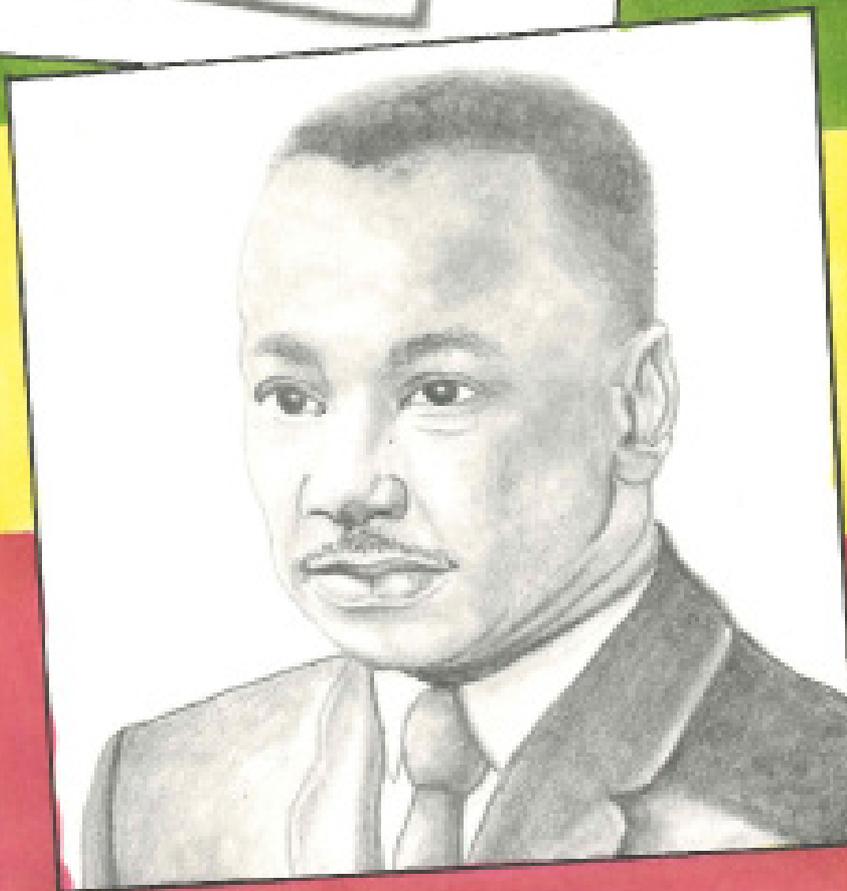
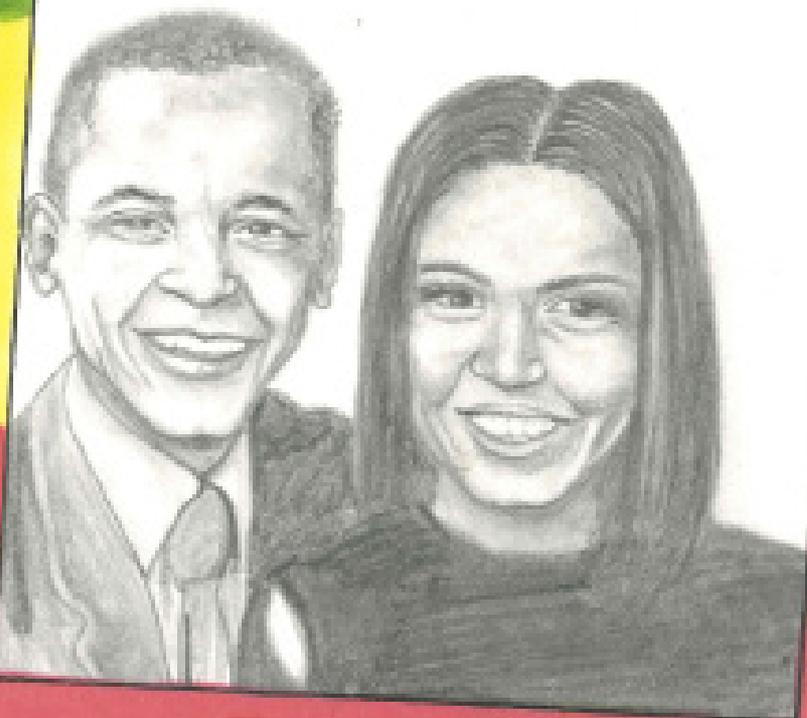


Applause

Volume 20, Number 5

School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC
soa-applause.com

February 2019



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Letter From the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this month's very special Black History Month and Valentine's Day issue! The entire staff has worked tirelessly on lots of captivating and intriguing articles that we're sure will capture all this month has to offer.

To fully immerse yourself in the spirit of Black History Month, be sure to give this month's playlist (pg 26) featuring prominent black artists a listen. SOA's faculty shared their favorite black artists on the centerfold, and page 7 recounts this year's staple soulful vocal performance, Music Down in My Soul. If you're inclined to activism, page 4 features students speaking out as part of Charleston's MLK Day celebration, and page 16 shows the importance of social justice and unity with an exclusive discussion with John Wilson. Don't miss our interview with Black Student Union founder, **Thomas Polkey!**

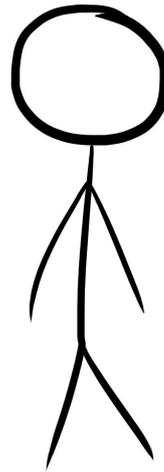
If your heart pines for some Valentine's Day romance, make sure to check out SOA's cutest couples on page 20 and special Valentine's themed horoscopes on page 26. If not, our signature features have you covered, with sudoku and mazes aplenty (pg 27)!

As always, big thanks to our dedicated staff, generous patrons, and wonderful readers for their continued support. Thank you for reading! Make sure to check back in next month for a very special fashion issue!

Love,

Your Editors

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



Who's the *real* Applause editor-in-chief?
You can decide! Draw your own editor!

Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of
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Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers

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Editorial: Even Today, the Fight for Equality Still Rages On

As we celebrate Black History Month, we urge readers to think about the ways in which the fight for racial equality is an ongoing process. Even though America has evolved significantly since the Civil Rights Movement, the legacy of segregation in the Charleston area is still prevalent, especially within education.

In 2018, the district paid for a study conducted by Clemson University that advised increasing accessibility to magnet schools as one of many solutions to the extreme diversity problem in Charleston County, and just a few weeks ago the school board met to discuss how to change the application process. While they did vote to reintroduce paper applications for families without computer access, they decided to wait until next year to discuss more drastic policy changes that could encourage and foster diversity throughout the school district.

This is an issue that affects School of the Arts directly, and there is an opportunity here for students to get involved in a solution. This Black History Month, we should all reflect on how so many black activists throughout history (such as SOA's own John Wilson, see article on page 16) worked to create the world they wanted to see, learn from them, and channel our artistic talents to enact positive change in our school and community.

Applause, SOA's official student publication since 1999, presents

American Pie

A tribute to 1950s & 60s Rock 'n' Roll

A live documentary concert that brings the lyrics of Don McClean's 1971 classic to life. Featuring more than three dozen SOA and AMHS students, under the direction of Dr. John Cusatis and Mr. Ian Grimshaw, collaborating on adaptations of songs by Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, Big Bopper, The Monotones, The Everly Brothers, Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones, The Beatles, The Byrds, and Janice Joplin.

Thursday, May 23, 2019, 6:30 PM

Rose Maree Myers Theater

A Free Event

Donations will be accepted for the tenth annual Rose Maree Myers Scholarship for Artistic Excellence

MLK Breakfast a Celebration to Remember

by John White Jr.

On January 22nd, I had the pleasure of attending the Martin Luther King Jr. Business and Professional Breakfast at the Charleston Galliard Center. The breakfast has been a key event in Charleston's 10 day long MLK celebration, the longest in the state, led by the Charleston YWCA.

This years theme was, "Embrace the Dream, Create the Change." The breakfast, the final event of the celebration, was attended by nearly 700 business and community leaders from small non profits to large corporations like Boeing, who was one of the many sponsors of the event, in addition to congressman Joe Cunningham, Mayor Tecklenburg, and students from several high schools in the area. SOA was represented by myself and **Asa Caldwell**, an 11th grade strings major.

Keynote speaker Cynthia Bramlett Thompson challenged the audience to face up to our country's growing racial problems calling them "America's historical and future Achilles' heel." A talented orator, Thompson encouraged us to be leaders in our community, "none of us will ever be a Martin Luther King, but all of us can be like Martin Luther King in small and big ways."

She ends on a positive note citing the growing diversity in our government and charges us, "Dr. King did not walk alone and neither do we, let us leave together not only having honored Dr. Martin Luther King jr. but continue to build on his legacy of action, continuing to fight against racism, sexism, homophobia, discrimination against any person or group and hate to police economic and social justice for all."

She ended by having all of the attendees standing to sing one stanza of Stevie Wonder's Happy Birthday to Dr. King. The Galliard Business and Professional Breakfast will continue to serve as a catalyst for change in our community for years to come.



Provided

The breakfast is packed with eager activists and community members.

Creative Writers Speak Out and Win Big at MLK Youth Poetry Slam

by M. B. McConnell

This past January, two creative writing students read at this year's MLK Youth Speak-Out Poetry Slam, an anticipated part of Charleston's MLK celebration organized by Charleston YWCA.

Charleston poet laureate, Marcus Amaker, hosted the event alongside local activist and hip-hop artist, Benny Starr, both of which performed their own works to open the event. Activists, artists, and everyone in between were in attendance to, as attendee Brenda J. Peart put it, witness "[the] youth speak from their hearts."

The poetry slam was comprised of three rounds, with eliminations each round. As per typical poetry slams, the MLK poetry slam encouraged audience participation alongside traditional scoring by judges. A total of nine students from across Charleston shared their works, with most centering around themes of activism and social progress to commemorate Dr. King's legacy. Among these students were SOA's own **Ramie Thompson**, sophomore, and **M. B. McConnell**, senior, who both let their vulnerability shine through heartfelt performances. Thompson thought the event "was a super great experience" for her first poetry slam. Both writers earned ample cheers and high scores for their poetry, with McConnell winning first prize overall.

The event as a whole highlighted how impactful and important mediums such as spoken word can be in spreading the values Dr. King held so close to his heart. Peart sums the slam up best in a social media post: "WOW! So freaking inspiring!"



Provided

Thompson (top, middle) and McConnell (bottom, middle) pose with their fellow poets.

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String Students Young and Old Come Together For Annual Department Side-By-Side Performance

by Katie Jo Gelasco

On Monday, January 28, strings students piled onto a very tightly packed stage in the RMMT for the annual Side-by-Side concert, where high school string students play alongside their middle school counterparts. This concert is played by every strings student in the program, which is a momentous task considering there are over 150 of them. They are also joined by the symphony winds, and with their help, middle schoolers are able to play in a full symphony, some for the first time.

For most conductors, this concert would be quite daunting. However, **Dr. Selby**, high school orchestra director, and **Mrs. Mears**, middle school strings director, are able to achieve euphonic excellence in the macro-ensemble through careful planning and rehearsals. It is hard to describe the difficulty in keeping an orchestra that size together and even more spectacular, to sound as good as they did. For perspective, during the concert, Dr. Selby had to cross the enormously packed stage, channeling a parting-the-sea motion, to speak to principal oboist, **Abby Kothera**, before beginning a piece, when usually she is only a nod away.

The concert opened with "Orange Jam" by Jeffrey Bishop, conducted by Mrs. Mears. She set the tone for the challenging piece by asking the cellists to raise and slam their bows on the string on the first beat to create a harsh sound. This piece, filled with syncopated rhythms, would be extremely hard to play together with a group that size, but the orchestra remained cohesive. Next was the Bacchanale from Camille Saint-Saëns' Samson and Delilah which opens with pizzicato from the strings and transitions into a soaring oboe cadenza, a new sound to many of the middle schoolers. This piece, conducted by Dr. Selby, showed off the group's ability to play as a full symphony, even with 60 more strings players. The concert concluded under Ms. Mear's direction with "España Cani," a catchy Spanish folk song.

The Side-by-Side concert is an enjoyable experience for both the high schoolers, who get a chance to be a mentor to a younger student, and middle schoolers, who do not often have the opportunity to play in a symphony orchestra, especially one as adept as SOA's ensemble. Next year will mark the concert's going full circle, where the seniors will have been the first sixth graders to participate in the Side-by-Side.



Senior Strings Thesis

by Katie Jo Gelasco

For six months, strings seniors have been preparing both a solo piece and an ensemble piece for one big recital. The recital itself was split into two halves: the solo section followed by the ensemble. The former was opened by **Madi Adams** who performed the first movement of Vanhal's Double Bass Concerto in E-flat Major, which is considered one of the most technically difficult bass concertos in the canon. The piece is filled with difficult runs and phrases that require a player's utmost experience and focus to play accurately, which Madi demonstrates perfectly. Cellist **Peter Hertel**'s performance of Tarantella by W. H. Squire displays the timeless truth that confidence is key when playing. Student Body President **Harper Cash** delivered a soulful rendition of Barber's Violin Concerto, complete with harmonics and gorgeous phrases. **Manuel Mendes** played a jaw-dropping performance of Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 1. The delivery of such a technically difficult piece requires an intense amount of passion and accuracy, both of which Manuel portrays. He truly deserved the standing ovation that followed. **Ben Kremer** gave a triumphant performance of the third movement of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. His flawless display left many sitting on the edge of their seats in anticipation for the ripping movement, also extremely technically demanding. Another deserved standing ovation was given following his performance.



Madi Adams starts the night on a lovely note with a passionate performance of the first movement of Vanhal's Double Bass Concerto in E-flat Major.

The second half of the performance was the ensemble section and was opened by **Beryl Ayiku**, **Maggie Smith**, and **Seungkyo Jung**'s performance of Haydn's London Trio. The concert concluded with Ben Kremer, Manuel Mendes, and **Andre Lim** (the self-named Tres Leches) with a performance of a Helmann's Capriccio for Three Violins. With complex harmonies and rhythms that weave in and out of each other, this was the perfect conclusion to an amazing recital that truly displays the excellence of this year's senior class. We'll miss you, seniors!

Sitting Down With the Soundcloud Rap Collective Blind Budapest

by Hannah Burton

Blind Budapest began after five friends with a passion for making music combined their talents. The collective is composed of four current SOA students: **Ethan Dotta**, **Igor Statsenko**, **Solomon Adams**, and **Malcolm Palmer**, as well as SOA alumni **Caleb Smith**. They began considering themselves a team after their joint concert they dubbed “Blind” back in December of 2018, performing about 2 hours of self written and produced music. After creating an opening track for the show that featured each artist, the boys decided to stick together from that point on. The concert was the first time they had ever performed together and the show went better than any of them had expected it to. They came up with their group name, Blind Budapest, after being inspired by the film *The Grand Budapest Hotel* and the teamwork shown by the main characters. The boys want to stick together no matter what, even if they’re unsure and can’t see what the future holds for them.

Each member of the collective has their own persona: Ethan goes by the name Winter, inspired by a snowy trip to Colorado, and is seen as the most romantic of the group; Igor goes by Zodiac Sparks, a name that “clicked” with his spiritual and philosophical beliefs; Solomon keeps his childhood nickname of Sauce, going by Sauce Taydo, showing how his roots influence him; Malcolm is known as Barie, and Caleb goes by Baewülf.

Although similar, they say their differences as artists help them flourish creatively. Combining their individual experiences and backgrounds, the boys feed off each other to create their own tracks. Solomon, for example, uses his Chicago origins to inspire his music and writing, as well as the knowledge he’s obtained from being a piano major at school. He says being around music every day gives him a significant advantage while producing tracks. Igor’s background as a DJ has led him to not only appreciate music, but the production aspect of putting a song together. The quality of their songs is one thing that is extremely important to him, most songs being mixed and produced while the boys are together in Igor’s self constructed home studio. “Ninety percent of the things we make would not exist if we didn’t work well together,” Ethan said. “We’ll start something and then one of us will hear something we didn’t hear at all.” While some of their songs are finalized on the first take, most take hours to complete.

Before they enter the studio, they use personal experiences to create lyrics for their songs. When asked about his inspiration, Malcolm said “I base my music around the little guy in my head who sees what’s wrong with the world around him. I try to keep it real and fun for the listener. They’re based off the things I learn and hope for.” Most importantly, they create things that make them happy; a large portion of their songs are composed by freestyling with each other and writing down lyrics that hit them instantly. “Sometimes I’ll pull over in a gas station and sit there for an hour because I have a sudden urge to write a song with whatever vibe the beat is giving me,” Igor said. “Most of the creative process takes place at night because that’s when I feel most productive, also why I’m often so late to school...sorry administration.”

Each boy wants their listeners to gain something from the music they release. Comfort is the main thing Ethan wants to display in his music, after so many artists have helped him in his toughest times. Solomon “[wants] to impact people’s lives... to feel what I’m feeling and relate. I want it to strengthen them, but I also want people to hear my music and let instant vibes hit them. Instant joy and happiness.”

After high school, they hope to stick together and move to Chicago to work on music as a career. If they can’t make a full time job out of it, they still want to pursue the passion on the side and create as much as they can. The boys want to become not only successful, but comfortable in their skin as musicians, producing full-length albums and releasing them on all listening platforms. They want to rise in the industry, inspired by rappers like J. Cole, Post Malone, and Kendrick Lamar, staying as independent as possible throughout the whole process. Music aside, the sense of friendship and security is the most valuable thing they’ve gained since beginning their journey together. “The beauty of our group is we’re all understanding of each other... and every one plays an equally significant part,” Solomon said. The team is in the works of finalizing a gig at the Music Farm this June; a small step in their come up.



A Ghostly Night

by Nathalie Delson

I, along with my friends Charles, Emma, Cassie, Asher, and Kailey, and my boyfriend Atticus had the wonderful opportunity to attend an incredible concert at the North Charleston Performing Arts center on November 27th. I was ecstatic, because the band, Ghost, has been my favorite since I was in ninth grade. I never thought Ghost would perform in Charleston! I bought a VIP pass to enter the venue early, receive exclusive rare merch along with an autograph, and even a meet and greet with the singer!

Hailing from Linköping Sweden, the theatrical metal band consists of eight members. The seven instrumentalists (known as the “Nameless Ghouls”) wear horned masks to keep their identities anonymous and give the band a dramatic flair. The lead singer, decked out in religious attire and a mustached-masked face, goes by the name “Cardinal Copia” (fan given nicknames include “Cardi C” and “Cardinal Cornucopia”). The band dates back to 2006, and their 2018 album *Prequelle* was among the top metal albums of that year. Ghost is becoming more and more internationally recognized for their distinct sound. The band claims the following influences: Kiss, Ozzy Osbourne, Queen, ABBA, Rammstein, Blue Oyster Cult, and Lady Gaga.

To describe this band and its lore in one paragraph would be a sin. Ghost’s aesthetic has been described as “a grand, supersonic sermon with horror-based themes and occult imagery.” However controversial that may sound, the Nameless Ghouls and Cardinal do not associate with any belief system or doctrine. They are here to entertain, to shock, to delight and surprise, and to provide a mystical, grand sound that will surely mesmerize and hypnotize the listener!

The concert phenomenal. Decked out in cathedral-style stained glass window decor, ominous lights, grand white staircase, and a black-and-white-checked floorboard, the venue felt like a theatre set with a grand array of bandmates being actors and Cardinal Copia playing the lead. Audience participation is common at a Ghost concert, so it is very important that you shout and cheer when Cardi C yells out his most famous phrase: “Are you with us?”

Surrounded by older men and women in elaborate costumes and battle-jackets, our friend group felt right at home. We were all singing and dancing along to hit songs like “Dance Macabre,” “Rats,” and “Faith” from Ghost’s newest album. What surprised me is that they played older songs like “From the Pinnacle to the Pit,” “Per Aspera Ad Inferi,” and my personal favorite, “Year Zero.” I took an immediate interest in the band at the beginning of ninth grade when an SOA graduate, **Ari Levine**, introduced me “Year Zero.” Hearing that song in concert brought tears to my eyes. It’s a shame Ari wasn’t with me to experience Ghost in concert.

The performance of the song “Con Clavi Con Dio” struck me the hardest. Cardinal Copia came onstage with a long thurible burning with a very entrancing incense. Smoke filled the stage and the warm smell of nag champa and frankincense filled the venue as the Cardinal sang out to all of us. We were absolutely spellbound. I felt entranced, as if he were speaking directly to me (which he did before the concert).

I had purchased the pricy VIP ticket that would grant me a one-on-one meet and greet, as well as a photo. When I first walked into the small room, I had a little trouble navigating, my eyes adjusting to the blackness. My heart was pounding. Suddenly, he strolls out with a grand “Hello, darling!” My inner fangirl began screaming. I kept cool, however, as he extended his leather gloved hand, his eyes meeting mine, and he asked with a thick accent, “How are you? How AM I doing? I can’t stop smiling. “My day is going extraordinarily well, thank you for asking! How are you?” To which he pulls me even closer and says, “Absolutely wonderful.” I remember blushing like a madman. (Holy mother, he touched me! Aaaa!) We talked for a little bit after that. One thing I told him is that Ghost has helped me through some bad times in my life and he gave me a very, very tight hug and said, “I am glad you are no longer in that dark place and you are here to listen to us play.”

Seeing Ghost perform live was probably the most cathartic and beautiful experience I have ever had, especially because I was with the people I love. I remember sobbing the day after when I arrived back to school. It didn’t quite strike me until after the concert that I had just experienced the best day of my life. I hope that I get to see Ghost and meet Cardinal Copia again. It was truly a ghostly night.

Music Down in My Soul

by John White

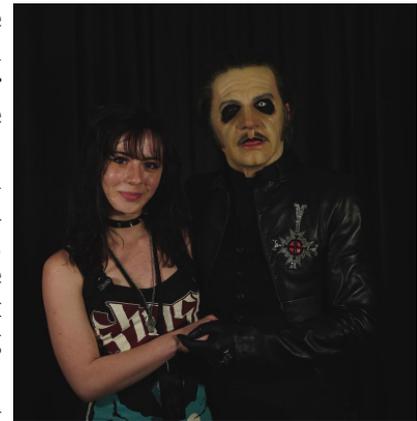
The annual Music Down in My Soul Concert was a fabulous success. The department was fortunate enough to have critically acclaimed jazz musician, as well as former SOA band director, Charleston Singleton return with his band members and talented vocalist Quiana Parler to accompany the singers.

The first half of the concert focused on the inspirational theme of the concert. Songs from the *Greatest Showman* were performed to inspire the audience to “Come Alive” and dream “A Million Dreams.”

Junior Aubrey Oates returned to the stage after being absent for several months to receive treatment following her being diagnosed with leukemia. She was joined by her mother who spoke a few words on Aubrey’s behalf during “What Would I Do Without My Music” testifying the healing power of music and how music has continued to be a central part of Aubrey’s life.

The second half of the concert brightened the mood with several upbeat gospel arrangements of songs like “Swing Low Sweet Chariot” and “When the Saints Go Marching In.” Alumnus Parish Brown and Michael Stevens returned to conduct and play the piano respectively for the finale of the concert “Total Praise.”

The concert sold out both nights. Charleton says that he looks forward to hearing from the vocal department and that he is always checking his schedule to see that he can come down for the show. Music Down in My Soul continues to be a hallmark of the vocal calendar year after year.



Nathalie Delson (left) poses with her idol, Cardinal Copia.



Vocal majors performing Friday, February 1st.

Provided

Dr. Cusatis

How do underrepresented ethnic cuisines thrive?

by Lisa Fimian

Charleston, South Carolina, has long been known as one of the United States' restaurant capitals. The Greater Charleston area is abundant in award-winning restaurants, earning their fame through beloved dishes and Southern hospitality. However, there seems to be a conspicuous absence of recognition for various ethnic cuisines. Yet this has not stopped ambitious restaurant owners from around the world from giving Charleston a try, despite the challenges.

I spoke with Preston Diedrick, owner of Taste of the Islands, a gem of a Jamaican restaurant in the West Ashley area of Charleston. Diedrick and his family moved to the United States from Jamaica in 1986, and the restaurant business is new to them, having opened their establishment only three years ago.

After a quick glance around the small but welcoming venue, I notice familiar Caribbean ingredients stored behind the counter and displayed on the overhead menu. I have spent many summers in St. Kitts, a Caribbean island in the West Indies, so many staple ingredients like allspice and ackee stand out to me. However, Diedrick says that the cooking greatly varies from island to island because of the limit on spices that are available.

Most of the ingredients needed to prepare a Jamaican delicacy like oxtail or jerk chicken, need to be purchased from a grocer specialized in Caribbean foods. The nearest supplier to Charleston is in Atlanta, which makes for a costly grocery haul. Diedrick asserts that metropolitan hubs like New York or Miami have cheaper, more attainable Caribbean ingredients. Limited and expensive ingredients in the South mean that traditional Caribbean restaurants are at greater risk of failure, and inadequate representation certainly doesn't make it easier.

"It's difficult to keep a restaurant running here, because Jamaican food is not popular in Charleston and people need to get used to different palates," Diedrick says. "Friendliness is key," he adds, "because people patronize for your hospitality."

There are few Jamaican restaurants in Charleston, and Diedrick says that people come from Myrtle Beach and Hilton Head just to check them out. South Carolina doesn't have a large Jamaican population, unlike large cities like New York, Diedrick says. Every corner in the Bronx and in Brooklyn has a Caribbean eatery of some sort: "When New Yorkers appreciate the cooking, you know you're doing well," he laughs. "Customer support is what keeps restaurants like ours going," Diedrick says. Charleston has so many restaurants and people often move around to try different things, but it's easy to get lost in that circle and then never return. "If you like a certain food, like fried chicken, you might eat oxtail once, but then go back to what you're used to." And that's how restaurants like Taste of the Islands get buried among the thriving restaurant scene.

Diedrick estimates that about 50% of his customers are originally from the Caribbean, which motivates his family to maintain authentic dishes that have roots in Jamaica. Diedrick claims that "if you blend tastes, and the dish isn't authentic, the quality isn't the same. It's important to avoid integrating American tastes into it."

After the interview, I engaged in some casual banter with Diedrick, and I was surprised to learn that Jamaican culture in the motherland itself is diminishing. He believes that the culture is gradually becoming more watered down, because local Jamaicans no longer have access to certain beaches and attractions that are now reserved for resort guests. For decades, Jamaican culture has been strongly represented through music and food beyond the island. Diedrick is determined to keep that tradition going in the United States. And the best place to begin is through the sharing of his authentic dishes.

An Interview with BSU Founder, Thomas Polkey



Luke Shaw: How did you come to start the Black Student Union?

Thomas Polkey: I started Black Student Union because I felt like the black and African-American community at SOA needed more unity especially in recent events of America. I felt that BSU was so essential and necessary to be created because these kids need a community and safe space where they can speak about what's bothering them or just to talk about what's going on in his or her life. BSU was also created to educate. We feel that if we can make people more aware about certain topics now, it would pay off in their future.

LS: What is your vision statement for BSU?

TP: BSU is a student based group which sponsors cultural and social events, provides leadership opportunities, and encourages networking and relations among African American students, faculty and staff.

LS: What does black history month mean to you?

TP: Black History Month is a time where we recognize the people before us and it's a time to honor those who have fought for the luxuries that we have now. Black History Month for me is all year. We should recognize and acknowledge the people that paved the way, whether they be living or dead. In my eyes, it isn't History. It is now.

LS: What civil rights leaders do you think have influenced you as an upcoming leader?

TP: I've been exposed to many leaders in my community but one of the leaders that I look up to the most is James Allen Baldwin. Not only is he a critically acclaimed poet, writer, playwright, and novelist. He was a gay, black man living in a very racist and homophobic time period. Baldwin has influenced me as a leader because he shows me that I can truly perfect any and everything that I put my mind to. and that if I really truly want something I can get it. Baldwin used his art as his way of protest. And I will too.

LS: How would you say your roots have influenced you and strengthened you as a person?

TP: I was born in Charleston. Raised downtown on the Peninsula my entire life. My family is the backbone of my being. I would be spineless and incumbent without them and I thank them every day for the sacrifices they make for me and my sister. My roots are tender yet strong and virtuous- impossible to cut. My roots are sacred. And I wouldn't change them for the world. My roots have taught me that "I can be bad all by myself" and that "If you can't find peace within yourself, you can never find it anywhere else." My roots give me the nutrients I need to succeed.

Cook's Corner

As an AirBnB host, I frequently interact with visitors who come to Charleston to explore and learn about the Lowcountry. Invariably they will be traveling through the downtown area, often on their way to Folly Beach, and plan to arrive via the Septima Clark Expressway. Because Septima Clark is one of the Americans and educators I most admire, I seize any opportunity to tell my guests about this remarkable woman and the impact she had on Charleston, The Civil Rights Movement and thousands of newly registered voters.

Clark began teaching 100 years ago on John's Island. Early in her career she developed lessons that incorporated materials and tasks which were meaningful to her students which helped them more quickly learn to read and write. Her innovative approach to literacy and belief in the power of education led her to establish Citizenship Schools, where African American adults learned to read and write using catalogs, deeds and voter registration materials. Under Clark's leadership, Citizenship schools helped bring about change for citizens who previously had no voice in government; the number of African American voters increased from 37 in 1958 to over 700,000 in 1969.

Septima Clark illustrates the power of education and the impact one person can have. I hope you'll Google her, learn about her life and work and share with others!

Dr. Cook



STUCO Update

by Christina Lewis

Prom committee meets every other Friday in **Mr. Clark's** room at lunch. If you would like to help plan the most anticipated event of the season, be sure to stop by!

Prom tickets are also on sale; visit SOA's website and make your purchase before the price increases again. If you would like to invite a guest to prom who doesn't attend SOA, a mandatory permission slip can also be found online. This form is due to Mr. Clark by March 15th.

Student Council is excited for the coming semester. As always, reach out to your grade's representatives if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas you want to share.

Family Day at the Charleston Jazz Festival Features Young Jazz Musicians

by Tes Smoak

January 24th through 27th marked the 5th annual Charleston Jazz Festival, featuring over 100 jazz musicians around the Charleston area. The last day of this festival signified Family Day, a performance at the Sottile Theater featuring young jazz combos and ensembles from South Carolina, including members from the SOA Jazz Ensemble.

In the lobby of Sottile, The Westside High School Jazz Combo, hailing from Anderson, SC, prepared all attendees for a day of fun jazz music. Inside the theater, SOA's very own jazz ensemble, conducted by **Mrs. Suzanne Reed** and guest conductor **Mr. Basil Kerr**, blew the crowd away

with favorites such as "The Puffy Taco" and "Moten Swing," along with new charts such as "Honk" by Jeff Jarvis, to which they received a standing ovation.

Following the SOA Jazz Ensemble was the debut performance of the South Carolina All-Stars Jazz Combo, made up of local student musicians, including members from the SOA Jazz Ensemble. After their spectacular performance, the Wando High School Festival Jazz Band presented a variety of catchy tunes that received a standing ovation as well.

Last, but not least, on the list was the Charleston All-Stars Jazz Band, a big band made up of many students



Senior band major **Joseph McGuin** gives it his all on the guitar.

from across the Lowcountry, including members from the SOA Jazz Ensemble, directed by **Mr. David Carter**, Director of Education and Outreach at Charleston Jazz. They began with Earth, Wind and Fire's "In the Stone," and ended with Michael Jackson's "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough," featuring guest soloist **Mr. Charlton Singleton**.

Overall, this year's Family Day at the Charleston Jazz Festival was a huge success. It featured many up-and-coming musicians from around South Carolina giving back to the Lowcountry by playing their hearts out.



With a smile on his face, **Mr. Kerr** conducts students with glee.



Mr. David Carter (foreground) and **Mr. Charlton Singleton** (background) announcing a band.

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Aubrey Oates' Journey Through Cancer

by Evelyn Howe

During the five and a half years **Aubrey Oates** has been a Vocal major, she has been one of the happiest people I've known. Always eager to talk about anything Zelda or Harry Potter related, Aubrey is outgoing and energetic. Her unique sense of humor has never failed to make someone laugh. As one of her best friends, **John Wesley**, puts it, "she is a ray of hope and positivity to us all."

Last spring, Aubrey was diagnosed with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). The National Cancer Institute describes ALL as "an aggressive type of leukemia in which too many B-cell lymphoblasts (immature white blood cells) are found in the bone marrow and blood." If left untreated, B-cell ALL can be fatal in less than three months.

It began for Aubrey before spring break last year, when she started experiencing severe fatigue. Her PE teacher, **Mr. Brian Johnson**, was the first to suggest that she consult a physician, having been diagnosed with leukemia himself less than two years before. Mr. Johnson noticed something was off when Aubrey returned to school after a short illness. "At first we thought it was the previous sickness lingering, but as time went on, she was really having a hard time doing much at all. She would get easily fatigued and one day her lips were blue from just a little moderate exercise," he recalls. He encouraged her to get this abnormality checked out, and a couple weeks later, during spring break, her father called him to let him know that Aubrey had been diagnosed with leukemia. "To say that my heart broke when he told me is an understatement," Mr. Johnson said. "I knew how hard this was going to be on Aubrey and her family."

It had been a fairly ordinary day for Aubrey when she found out that she had cancer. She and her mother had gone to her pediatrician for the third time to draw blood, even after being told Aubrey was simply anemic and should take iron pills. A few hours later, her father came home in a panic. The test results had come back, and her pediatrician told them to immediately get into the car and drive to the Emergency Room. "We didn't even have time to pack a bag, much less process," Aubrey's mother said. At this point, Aubrey was in complete shock. "It wasn't until the tenth day in the hospital that I broke down crying and couldn't stop," she remembers. "I kept thinking, 'This means I'm going to die.'" And from 5:00 that evening, Aubrey didn't leave the pediatric oncology wing of the MUSC Children's Hospital for 55 days.

Life changed for Aubrey and her family. "Her mom basically put her life on hold and lived with Aubrey in the hospital," Mr. Johnson explained. "Cancer affects families in so many ways more than just the illness." From this point forward, Aubrey received aggressive chemotherapy treatment consisting of vincristine and methotrexate, two drugs known to combat cancer cells but also cause serious side effects. Methotrexate affects the motor cortex in the brain, which is responsible for motor function. When those nerves are affected, it can have serious and scary repercussions. "One day Aubrey ate lunch, sat in her chair, and all of a sudden, it looked like she was having a stroke," her mom recalls. She was rushed to the hospital, where she lost use of the entire right side of her body. The worst part about that experience was the uncertainty, as they didn't know when or if she would recover. She was discharged the next day after regaining use of her limbs, only to be rushed to the ER with the same symptoms again at 6:00 that night. Methotrexate and vincristine also affect how one supports his or her weight, making it virtually impossible for Aubrey to walk on her own. "I feel alienated in my own body because it won't do what I want it to do," Aubrey says. Mrs. Oates expressed the reality that "when you're trying to ignore cancer and live your life, the only structure you're allowed to



Provided

have is cancer." Aubrey's life was suddenly structured around chemotherapy. "You have school bells. We have alarms that go off to take medication," Aubrey's mom says. And when you have to go to the hospital every week for the next two years of your life for chemotherapy, it is a whole different way of living.

As if dealing with these horrible side effects and fighting leukemia wasn't enough, Aubrey's family also faced the unexpected challenge of simply continuing Aubrey's education at SOA. According to CCSD, because SOA is a magnet school, a student must finish the curriculum in four years. This means that Aubrey would either have to take a full year of courses this year, or transfer to James Island Charter, her home school. This is problematic in more ways than one. First, the side effects of chemotherapy are astoundingly serious and difficult to manage, making a full course load of classes even more daunting and unrealistic. But if Aubrey didn't make this decision, the administration provided no other option or advice besides her transferring to James Island. "It just makes me feel frustrated," she says. Her mother expressed that it was paramount that people going through cancer and chemotherapy have a support group around them. Transferring to a brand new school without any friends there would be "just so isolating." "I don't just want to be seen as 'the new girl in the wheelchair.' I want to be seen as Aubrey," she says. "I don't want people to pity me anymore." Eventually, Aubrey and her family reached a compromise with the administration. In order to stay at SOA, Aubrey would have to take a "gap year" and return next year as a junior. "If she takes a single class this year, she couldn't stay at SOA," her mom said. So Aubrey's education is now completely on hold.



Provided

I hadn't thought that something so seemingly guaranteed, like continuing your education at the school you love, would be an issue. But it hasn't been all stressful and disappointing. Mr. Johnson and Ms. Hammond have been incredibly supportive, according to the Oates family. "Ms. Hammond has been awesome. She's kept in touch with me," Mrs. Oates said, even going so far as to provide Aubrey with all of our music. And because the Vocal New York trip is sponsored by the Vocal Boosters, Aubrey will be able to join us this year, which personally, I am very excited about. And we all hope Aubrey will be able to join us next year for her junior year.

After hearing about all of these struggles, I was barely able to grasp how hopeless and isolating it must feel. But Aubrey and her mother seemed happy. Our interview was filled with laughs and smiles. "I've always been an optimist," Aubrey says. The key is to "not dwell on the fact that you have cancer. Just ignore it," no matter how hard that may be. "The hardest part for me is that I'm a planner," her mom shares. "You have to plan. But the best strategy for us is not to plan. Just do today. The danger is you have no idea how you'll feel in the future, so instead of planning or worrying, you have to look at today. *Today is your day.* What good thing happened today? It might suck today, but find something good. The more you do it, the more you can do it." Aubrey also shared what she's learned about herself throughout this process. "When I was little, I thought that in order to be strong I had to act more boyish because men were strong. And the expression you do something 'like a girl' didn't help. But now, I realize that I can just be me and be strong enough." And finally, when I asked Aubrey to share any wisdom she may have gained from this experience with our readers, she responded simply, "Today is not forever."

If you wish to help Aubrey's family and all those battling leukemia, donating blood and platelets to the American Red Cross is by far the most helpful thing you could do.

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TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2018 AT 7:30PM

MOZART Quintet in E flat Major for Piano and Winds
GERSHWIN Three Preludes for Clarinet and Piano
STRAUSS Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks Op. 28

Andrew Armstrong *piano*
Regina Helcher Yost *flute*
Zac Hammond *oboe*
Charles Messersmith *clarinet*
Sandra Nikolajevs *bassoon*
Debra Sherrill Ward *horn*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2019 AT 3PM

ENESCU Impressions d'enfance, Op. 28
BEETHOVEN Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23
BRAHMS String Quintet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 111

Francisco Fullana *violin*
Jiayi Shi *piano*
Frances Hsieh *violin*
Ben Weiss *viola*
Jenny Weiss *viola*
Timothy O'Malley *cello*

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2019 AT 7:30PM

RAVEL Tzigane, Rhapsody for Violin and Piano
FRANCK Piano Quintet in F minor

Andrew Armstrong *piano*
Jennifer Frautschi *violin*
Jenny Weiss *violin*
Ben Weiss *viola*
Timothy O'Malley *cello*

Where Are They Now?

Galen Berger spoke with SOA alumnus Robbie Madison about his music career and his return to SOA as a student teacher.

Galen Berger: Where did you study after SOA and how was your college experience?

Robbie Madison: I was recruited to study at Newberry College by the Director of Bands, Bill Long. It was a wonderful experience in so many ways and it ended up being exactly what I needed. Mr. Long selected me to be his principal trumpet player for the Newberry College Concert Band, The NC Brass Quintet and the Solo Trumpet Chair for the NC Jazz Band. I also studied as a Classical Trumpet Soloist under the direction of Levonne Bazemore, and Jens Larsen (Asst. Principal of the Greenville Symphony). I helped to conduct both the Newberry College Marching and Concert Bands during my last two years there as well which was great band leading experience for me.

GB: What is your best memory from your time at SOA?

RM: SOA was my home, and I have so many amazing memories from this sweet place. It is very difficult to limit to one. The SOA Jazz Band event called Jump, Jive and Wail was definitely one of my favorite events each year. Playing three blazing sets of live jazz big band music as a high schooler for our peers, professors and families was such a filling experience. Singing in the jazz vocal group called "Harmony" where I was able to sing a solo with the Charleston Symphony is still to this day one of the most magical moments. Lastly, our performances of Peter Pan were some of the most iconic memories for me. I loved when we had collaboration across all of the arts areas. To share the stage with the founder of SOA, Rose Marie Myers, was an honor for me and a time I will never forget.

GB: What have you been up to since college?

RM: Upon graduation from Newberry College I became the Artistic Director of the Skipp Pearson Jazz Foundation operated from Columbia, South Carolina. We worked on projects to preserve live jazz music as one of America's most precious art forms. I have become known as a performer for voice and trumpet mainly and have had the opportunity to share the stage with many great musicians around the world. I also over the years have used what I've gained musically to build music programs in churches, and have worked as a soloist and band leader around the world for many Christian music programs. My minor in college was Spanish so with the combination of music and Spanish it has opened the door for me to perform in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Brazil. I've been back in Charleston collaborating with the community of artists here. The Charleston Jazz Foundation has featured me as a jazz artist in Spoleto in 2018 and in the Charleston Jazz Festival in 2019. It's been an honor to make music in my city once again.

GB: What advice do you have for the current SOA students and this year's graduating class?

RM: There are so many things that I could share, but first I would say live passionately! This is a concept that we have been taught here at SOA whether we took it to heart or took it for granted, but I can tell you that when you have experienced living through passion there is nothing else that compares.

GB: How do you find that the study of music helps you in other aspects of your life?

RM: I was pretty shy when I was younger and music has helped me express what I truly feel. It's how I experience joy, how I have grieved and how I have grown in so many ways. I think through art I have been able to find confidence in the way God has made me and it's been wonderful.

GB: What are the biggest changes that you have noticed upon your return to SOA, more than a decade later?

RM: Well, the school has a different feel now. It's hard being

gone for so long because SOA is so intimate and it is a place where you truly feel known, but it has grown so much that it is hard sometimes to be back and not feel that connection. At the same time I am so proud when I walk the halls and see what it has become and how many students have been affected by what we have built.

GB: Seeing that you have come full circle back to SOA, how was the school helped in your endeavors as an artist and a student?

RM: My time as SOA gave me confidence in my artistry that I would not have found anywhere else. From the time I entered I was called an artist and I needed people to speak that into me. I have had the privilege of performing with some of the greatest artists in the world and in so many places around the world and I believe that my 7 years at SOA have truly stoked a passion for the arts that cannot be satisfied. So, I never get tired of performing and I never get tired of witnessing other peoples' are either.

GB: Do you have any words of wisdom for students who are looking to pursue a career in the arts?

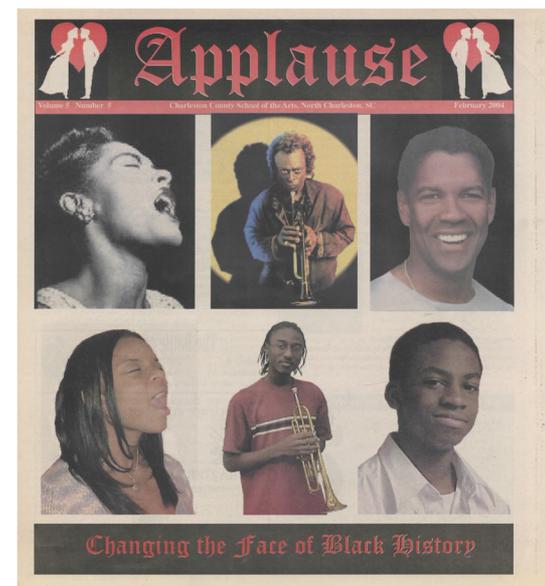
RM: Don't take this time for granted. Don't take your art or these relationships for granted. I believe that it is possible to achieve your dreams in life but I also believe that it takes constant fighting for those dreams. Do not ever give up, and don't give in to what society says it's supposed to look like. Stay positive and appreciate everyone who believes in you!! Love you guys!



Robbie Madison combined his passion for music and religion to produce his album *Psalm 23*.



Robbie Madison meets Charleston mayor John Tecklenburg.



Robbie Madison (bottom center) appeared on the 2004 Black History Month cover of *Applause*, alongside Matthew Bostik, who is now a professional rapper known as Matt Monday.

Where Were They Then?

*Katie Jo Gelasco spoke with one of SOA's administrators **Mr. Robert Grant** about his life from New York to Charleston.*

Katie Jo Gelasco: Where were you born and raised?

Mr. Robert Grant: New York, New York.

KJG: What was your childhood like? Were there any moments that defined it?

RG: Oh wow, OK. I would say it was a good and interesting childhood. The moment that would define it two: when I was accepted into School of the Arts in New York. That's the flagship school of the arts-ones like ours-you know-built after a copy. And the other being a signed Motown recording artist at the age of fifteen.

KJG: And this school is the Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. What was the audition process like?

RG: Similar to this. Similar to ours. You're asked to perform several songs. One that you've practiced. Several that they might hand to you. There's a hearing test, sight reading test. Very similar to ours.

KJG: What did you specialize in there? How would you compare it to SOA?

RG: I was a vocal major. I had some theatre experiences so you can call it a "theater minor." And how would I compare it? I'm not sure. It's different {} so school of the arts there is embedded in the arts community in Lincoln Center. Various opportunities. I would say the difference is we were exposed to outside opportunities. We had an audition board, where you know, off-Broadway production companies had looking for fourteen-year-old kid who can tap dance. "Wanting, seeking high school vocalist for a small time part"-so that was a constant. And you know kids would just pass by and you know buzz, "Oh, I'm going to that audition," and all that kind of thing.

KJG: Did any of your peers go onto achieve national recognition as performers?

RG: Yeah, lots of them. The most famous would be Jennifer Aniston. She was in my class. But there were many others, some weren't in my class though. Jennifer Aniston was the most famous of our class year but I can list a bunch of celebrities. Two of the individuals in "Martin" were from School of the Arts that graduated in my year. The young girl who played Pam, best friend to Gina, she was a student at the school. And the other gentleman played Cole. He was also a student at the school. He was actually in the Cosby Show. He played Theo's best friend. He was at School of the Arts while doing that. That was at the height of the Cosby Show, you know when it was really popular. So he used to get all kinds of the fan attention while we were going to school.

KJG: Where did you go to college? How did your high school influence your college and career path?

RG: I went to Fordham University. And my high school, I wouldn't really say it influenced it. I was familiar with Fordham University because it was a university that was close in proximity to my middle school. So we used to take a lot of visits on campus-things of that nature. So I had a familiarity with it. One of the reasons why I even had it on my list is because I was familiar with it from middle school.

KJG: What did you major in?

RG: Communications. Actually I majored in law and changed to communications my junior year.

KJG: Before your career at SOA what did you do? What did that have to do with your studies?

RG: Before SOA, I was still an educational administrator. Communication is key in my role as an admin because I am constantly communicating with individuals via verbally or in writing.

KJG: How do you believe your arts education led you to your current career? How has it shaped your life?

RG: Music for me was very influential. As a teenager, I mean it was my life, like I told you, I was a signed Motown recording artist while being a student so I would spend lots of time gigging, so to speak, or in the studio. My plans were to be a famous recording artist at one time. Didn't work out like that but I've met quite a few famous people that I can have in my belt as having worked with. How did I parlay

that into what I do now is I'm at School of the Arts, so I am able to identify with the current student population and their quest to either become professionals at what their line of interest is or being able to talk to them about my experiences. And even though I didn't actually go into the field of the music industry- oh well correction. I went into the field I just didn't make it as big as I wanted to. But I actually pursued it outside of school for a long time.

KJG: You were in New York City during 9/11. Can you describe the experience and how it continues to impact you?

RG: That's a loaded question. I'll put it this way: the 9/11 attacks was a major motivation for me to leave. The quality of life wasn't the same in New York afterwards. It just wasn't the same and so when I made up my mind to leave, Charleston was at the top of the list because I have ties to the community to the area.

KJG: From your own experience as a student, artist, and an educator, what advice would you offer to your students at SOA?

RG: To truly be passionate about their craft. And even if they don't want to pursue it at the professional level, to respect it because a lot of people take for granted their talent. And so you can regress, even if you're good at one point in time, if you don't work at it, you can still be talented but you won't reach that mastery level that those who are passionate about it can reach. An individual who maintains that passion for their art form tends to outshine. You can be talented but that doesn't necessarily mean you're the best. Sometimes hard work tends to outshine talent. That would be my advice.



Mr. Grant (far left) with a fellow artist after a concert.



Mr. Grant (bottom right) and his fellow bandmates posing for a promotional picture.

What work from an African American has inspired you? Teachers' Responses

This month, SOA faculty members were asked to name a work by an African American artist that has inspired them. Ranging from actors to authors, these are their responses.

Ms. Fairchild: Lucille Clifton's poem "Won't You Celebrate with Me." I love the pride with which this poem is written - celebrating the accomplishment of being who you are. Everyone should be celebrated. The line "I had no model" breaks my heart. The phrase "everyday something has tried to kill me and has failed" is victorious over the struggles that this black female has faced. She does not give up. I find this very inspiring.

Ms. Horschel: My favorite writer of all time, who happens to be black, is Alice Walker. I was first introduced to Walker during my freshman year in college and absolutely fell in love with both her writing and the strength of her female characters. Two of my favorite pieces by her are her novel, *The Color Purple*, and the short story, "Everyday Use." I am overwhelmed at the fortitude of her female characters and their unapologetic nature.

Mr. Orvin: Otis Redding - "Try A Little Tenderness"; James Brown - "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud"; Jimi Hendrix - "Voodoo Child"

Ms. Zerbst: I'd like to collectively celebrate the famous and unknown artists who contributed to *The Crisis* magazine. Painters, illustrators, poets, essayists, and thinkers worked in collaboration to give voice and dignity to Americans of color from 1910 to today.

Ms. Jones: "Revelations" choreographed by Alvin Ailey. I love this work (originally from 1960) that serves as a tribute to African American faith and perseverance. It has joyful gospel music and hymns that many people find relatable and inspiring, and the dancing is stunning.

Ms. Foster: Zora Neale Hurston and Alice Walker have inspired me. Barack and Michelle Obama, not necessarily artists, but they have inspired me. I just read Michelle Obama's biography entitled *Becoming* and was inspired by her work ethic and big heart.

Ms. Moschella: I'm a huge fan of our local musician with an SOA background, Charlton Singleton. He is in a band called "Ranky Tanky" that got nominated for a Grammy award, but was voted into the top 6 selections. He also has three solo albums: *The New Deal*, *Soul Cavern*, and *Delicate*.

Ms. Kramer: I have always loved Maya Angelou's writing. I love the poem "Still I Rise." I have read all of her memoirs. My favorite quotes are, "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time," and "Love liberates. It doesn't bind." Her writing is lyrical and profound. I recommend it to anyone to read.

Mr. Grant: *Brainwashed* by Tom Burrell and *Stolen Legacy* by George G.M. James, two profoundly powerful reads regarding Black Studies!

Ms. Fields: "Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou



Maya Angelou



Lucille Clifton



Charlton Singleton



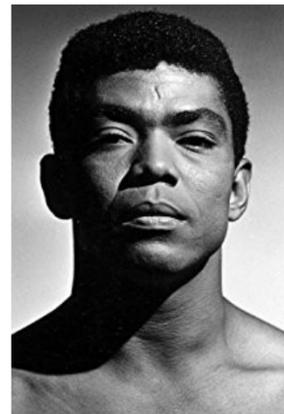
Henrietta Lacks



Buckwheat Zydeco



Daniel Kaluuya



Alvin Ailey



Kerry James Marshall



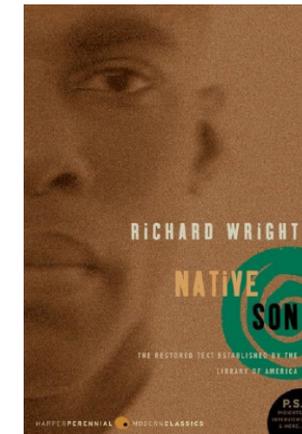
Otis Redding



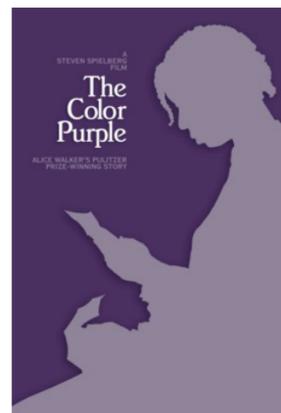
Nina Simone



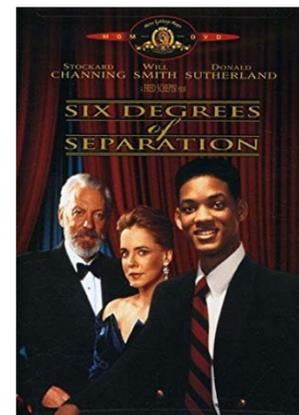
Michelle Obama



Richard Wright
Native Son



The Color Purple



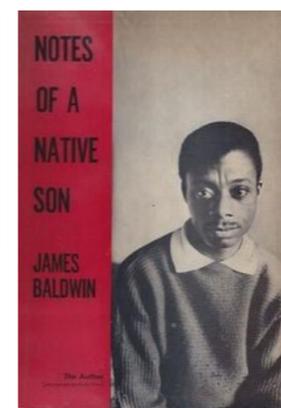
Six Degrees of Separation



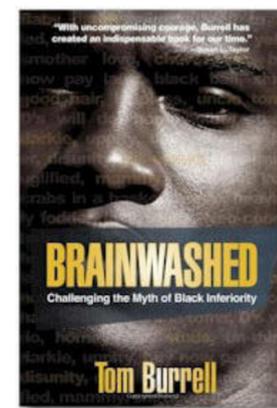
Moonlight



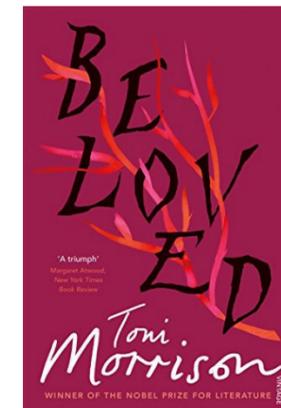
The Crisis



Notes of a Native Son



Brainwashed



Beloved

Mr. Clark: Barry Jenkins's film "Moonlight"

Ms. Baker: Will Smith's performance in "Six Degrees of Separation"

Ms. Drennan: *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, my vote for THE great American novel of the 20th century.

Ms. Rink: "Feeling Good" by Nina Simone

Ms. Greig: Daniel Kaluuya's performance in "Get Out"

Ms. McKinley: Kerry James Marshall. [not her words] Kerry James Marshall uses painting, sculptural installations, collage, video, and photography to comment on the history of black identity both in the United States and in Western art. He is well known for paintings that focus on black subjects historically excluded from the artistic canon, and has explored issues of race and history through imagery ranging from abstraction to comics. Marshall said in a 2012 interview with *Art + Auction* that "it is possible to transcend what is perceived to be the limitations of a race-conscious kind of work. It is a limitation only if you accept someone else's foreclosure from the outside. If you plumb the depths yourself, you can exercise a good deal of creative flexibility. You are limited only by your ability to imagine possibilities."

Dr. Cusatis: "Creole Country" by Buckwheat Zydeco (Stanley Joseph Dural). I saw Buckwheat open for Eric Clapton in Philadelphia in 1988 shortly after he recorded songs for the soundtrack of *The Big Easy*. I had never heard anything like him, and it sparked my love of zydeco music. When I heard him sing "Come on Down to Creole Country!" I took him up on the invitation and headed to the famous zydeco club, Slim's Waikiki, in Opelousas, Louisiana, where I met zydeco legend Boozoo Chavis. And later I befriended and jammed with Roy Carrier in Athens, GA, cousin of the father of zydeco, Clifton Chenier, famously alluded to in Paul Simon's "That Was Your Mother" ("I'm standing on a corner in Lafayette, State of Louisiana / Wondering what a city boy can do? ... Listening to the music of Clifton Chenier, the King of the Bayou!). I spoke for a while with Buckwheat in 1991 after he opened for War in Reading, PA, and he was happy to hear about the trip to Slim's he inspired. Buckwheat passed away in 2016. Also listen to "Dallas Alley" and try to sit still, not easy, or his cover of Dylan's "On a Night Like This," to which his accordion gives new life.

Kevin Short: Although not an artistic contribution, the legacy of Henrietta Lacks in the biological community is immense. Her cells were collected from her without consent and went on to be the first human cell line to be cultured successfully in the lab. The scientific discoveries from her cell line include vaccines for polio and advancements in cancer research. Henrietta was an African American woman that died in 1951.

Ms. Hart: *Notes of a Native Son* by James Baldwin

Mr. Younts: *Native Son* by Richard Wright

When I met Mr. John “Bev” Wilson, I observed a kind-hearted, hard-working gentleman, who showed up promptly at 4 PM each evening to clean the classrooms in the high school building. However, I soon learned, there is much more to this humble septuagenarian. Mr. Wilson carries with him a large part of South Carolina history, particularly the African-American experience in the segregated South. In his effort to obtain a good education and pursue a happy, successful life, Mr. Wilson withstood hateful words and gestures, fled bullets during one of the most notorious events of the Civil Rights Movement, and suffered the crack of a baseball bat while trying to assist a friend. He also earned a four-year scholarship to South Carolina State, a master’s degree in business administration, and the respect of the fourteen employees he supervised in the final years of a thriving business career. His return to the Bonds-Wilson campus after more than a decade of retirement was a homecoming for Mr. Wilson. The captain and star quarterback for the Bonds-Wilson High School Cobras in the early 1960s, he played alongside a future NFL hall of famer, and he never lost a home game.

Mr. Wilson grew up in the Daniel Jenkins Project in North Charleston, attending Daniel Jenkins Elementary, before moving to live with his father in Georgetown, where he began playing midget football. “Sports was second nature,” he explains. When Mr. Wilson, whose family inexplicably nicknamed him “Bev,” was in seventh grade, he was recruited by the coach at Georgetown’s Howard High School to play varsity football. Bev moved back to the Jenkins Project for his eighth grade year and enrolled at Bonds-Wilson High School, where he began an illustrious five year tenure, becoming the first-string quarterback during his freshman year.

While being of the captain of the football team invited popularity and other privileges, life was not easy in the project. Bev was one of eleven children. “It was a struggle that we didn’t understand as children,” he recalls. “Everybody had a large family. Ms. Gadson had eleven, and her daughter had thirteen.” It made a difference, he says, “when there was a working man in house.” Bev returned to Charleston so he could help out his mom, he says, and he took a job as a dishwasher at a Rivers Avenue diner as an eighth-grader and worked there until he graduated high school.

But there was a strong sense of solidarity in the projects, Mr. Wilson recalls, not just Daniel Jenkins, but other black communities such as Liberty Hill and Charleston Heights. “That’s just where you knew you belonged,” he says. “And if you went outside your community, there’s no telling what might happen. Bev and his friends regularly played with the white children that many of his neighbors took care of while their parents worked, but he noticed they stopped coming around, usually after the age eleven. Bev did not think much about segregation until he began attending the all-black Bonds-Wilson High School, which was not permitted to compete against North Charleston High or any white schools. “You just followed what the adults did, that was acceptable. At Bonds-Wilson he began to question racial injustice. And when organizations such as the NAACP visited his church to encourage peaceful demonstrations, he joined in, participating in sit-ins at diners on King Street that prohibited blacks. “We were instructed by the organizers to sit real straight and not to fight back,” he explained. “It was difficult for me. Once someone spit in my face, even as buff as I was, but I did not fight back.”

But Mr. Wilson has fond memories of his days at Bonds Wilson, as well, including the annual community sandlot football game that took place every Thanksgiving between the boys of Jenkins Project and Charleston Heights. Occasionally a player from Charleston Heights, knowing that defeat was imminent, would ask if they could “play on Johnny Wilson’s team.” One of these was a 6’4” Bonds Wilson junior named Art Shell. A grade ahead of Bev, who always played quarterback, Art generally played offensive tackle. “I asked Art, ‘You know how to snap a ball?’ and he said ‘I think I can snap a ball.’” The soft spoken but colossal Art, whom his teammates nicknamed Big Baby Jesus, played center that day and Bev approached his coach at Bonds Wilson and told him, “I got you a new center.” Mr. Shell became Mr. Wilson’s center for the remainder of his high school career before going on to play college ball and then the NFL, where he played in two Super Bowls and was inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. Shell also became the first black coach in modern football history. The two remain friends, and Bev was excited to see Shell’s nephew, Brandon, a Charleston native and former Gamecock, get drafted in the fourth round by the New York Jets in 2016.

While John looked up to sports figures like Jackie Robinson, Willie Mays and Jim Brown, who were battling to blaze a trail into professional sports for younger black athletes, his real heroes were the men in the community who went off to college. Most did not, even some of the best football players had to “man up” and get a job, if not in Charleston, then in New York, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, Hartford, Chicago, or Los Angeles. “Going to college was a big thing,” he says, as it generally required loans or grants. “You could bypass all that if you were a sports guy.” Math was always John’s strongest subject and his good grades combined with his football prowess attracted the attention of multiple black colleges, such as Allen University, Benedict University, Morris College, Shaw University, and Livingstone College. He accepted a four-year scholarship to South Carolina State after graduating from Bonds-Wilson in 1965. Bev didn’t possess the stature of an Art Shell, who went on to play college ball in Maryland. “You could only go as far as your size takes you,” he explains. “I didn’t get tapped by none of the big boys.”

As college approached, Mr. Wilson met it with ambition and eagerness, ready to better himself and those around him. While his experience with peaceful protest on King Street, exposed him to the ugliness of racism, it was as a football player at South Carolina State that he experienced racial injustice to the greatest degree and the disparity of racial attitudes in the American South. On a bus ride to Mississippi in 1966, the team stopped at a black owned restaurant in Atlanta called Pascos, where he and his teammates were treated graciously and the food and the atmosphere were exceptional. They wondered why they had never heard of the place. But later in the trip when their white bus driver pulled up for gas at a station in Alabama and a few players stepped out to stretch and use the restroom, they were accosted by an angry owner who told the bus driver he had to get the bus off his property. “He hollered ‘We don’t do (n-word) business here!’” Mr. Wilson recalls. At first the incredulous players became restless and angry, but after their coach told them to sit down, “you could have heard a pin drop,” Mr. Wilson says, as the men began to contemplate what had just happened. “We had all fooled ourselves,” he said. “We all thought that kind of treatment was gone, maybe not totally gone, but we didn’t think it could be that obvious.”



Caption

The summer between his sophomore and junior year at South Carolina State, Mr. Wilson travelled back to Charleston to meet a man he admired and always will: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was speaking at County Hall on King Street on July 31, 1967. Dr. King was escorted by about thirty police cars, Mr. Wilson recalls. “They weren’t taking any chances.” Dr. King’s message resonated with Mr. Wilson, as it aligned with his personal approach to dealing with prejudice. “They were expecting him to come here and say ‘burn, baby, burn’ but he said, ‘build, baby, build.’” Mr. Wilson recalls being deeply disturbed and saddened by Dr. King’s death less than a year later. “Dr. Martin Luther King was a fair and honest man,” he says. “If people would follow what he taught, the world would be a much better place.” While legislators can change policies, he noted, “you can’t change people; they have to do that themselves.”

With a passion burning in him reaffirmed by Dr. King’s words, Mr. Wilson continued his testimony for living a life led by the heart. On a February night in 1968, Mr. Wilson, now junior, was in the mechanical engineering classroom with his teammates their football coach, going through the playbook in preparation for the upcoming spring practice season. When they were released at 7 PM, they saw a crowd of students heading towards town and asked where they were going: “They won’t let us go in the bowling alley,” one of them stated. “Go to the campus bowling alley,” Mr. Wilson responded. “That’s not the point,” a girl responded. Seeing the size and number of football players, they invited them to join the protest. When the forty or so football players arrived, they were greeted with raucous applause by the other protesters, but Mr. Wilson, seeing the parking lot filled with police officers was apprehensive. “This don’t look to cool to me,” he told his roommate, Johnny Jones.

“They ain’t going to do nothing,” Jones responded. “They had never tussled with us before,” he explained. But this night was different: “They did something.” Soon the protesters found themselves among a flurry of flailing baseball bats. “Those guys were really laying that wood down on us. They were hitting girls! Oh, Man. They weren’t using night sticks,” he recalls. “They were baseball bats.” Soon Bev was struck in the shoulder. “I got hit because I had to rescue a linebacker from Stamford, Connecticut. He was all excited because he heard about this stuff going on in the South, but now he’s experiencing it and he’s gung ho, man. I wasn’t as excited about it as he was,” Mr. Wilson explained. “Grab my wrist, hold my wrist, we’re getting out of here.” Mr. Wilson told his friend.

The next day, the SC State campus was blockaded with tanks. “They say that a shot came from off the campus. I’d never known anyone to carry a gun on campus. But they said we retaliated so the troopers started firing.” After things settled down, Mr. Wilson went to the infirmary, where they couldn’t even close the door because so many were injured. “They say twenty-seven were injured. There were more than twenty-seven trying to get in the door way. He went to visit Samuel Hammond, the linebacker of his football team, who was among the injured. “He wasn’t making noise. He sat right there and died. That’s when it became real to us, that this thing ain’t no joke.” He also knew the other two who were killed, Henry Smith, or “Smitty” as he knew him, and Delano Middleton, a high schooler whose mother worked on campus, and who was being recruited by the football team. The morning after, Mr. Wilson, married with a baby on the way, travelled to Greenville with two of his friends to be with his wife’s family. The school remained closed for a week. After the events of February 8, which became known as the Orangeburg Massacre, he said there was a strong awareness of the city of Orangeburg.

Graduating in 1969, Mr. Wilson welcomed a friendlier and successful future with open arms. He went on to work as an internal auditor for Monsanto, and in accounting for W.R. Grace, Cryovac, as well as National Cash Register. For a time he worked as a used car salesman but he moved on shortly after because he believed he would have to “take advantage of people, and I didn’t have that kind of heart.” Mr. Wilson was very successful despite the problems he had to confront. “I had an associate, I could go where they go, I never had any problems. I was wearing a suit and tie. As long as you had a business card, they’d serve you.” Although Mr. Wilson did not experience as much hateful interactions, he was aware that racism was not gone. He knew that black people still didn’t get promoted universally. But he saw a big change in the way people can live today. “People have a lot more freedom to express themselves and attend any function that they so desire.”

Mr. Wilson made his way back to Charleston in 1979 from St. Louis, Missouri to be employed by Alumax (now known as Century Aluminum). February the 11th, 1980 he started with Alumax and remained with them until 2006. By the time he retired, he had 14 employees working under him. In 2018, He decided he wanted something to keep him busy so he went to do janitorial work in the high schools with his cousin from Georgia. “I’ve pepped my life up a bit ‘cause I’m around people again.” He said that sometimes he walks around campus and he’ll start dreaming about the days when he was football captain at Bonds-Wilson.

Mr. Wilson looks back fondly on his life and success. His pride lies in one simple fact: “I’ve never hurt nobody.” The advice he has to give to the students on his former campus is, “find something that you like and that you feel you can live with. Concentrate on that something. Don’t zigzag from this to that. You wouldn’t achieve anything from that approach. Concentrate on what you think you like and try to do the best you can.” But Mr. Wilson learned something from football and has applied it to the rest of his life, “go as far as your size takes you.” Mr. Wilson mentioned many times during his interview with great pride, “I have a big heart.”



Caption



Caption

Clubs of SOA

by Zachary Shirley

Behind the Brushes -

If the art of makeup fascinates you then we may have the perfect club for you! Makeup Club is one of SOA's newest. It was conceived by two students, **Trevor Bierdz** and **Olivia Bouknight** after they decided to combine their passion for makeup and skincare and turn it into a community for students alike. When asked what his favorite aspect of the group is, makeup club president Trevor Bierdz said: "I enjoy the group discussions and the different conversations we have during club. It's so cool to see so many different people share tips and tricks of topics you are passionate about." Makeup club has a flexible schedule but usually meets every other tuesday in **Mrs. Reid's room 1201**, so stop by and say hello!

Young Democrats -

Young Democrats is one of SOA's newest political clubs! Originally created as a place for thoughtful discussion and discourse. Lead by 11th grader **Cecilia Connelly**, she said that "Although the club focuses heavily on current events and politics, a large aspect of the club that I strived for from the beginning is to educate kids on what it means to be a good citizen who cares from their society and the people around them." SOA's Young Democrats represent a chapter of the National Young Democrats of America! The club has about seven consistent members and is always looking for more, so if you're looking to stop by then come to **Ms. Martini's room 1225** this tuesday during lunch and join in on the conversation! They will also be holding a non perishable food drive for the One80 Place from January 28 until February 8th.

Swing Dance Club -

It's time to get your swing on! A new wave of soulful swinging seniors have resumed one of SOA's most fun clubs for a second year! Swing Dance Club was started by **Lucas Clare** and **Piper Arnold** last year and it represents east coast style swing dancing. The club welcomes all levels of skill, as any measure of dancer will have fun. "It started out as a way to help teach people some dancing for JJW since the music played there is swing dance music" said club president Lucas Clare. Swing Dance Club meets every Tuesday at lunch in **Mrs. T's dance room 4137** and is always looking for new members, so swing on by!

Sass Attack

by John White

"Sass Attack" was originally created by David Sass ten years ago, and as per tradition, Applause writer John White has continued its legacy, giving us his take on life's daily inconveniences.

In my last "Sass Attack," I reluctantly made a Trump joke. I felt bad about it; I felt like I had succumb to peer pressure. Really, I dare you to find one comic that hasn't made a Trump joke. Why even have "Weekend Update" on SNL when we could just have "Keeping up with the Trumps"? Because that's what it feel like mainstream comedy has become. Not to say that the Trump administration is anything short of a joke, I just don't like being reminded every day of the mistakes our country made that allowed this man to make it to the Oval Office.

There's even an entire show dedicated to making cheap Trump gags fittingly titled "The President Show." How is that a sustainable

model for a long running television series? Even with Trump you're bound to run out of material. And even if they make a "President Show" for whoever's next in office, that's going to be a tough act to follow. Let's make another reality star/entrepreneur with a receding hairline president and we'll have JoJo Siwa 2020.

Trump jokes are just too easy. Making a joke about how Trump is dishonest is like making a joke about how Garfield hates Mondays. It's just a known fact. Grass is green, sky is blue, Donald Trump lies.

That's not to say Trump hasn't had his moments. He recently signed a criminal justice reform bill. That's pretty neat, but he also is leading our nation during the longest government shutdown in our history. Working in a restaurant, I don't know much about the day to day responsibilities of the commander in chief but it seems like my job would be easier too if I decided to close for a month.

I'm not trying to ruffle any feathers, that's just my two cents... more than any TSA agent, FDA inspector, NASA staff member, park ranger, or FAA air traffic controller has made since last year.



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Influential Artists: Visual Arts

by Luke Shaw

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

Mr. Damond Howard: Hale Woodruff

Luke Shaw: When and how did you first encounter the work of Hale Woodruff?

Mr. Damond Howard: I first encountered the artwork of Hale Woodruff as an undergraduate student in a course called African-American Art, at South Carolina State University.

LS: What initially drew you and what continues to draw you to his or her work?

DH: What initially drew me to Hale Woodruff's work was the way he painted African-American figures in murals he based on the Amistad Incident. Woodruff's depictions of Cinque, leader of the Amistad revolt, and the other captured Africans, in paintings, to me looked akin to the way I had seen portrayals of Batman, Superman, and other heroic characters in Marvel and DC comic books. Woodruff painted his Amistad murals in 1938, at a time when there was a redefinition of depictions of African-American subject-matter in the pictorial arts. As an African-American and an artist living and working in South Carolina, I feel that Woodruff's work has even greater relevance at this moment in our history.

LS: What are your favorite works by this artist?

DH: My favorite works by Hale Woodruff are his Amistad Murals.

LS: In what ways has he or she inspired your own work?

DH: Woodruff's work gave me the idea of using the self-portrait as a means of artistic expression.



Emily Apostolico: Mr. Howard

Luke Shaw: when and how did you first encounter the work of Mr. Howard?

Emily Apostolico: We went on a Visual Arts field trip to a museum in Columbia and I saw Mr. Howard's artwork displayed on one of the walls.

LS: what initially drew you and what continues to draw you to his or her work?

EA: It showed me that artists do get recognition and that my mentor, in fact, had his art displayed to the public. What I liked about the work I saw was that it was monochromatic meaning only in black and white and I like that style of art.

LS: what is your favorite work by this artist?

EA: I've only ever seen one of Mr. Howard's art works and don't remember the name. But the image and meaning behind it I can still remember.

LS: in what ways has he or she inspired your own work?

EA: We as [developing] artists struggle in comparing ourselves to others around us, and we sometimes have a tug of war with our teachers at first. But then we realize that he or she is just trying to make us better. When we see our improvement throughout the year, we realize [just] how far we've really come while working with them. To this day, I still really like working in monochromatic colors because it gives that artwork a sense of balance and contrast at the same time.



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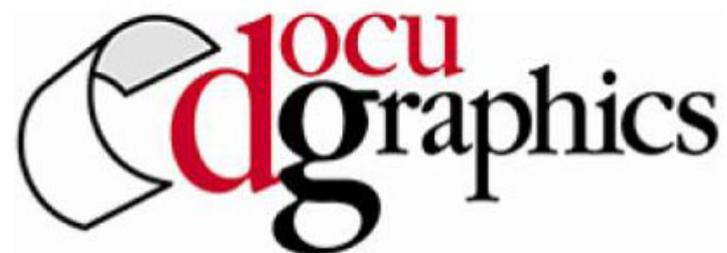


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Hannah Burton

Anya and Leighton: Sophomores Anya and Leighton have been dating for 6 months. Their best date was attending the Milky Chance concert. Anya's favorite thing about Leighton is his sense of humor, while Leighton likes that Anya is a caring person.



Hannah Burton

Kenna and Stella: Sophomores Kenna and Stella have been together for about 7 months. Although there are too many things to count, Kenna likes the creases in Stella's eyes when she laughs. Stella likes Kenna's booming laugh and the little bump in her nose. Having a nice dinner at Butcher and Bee before Jump Jive and Wail this year was their favorite time together.



Hannah Burton

Gabe and Isabelle: Juniors Isabelle and Gabe have been together for a year and two months. Isabelle likes the way Gabe treats her, and Isabelle's kindness and maturity is Gabe's favorite things about her; however, they both say there are too many good things about each other to choose just one. Going bowling was their best time together.



Hannah Burton

Gabby and Aiden: Freshmen Gabby and Aiden have been together for almost 2 months. Aiden likes Gabby's smile, and Gabby likes Aidan's kindness. Their favorite part of each day is getting to see each other at lunch.

SOA Couples

by Hannah Burton

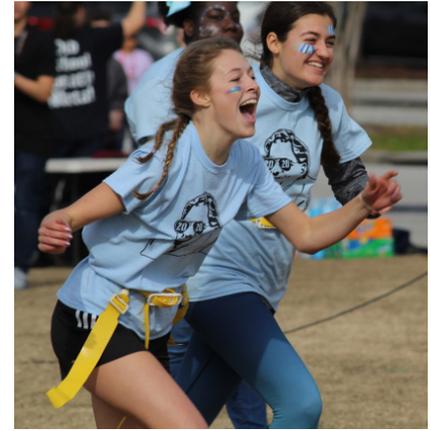
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Powderpuff 2019*



***at least the seniors had good cheer-leaders**



The Art of Breaking Up

By Acadia Reynolds, 6th grade guest writer

You feel that your relationship isn't working. You've tried everything. So you decide that the best thing to do is to just end the relationship. Three things to keep in mind:

Do it in person, not over text.

Be gentle.

Focus on the good memories, not the bad.

Okay. Now let's say that you *hate* your partner. Here's what you do to make your rejection hurt.

1. Write it in a note and slip it into their locker.

They'll be expecting a love letter, but instead they get a nasty surprise.

2. Don't write the letter yourself.

Get someone else to do it, and make sure they know the letter isn't from you.

3. Write hurtful things in the letter.

Call them ugly, and say you were only using them to make you feel better about yourself.

4. Claim you had no idea the letter said these things.

When they come up to you the next day, understandably angry, plead the fifth.

How to get revenge if someone does this to you:

Write an article about it and publish it in the school newspaper.

Winter Dress Code Solutions

By Reagan Perrett, 7th grade guest writer

Have you ever found yourself with that perfect winter outfit? Each color and pattern, in meticulous sync with those adorable earrings that you may or may not have found at Walmart. You slip on your lanyard, decked with pins like a Christmas tree, and once you arrive at class...you're dress coded!

Here at *Applause*, we understand that this can be one of the most disheartening moments in fashion. But don't worry! With these cute, winter outfits, you can repair those outfits in your pinnacle years of fashion, without

★ SOA dress code friendly
Fall/Winter female fashion! ★

★ SOA dress code friendly
Fall/Winter male fashion! ★



Five Reasons to Celebrate in February

By Natalie Blakeslee, 6th grade guest writer

For most people, February is a time of romance, love, and boxes of chocolates. When they think of holidays for this month, Valentine's Day is what comes to mind. But some of us are single or just unable to appreciate this holiday (me). Luckily, I have found some amazing holidays for you to celebrate when Valentine's Day just doesn't cut it.



1. Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day

This holiday can and should be celebrated any day of the month but specifically the second of February. In the 1960s, a mom in New York created this holiday to bust winter boredom and give her kids something to look forward to. To celebrate this holiday, you must do exactly what it says: eat ice cream for breakfast.

2. Galentine's Day

Sorry males, move over, this holiday is for the ladies. This holiday is specifically for you and your best gal friend. You can do anything today as long as you do it together. This holiday is celebrated on February 13.

3. Clean out your Computer Day

There are tabs left open, old emails you don't need, documents from last years project, folders you don't even remember. Take this day as an excuse to clean out your computer after waiting so long to do it. This holiday is celebrated on February 12, and it was created by the Institute of Business Technology.

4. Love your Pet Day

Your pet - the one thing that comforts you when you come home. 10% of Americans admit that they talk to their pet in a special voice. If you feed it the attention it craves it will forever be your friend (until you accidentally feed it 5 minutes later than usual). So what better way to celebrate all the creatures in your home than to make a holiday for them, right? You can celebrate this holiday on February 20.

5. Single-Valentine's Day

While this holiday is just one that I made up, you should still celebrate it. This holiday is for the single people who don't have anything to do on Valentine's. Celebrate the person you love most, yourself. On Valentine's Day simply buy yourself fancy chocolates and roses. Pamper yourself!

Sickness in Sixth Grade

By Ruby Varallo, 6th grade guest writer

To say that there is sickness going around seems like an understatement. Rooms full of constant coughing and complaining. Sick children sitting in the hallway outside the nurse, desperately waiting to be sent home.



Now picture this. Ms. Lasley's third block class. Five people are already absent (most of them probably sick). Then someone raises a hand. "I don't feel good," she says. "Can I go to the nurse?"

Ms. Lasley says yes, and then suggests we sing "Another One Bites the Dust."

"Another one bites the dust," everyone sings in unison. By the end of class, we all know the lyrics by heart because three more kids go to the nurse, one by one.

This should be a warning to you. Good luck, reader. I hope you survive. You do not want to be next!

Before the Middle, We Were Slaves

by Maya Green

In the middle of my family tree
three sisters married three brothers. I don't know
the very beginning: once I asked my grandma where
we were from. *Somewhere in West Africa, most likely.*
We only know rusted chains on wooden boats.
Brown bodies pressed against one another and tossed
into gray, frothing oceans. Years and years of swollen
fingers, bloody backs, a hollowed out cavern
in the very middle of a person where something unnamed
and very essential is supposed to be, but isn't. Fields
of rice, then cotton. These came from the ground.
It's easier to start in the middle. I like to imagine my ancestor
sitting outside looking at the dirt beneath her toes, feeling nothing
but full in the middle.

How does a woman live
resenting the very thing holding her up?
The earth demands no understanding, but there is
a reckoning that must happen. I don't know how
she got there. Maybe she saw rows of dried dirt
and was reminded of white scars on brown backs.
Maybe she realized they had a lot in common.
She wants to know each shade of earth. Its color
on days that smell like sun, days where the horizon melts
into the sea, when she knows the world
is round because she can see it. And
the heavy-looking black after rain, buds
green and unfurling roots beneath the surface. Days when
the worms are too brave.

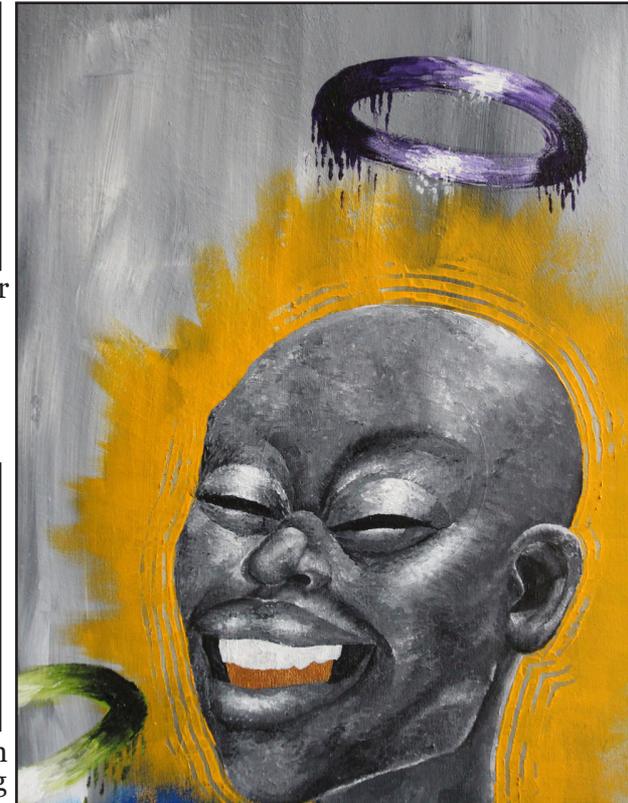
How do I live
never knowing when we'll reach the end? I try to do what she did;
I want to know the brown, cracked like skin on the days
when the sky is white with heat and fragile like glass.



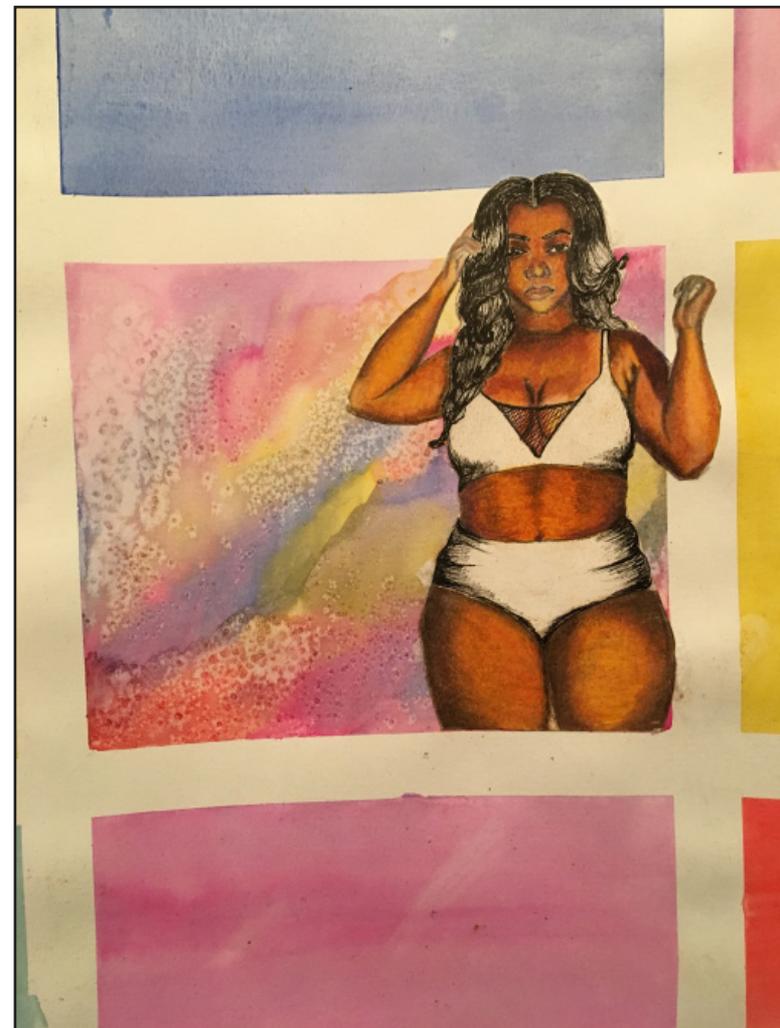
Mahogany Christopher
(right), 12th grade
Visual Arts



Maya Green (left), 11th
grade Creative Writing



"Bad Kidd Chill City"



"Appreciation"

Student Writing and Artwork



Antonee Martin
(right), 11th grade
Visual Arts



Restaurant Review: Istanbul Shish Kebab

by Maya Green and River Abedon

Name: Istanbul Shish Kebab
Location: 4940 Centre Pointe Dr Suite C,
North Charleston, SC 29418
Grade: A-

For the February issue of the Applause, Maya and River decided to pop over to Tanger Outlets after school to visit Istanbul Shish Kebab, an on the rise all-you-can-eat Middle Eastern buffet. Customers pay a fixed price for unlimited food at the cafe, as well as their choice of protein and a drink, totaling around \$16. Along with the buffet, Maya ordered falafel, a shrimp kebab, and sweet tea; River ordered two chicken kebabs and a diet Pepsi.

Maya noticed a familiar buffet style you know and love/hate, with Persian rugs adorning the walls for a fun, if not slightly kitschy cultural flair. She thought it might be slightly intimidating solo or with one other friend, but with a horde of hungry QuizBowl members, it was the perfect space. River felt that the experience was a very important part of it! He liked that the restaurant was clean and well decorated with a large central buffet containing seemingly endless heaps of deliciously smelling mediterranean food.

In the words of QuizBowl teammate (and fellow columnist) John White, "Istanbul is so gas." Needless to say, Maya's expectations were quite high. Although everyone she talked to sung praises of Istanbul Shish Kabob, most compliments were for the meat, so she was slightly hesitant about their vegetarian options. When it was first recommended to River, he was promised insane, perhaps even dangerous, levels of food. He fasted all day in preparation for the all-you-can-eat buffet and eagerly awaited to be painfully full once school let out.

River's expectations were met and exceeded. Starting with the warm pita rolls fresh out of the toaster, River was swept away in an overwhelmingly large amount of Turkish food.



River's first buffet plate (AKA the beginning of the madness).

Familiar favorites, like hummus and tzatziki, and new discoveries, like ground walnut, delighted. Seconds, thirds and then fourths were all indulged in before the kebabs even came out! The chicken itself was warm and perfectly seasoned, as well as a major test of just how far one could stretch the walls of one's stomach.

Such a variety of different foods were consumed that River couldn't single out a favorite, but the Turkish spiced potatoes were definitely a highlight. Directly afterwards, Maya had limited opinions about her meal because she was too busy being lulled into a food coma. Admittedly, this was not the best state of mind to be in before a high pressure trivia competition, but after some reflection and digestion, Maya had nothing but positive thoughts about her order. Like River, she thought the buffet was the perfect mix of familiar and new dishes. Her falafel order was a bit dry, but was quickly gobbled by the table, and her shrimp kebab was perfectly grilled with a delicious and surprisingly sweet glaze.

River and Maya recommend coming with a big attitude and no delusions of self-restraint. They give this restaurant an A-, for its delicious food, fun atmosphere, and all-you-can-eat buffet glory. Thanks to Alex Kuffel-Barbanel (among many others) for recommending Istanbul Shish Kebab. 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.

Album Review: *Some Rap Songs* by Earl Sweatshirt

by Chassee' Palmer

Earl Sweatshirt isn't a household name, but that doesn't mean that he hasn't made an impact in the rap game. Arriving on the scene with the rap collective Odd Future, a group of teenagers, he took the West Coast sound the group was raised on and merged it with hints of alt-rock and modern pop to create rap hybrid. After disbanding in early 2011, the members each produced solo projects. Earl gained his



The famous kebabs took the cake.

own fan base with his first full length release, *Doris*. On his next album he displayed a dark side, rapping about grief and being in a broken state.

Some Raps Songs, which dropped November 30th, isn't a part two to his last album but it still carries the same theme of living through depression, but this time he suggests there is a path out. "Nowwhere2go," the first single, offers a brief look into what has been up with Earl since his 2016 hiatus. He talks about watching out for the people that you hang around. In lines such as "I think/ I spent most of my life depressed/ Only thing on my mind was death/ Didn't know if my time was left," he expresses that he has always battled with mental health issues and it is normal to him. However, he lets the listener know that he has overcome his struggles even though he had to do so on his own: "I redefined myself/ First, I had to find it (Ugh)/ I couldn't find a friend/ Had to rely on my wits."

The opening song "Shattered Dreams" features a sample from "Shattered Dreams (Stop)" by the Endeavors. This song touches on past relationships and the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. He also insists that he is one of the best in the game and that it useless to argue with him.

"December 24" carries a message of black power and paints a picture of the hood. With the minimalistic beat behind the knowledgeable lyrics, he describes the plight of drug dealers, and notes that through the bad he has learned new passages in life. "Playing Possum" is probably one of the most heartfelt tracks on the album and features both of his parents. His mother who opens the track by speaking about him, and his late father, Earl, with whom he had an unstable relationship, reads an original poem. The album ends with an instrumental from a sample of a close friend of his father's. We get to see a hopeful side of Earl, but also see that the experiences he went through have hardened him in a good way, giving him a new outlook He hasn't spoken about touring, but fans are hopeful he will release a visual for the project.

Some Rap Songs offers hope that it is possible to overcome hurdles that seem insurmountable.

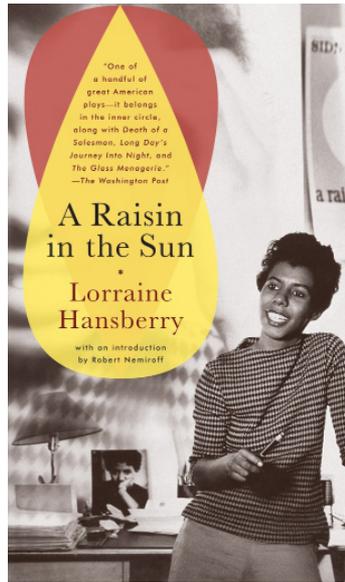


Classic Book Review: *A Raisin in the Sun*

by Maya Green

Although February is Black History Month, a time for intentional celebration of and education about black achievements, black history is American history, and black culture is consumed by nearly everyone every day. As an arts school, we definitely have an increased awareness of all the ways in which African-Americans have contributed to theater, art, dance, and music. However, one realm in which African-Americans have historically gone unacknowledged is literature. With a few notable exceptions, much of what we are told is classic literature was written by white people, and overwhelmingly white men. That doesn't make those works any less culturally significant or well-written, but for this month especially, I call on you to diversify your mindset and question canonical norms by checking out literary work produced by black writers. In particular I recommend *A Raisin in the Sun*, an astounding short play written by Lorraine Hansberry.

The title is taken from Langston Hughes' poem "Harlem": "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?... Or does it explode?" The play is set in a weary, crowded Chicago apartment sometime between World War II and present day, and does its best to answer that question. It follows the Youngers, a black family waiting on a large insurance check after the death of the family's patriarch. In showing just a snippet of their story, the play examines so, so many important themes and topics: systemic poverty, housing discrimination, the resilience of mothers, our African roots, black hair, pride, giving up on dreams. Despite such heavy subject matter, it never forgets that it's a play, and flows with a light, conversational, and engaging tone. No punches are pulled, and it's impossible to read this without reflecting on the injustices that



still exist in our society. However, despite all of that, the prevailing message at the end of the play is one of hope, because despite all of the general societal suckiness, there are still so many people who, like the Youngers, push through life's trials and carry on. I don't want to spoil anything, so I'll leave it at that, but this book is a must read as well as a super short one. It's so good! Read it! Do it for the culture!

Netflix Movie Review: *Velvet Buzzsaw*

by Lou Collins

This movie feels like being stuck in a conversation with someone wearing airpods complaining about rich people. Maybe that's because that was an actual interaction fifteen minutes into *Velvet Buzzsaw*.

This movie is an attempt at social commentary on the capitalist hold on the upper society art collecting world. The problem is that it was made by upper society people who participate in the art collecting world. Half of the actors are playing up satirical commentary and the other half are treating this movie as their most genuine role. However, all of the actors mumble through every line. The performances give off the feeling that Dan Gilroy had no clue he was going for when he wrote a satirical horror that loses its satire without Jake Gyllenhaal or Toni Collette on the screen and loses its horror by never conveying any emotion. I can't help but think that if every actor played it up like Gyllenhaal and Collette the movie could have been brilliant, instead of a mere 66% on Rotten Tomatoes.

Two actors aren't enough to make up for a script that feels like if Tommy Wiseau used bigger words and tried too hard to be set in 2018-2019. Between the vaping and trending on Instagram, my favourite example of this is Daveed Diggs' role of a cornrowed gangster with a dab pen trying to get off the streets by painting. His role further solidifies the knowledge that this movie was made by an old rich white man.

The ending was somehow the least satisfying part while also being my favourite.



It was an undeserved statement about art and urban legends to wrap up a boring and mediocre film that doesn't understand the genre it's trying to be or even how people interact. The movie wasn't actually that bad—it has its moments—but all in all it was forgettable, and that's the worst thing a movie can be.

Start Spreading the Naas

by Hannah Burton

In this new column, staff writer Hannah Burton investigates the unique habits and traditions of the one and only Mr. Naas.

Whether you've been at SOA since 6th grade or just for a few days, you've undoubtedly seen or high fived Mr. Naas.

Back in the day, Mr. Naas's classroom was filled with hungry students and the aroma of toast. His toast station began when Mr. Naas noticed a problem: his students who rode the bus were getting to class late, not giving them enough time to get the school's breakfast and being hungry in class. After writing one too many passes to the vending machine, Mr. Naas decided to take initiative and start his iconic toaster station.

He began purchasing his supplies from Walmart and Sam's Club, topping his cabinet with a toaster and white bread, as well as his favorite: grape jelly. He found students' learning habits and attention span to improve once they had the opportunity to eat. Students were inspired by the toast station and once used a slice in a poster project; Naas says this was the most interesting thing he'd ever seen done with the toaster in class, and that it somehow lasted the whole year without decomposing. Although this great idea was beneficial, his toaster was taken away by admin after the cleaning company complained of the mess the crumbs and jams left behind. Naas was aware of the mess; he personally cleaned and vacuumed the toast station after the end of each day.

Despite the loss, the ghost of the toaster still remains atop his filing cabinet. When asked if he would bring the toast station back, he stated "I think that the toast time is history. I don't see administration allowing me to bring it back." Mr. Naas instead wants students to begin a school coffee house, an idea he's seen other schools take on. "I think it would be nice if the senior class gets together and organizes a coffee house and uses the profits to help fund senior activities. This would also provide experience in running a business."

Horoscopes

by Liv Provosty



Aquarius (Jan. 20- Feb. 18): Life is good right now.

You are feeling higher energy levels than normal and are more motivated to get your life together. Very respectable, I can't exactly relate. You should be feeling self confident which is a great excuse to flirt of course.

Pisces (Feb. 19- Mar. 20): In the spirit of love and romance how about you treat yourself this year? Who says you can't have a gorgeous locket with a photo of yourself? Take a trip through memories by checking out old cards, photos, love letters, or ticket stubs. They have this power to not only make you super sentimental but inspire a realm of dreams.

Aries (Mar. 21- Apr. 19): You should focus on channeling a more practical and organized side to yourself. Stay true to the side of you that challenges expectations and makes moves of course, but by focusing on a clear goal and trying to be patient (difficult for you, I know) you will leave February with more of your dreams accomplished.

Taurus (Apr. 20- May 20): While you are normally comfortable in a relaxed and predictable routine, now is the time to challenge these routines since you might be craving a sense of change. Lean on your friends to help you try new things and challenge each other, with the goal of getting to know yourself better.

Gemini (May 21- Jun. 20): There might be a lot going on with the relationships in your life, whether it's drama with friends or family or a sense of tension that hasn't completely dissolved. It's important to make sure that you are comfortable with the people you surround yourself with. If they can't complain with you and laugh with you and make your life feel lighter than why are they getting your time?

Cancer (Jun 21- Jul. 22): You might be feeling hurt and small. For some reason you might feel stuck in a place you did when you were younger, and less in tune with who you actually are. If someone is making you feel like this remember who you are and what you have been through, if it means talking about your feelings or brushing off whatever is holding you down then so be it. But know that really only you can help yourself realize how awesome you are.

Leo (Jul. 23- Aug. 22): Your goals might have changed recently; something that you might have wanted for yourself might suddenly just feel...meh. But in this new found state of blah there could be something that makes you excited again. People change, so don't worry. It's normal. Interests are made to cycle, how else do we grow up?

Virgo (Aug. 23- Sept. 22): Keep your life routine stable, don't go too far out on a limb with a new job or responsibility. Try to slow down before jumping into a relationship. There is no rush and life is pretty sweet for you right now anyway so what's the hurry to change everything up so quickly?



Libra (Sept. 23- Oct. 22): Love is very possible this month. You might feel bored with every area of your life besides relationships but try to not be too eager, because as fun as the whole "love thing" is, it always brings confusion.



Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You aren't always the most trusting person, but your guard is up more than normal lately. You're hesitant to believe promises or make any, because of how quickly things in your life are changing lately. Your ex might come back to your life and you will fall "madly in love." But I warn you if the ex is the one you fall for, think about...just realllllyy think about it.



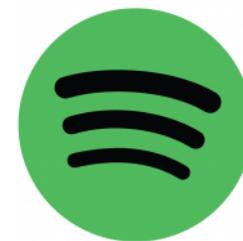
Sagittarius (Nov. 22- Dec. 21): You're restless now through mid-February but try not to get involved in too much and take care of yourself. Some lazy person suggestions are: sleeping, bathing, watching reruns, cooking food. In the spirit of Valentine's Day, there are plenty more flirtatious conversations in the future and easy, casual love is possible.



Capricorn (Dec. 22- Jan.19): Like the Scorpios an ex/old flame might come back into your life around this time, I think this time of year makes everyone just come crawling back...but you have already learned your lesson from this person.

Black History Month Playlist

Head over to [@soaapplause](#) on Spotify for a look at music made by prominent Black artists through the decades.



Spotify

"It Don't Mean a Thing" by Ella Fitzgerald (1957)

"Hallelujah I Love Her So" by Ray Charles (1961)

"What a Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong (1968)

"I Say a Little Prayer" by Aretha Franklin (1968)

"ABC" by The Jackson 5 (1970)

"Tired of Being Alone" by Al Green (1971)

"Can't Get Enough of Your Love" by Barry White (1974)

"I Wanna Dance with Somebody" by Whitney Houston (1979)

"Little Red Corvette" by Prince (1982)

"Candy Girl" by New Edition (1983)

"Rock with You" by Michael Jackson (1991)

"What About Your Friends" by TLC (1992)

"Jump" by Kriss Kross (1992)

"Pon de Replay" by Rihanna (2001)

"Run the World (Girls)" by Beyoncé (2011)

"Trip" by Ella Mai (2018)

SOA Sudoku

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

Then and Now

Zachary Shirley investigates:

Who is/was your celebrity crush in 6th grade?

Zachary Shirley



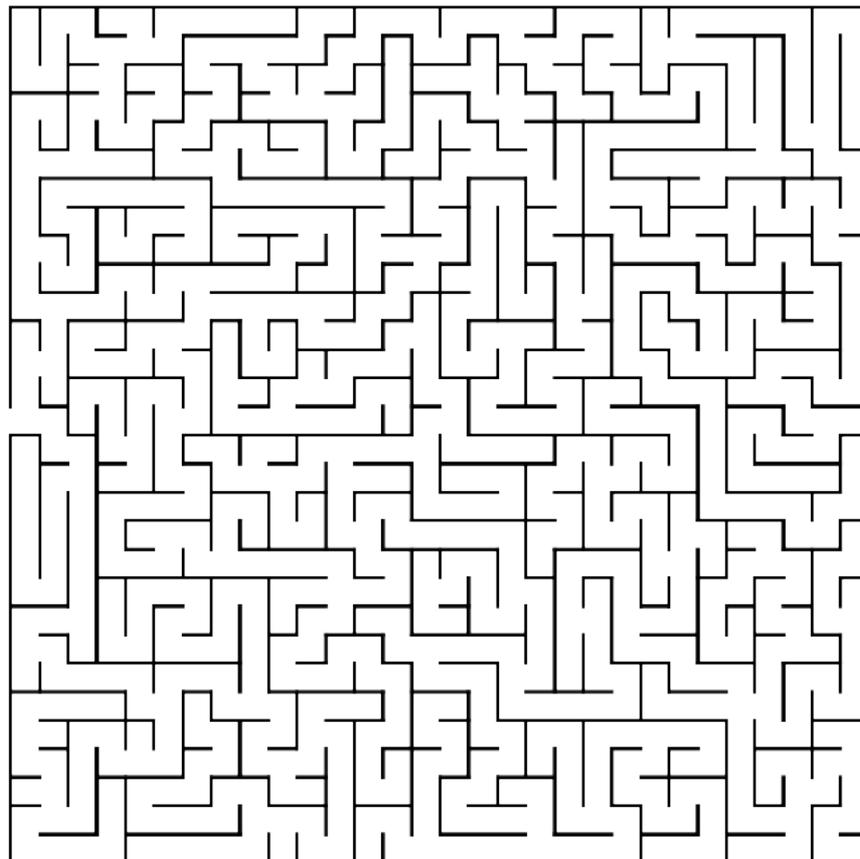
6th grade Dance major
Ainsley Register is
crushin' on Zac Efron.

Zachary Shirley



12th grade Creative
Writer **Maya Gardner**
loved the Jonas
Brothers.

**Help Mr.
Grant find
his hat!**





“Going out of your way to make a certain person feel cared for.”

-Jack Beaudrot, 8th grade Theatre



“Something that feels right.”

-Ava Coats, 6th grade Dance



“It should be the meaning or goal of all things: work, personal, athletic, etc”

-Mr. Cosgrove, Faculty



“Love is like you’re the raccoon in the store and God is the broom kicking you out of the store - the store is love by the way.”

-Nat Delson, 12th grade Theatre major



“Extreme care for another person or group.”

-Ms. Hicks, 8th grade History Teacher

What is your definition of love?

by River Abedon and Lou Collins

Photos by River Abedon and Lou Collins



“Her.”

-Gabe Whited, 11th grade Piano



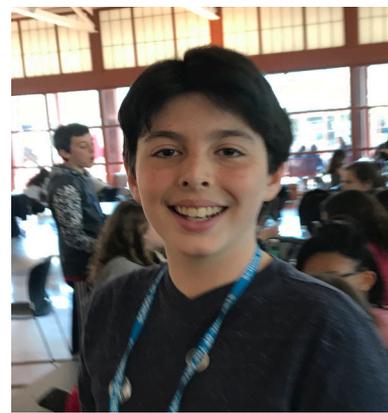
“Love is like the School of the Arts, you can’t explain it.”

-Lilliann Stevens, 9th grade Vocal/Mekhi Jenkins, 9th grade Theatre



“Love is when it hurts my hand to lift the diamond up.”

-Mrs. Richardson, Visual Arts Teacher



“Love is an undefined emotion based only on your feelings.”

-Jesus Price, 7th grade Theatre



“When you’re able to trust somebody wholeheartedly.”

-Breona Green, 10th grade Creative Writing