. "Little Drummer Boy"
8. Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen
9. I don't know
10. "Christmas Time is Here"



5/10

It's a Christmas miracle! Olivia's trivia genius has been matched. Since there was no clear champion, next issue will feature two brand new competitors!

[soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com)

Are you interested in competing in an upcoming *Applause* Trivia Challenge? If so, email [mjmcline@gmail.com](mailto:mjmcline@gmail.com) with the subject line "Trivia."

Photos by Loulou Hranowsky

### Answers

1. Turkey
2. 1966
3. *Home Alone*
4. Festival of Lights
5. Missouri
6. Frankincense, Gold, and Myrrh
7. "Drummer Boy"
8. Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, or Blitzen
9. Re-dedication
10. "Christmas Time is Here"



“To get another puppy.”  
-Abby Harris, 6th grade Theatre



“I wanna egg Emma Butterworth’s house.”  
-Parker Thompson, 12th grade Dance



“To be more mindful with my words; to make sure what I’m saying is sincere.”  
-Ms. Baker, Costume and Fashion Design Teacher



“To avenge my man Stephen Hillenburg, legends never die.”  
-Nicholas Tuemler, 10th grade Piano



“To not take life so seriously, and to learn how to grow a beard like Mr. McCauley.”  
-Mr. Clark, History Teacher

## What is your New Year’s resolution?

by River Abedon and Lou Collins

Photos by River Abedon and Lou Collins



“To spend less money on Fortnite.”  
-Peter O’Mally, 8th grade Strings



“Learn how to play the accordion.”  
-Eli Bundi, 9th grade Band



“Watch more anime.”  
-Will Frolicker, 7th grade Theatre



“To live life to the fullest and be joyful every day.”  
-Sylvia Edwards, Staff



“To expand my record collection.”  
-Cherish Tolbert, 11th grade Visual Arts