

Applause

Volume 23, Number 9

School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC

May 2022



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Thank you for your support!

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Welcome to May! This is a really strange month for high school students. For the first half of the month, we're bogged down with AP exams and finals, but after that it's incredibly relaxed. We're finally putting our banked absence days to use, and we're spending as much time with our friends as possible before we go our separate ways for the summer. The Seniors are going nuts, *Applause* writers are jumping overboard, and Julia and Lauren continue to annoy me. Kayla is occupied with her phone, but somehow still manages to distract me from the paper.



This month is themed around the Creative Writing major. Flip to page 10 to read interviews with some of the Creative Writing Seniors who recently had their theses published, and to page 38 for Jada Fickling's literary trivia.

Applause is proud to sponsor Reelin in the Years: A Celebration of the Seventies, in the Rose Maree Myers Theatre on Tuesday, May 17th at 6:30. Admission is free, however, donations will be accepted for the Rose Maree Myers Scholarship for Artistic Excellence. I hope you enjoy this May issue of *Applause*. I look forward to our June issue, commemorating the Class of 2022!

Your Editor-In-Chief,

Peter O'Malley

SOA Calendar
by Peter O'Malley

May 16: HS Theater Stage Combat Showcase, 6:30 p.m., HS Gym
May 17: Reelin' in the Years: Songs of the Seventies, 6:30 p.m., RMMT
May 19: Grub on the

Green, Senior Parade, Yearbooks, last day for Seniors
May 20: Piano Jazz Recital, 6:00 p.m., RMMT
May 20: Music Down in My Soul, 6:00 p.m., SOA Cafeteria
May 24: MS Visual Art Show, 6:00 p.m., SOA Cafeteria
May 25: HS Visual Art

Show, 6:00 p.m., Visual Arts Hallway
May 26: Visual Arts Senior Thesis, 5:00 p.m., SOA Cafeteria
June 1: Half Day
June 2: Half Day, last day for students
June 2: SOA Graduation, 7:00 p.m.
June 3: E-Learning Day

Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of
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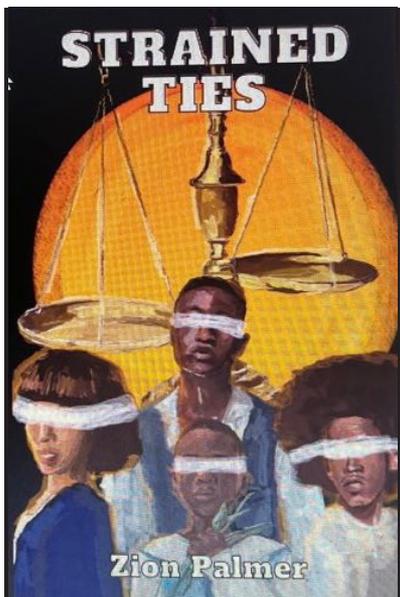
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In This Issue

Applause Meets with Creative Writing Seniors
by the *Applause* staff

Where Were They Then?
by Giovanni Cusatis

Reelin' in the Years: A Celebration of the Seventies
by Norah Bernstein and Ryan Hinske



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SOA Athletes Wrapping Up Spring Seasons

As the school year is wrapping up, so are spring sports. Giovanni Cusatis caught up with Gabbie Chinnis and Luke Shackelford to see how their spring seasons went.

Gabbie Chinnis is a Freshman Strings Major who plays Varsity softball for West Ashley. She started with tee-ball when she was four, and when she moved to South Carolina from Florida at six, she started playing fast-pitch softball. Gabbie's main position is shortstop, but she also fills the utility role, being able to play all positions on the diamond, excluding pitcher and catcher. She has played for many travel teams, including the 14U Lady Rocks and the 16U-18U Warhawks, but this is her first year on a high school team. Her goals for this season were to "have tons of fun and win as many games with the least amount of errors possible." She looks forward to next season, and over the summer she plans to try out for USSSA's 16U national team.



Gabbie Chinnis

Luke Shackelford is a Junior Strings major who runs track for West Ashley. In fourth and fifth grade, he ran for Harbor View Elementary, but stopped to focus on music. In his sophomore year, he began running for West Ashley. His goal going into the season was to break a five minute mile. He achieved that by having some of the best times on his team, running a 4:56 mile as well as a 2:02 800m. Although some Saturday meets can last all day, "being able to talk to other runners and being with your team definitely make up for that." On Thursday, May 5th, he competed in the region meet where he tied his 800m personal best. Luke is competing next at the lower state meet. Wish him luck!



Luke Shackelford

SOA Teachers Who Coach: Mr. Brett Johnsen

by Ryan Hinske

Ryan Hinske: What sport(s) do you coach and where?

Brett Johnsen: I have coached soccer, wrestling, softball, and basketball, all at Academic Magnet.

RH: How long have you been coaching your current team? How long have you been coaching overall, and what other teams have you been involved with over your career?

BJ: I am currently coaching softball and basketball at Academic Magnet. This was my tenth year coaching the Varsity Boys basketball team and my fifth year coaching Varsity softball. I was the head JV girls/assistant Varsity soccer coach for six years and coached wrestling for two. I have coached rec soccer and softball, as well as multiple travel softball teams and at multiple Nike basketball camps over the last ten years around the lowcountry.

RH: What have been some of your achievements as a coach?

BJ: For the girls soccer team, we won state four times, was state runner-

up one year, and lower-state runner-up one year. For boys basketball, we were region runner-up twice. With wrestling, I was able to coach a two time state champion.

RH: What can you tell us about your athletic career before coaching?

BJ: In high school in Illinois, I was a three sport athlete: football, baseball, and wrestling. I played basketball on the side on rec teams. Wrestling was my main sport, and I wrestled on the Junior National Illinois team. A lot of fun!

RH: Tell us about your season this school year.

BJ: For boys basketball, we made the playoffs, but didn't do too well in the first round. Boys basketball is very competitive and requires a lot of practice to stay competitive. Softball is currently ongoing.

RH: What is your favorite part about coaching?

BJ: I love being able to see my players' improvement from the start of a season until completion.

The skill improvement and the improvement on the mental side of athletics in my athletes is one of the main reasons I coach.

RH: What is the biggest challenge of coaching student athletes?

BJ: Keeping student athletes motivated through tough times and keeping focus on what needs to be done to stay competitive.

RH: What's your best piece of advice you give to your athletes that could apply to the everyday outside of sports?

BJ: Have fun and make sure you are enjoying what you are doing! That is the easiest way to continue to put in the work needed to compete at a high level. If you are not enjoying it, the work becomes frustrating and then games become frustrating. Enjoy the path you're on!



Mr. Johnson coaches the AMHS basketball team.

This Month in Jewish and Asian American History

by Madelynn Burt

Jewish American Heritage Month

2022 Theme: "Turning Memory to Strength."

May 3, 1791

Polish Jews were emancipated under the new Polish constitution, ensuring more freedom and political equality on its territory and introducing the constitutional monarchy system.

May 5, 1945

Allies liberated Mauthausen Concentration Camp containing around 40,000 prisoners and hundreds of bodies of prisoners who had died in the days before liberation.

May 6, 1856

Sigmund Freud, the Jewish-Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, was born in Příbor, Czechia.

The United Nations admitted Israel as its 59th Member State.

May 29, 1938

Modeled after Germany's Nuremberg Laws, Hungary adopted laws restricting Jewish citizens' rights and excluding Jews from many professions.

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month 2022 Theme: "Advancing Leaders Through Collaboration."

May 6, 1882

Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act banning Chinese workers from entering the country and from gaining American citizenship.

May 7, 1843

The first Japanese people immigrated to the United States. A fourteen-year-old named Manjiro became the first official U.S. Japanese immigrant after being rescued from a shipwreck.

May 8, 1929

Miyoshi Umeki, the Japanese-American singer and actress best known for her Oscar-winning role as Katsumi in the film *Sayonara* (1957), was born in Otaru, Hokkaido.

May 10, 1869

The transcontinental railroad was completed with significant contributions from Chinese workers.

May 20, 2021

President Biden signed into law the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which addressed "hate crimes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular emphasis on the increase in violence against Asian Americans."

Paint the Town Red and Gold!

By Judith Hamrick

What's going on around town this month?

The Lumineers: BRIGHTSIDE World Tour

May 21st (7:30pm)

Credit One Stadium

Dance with everybody's favorite folk-rock band as they make a stop on Daniel Island, opened by Caamp!

Charleston Food Truck Festival

May 21st-22nd

Tanger Outlets

Annual event held in North Charleston filled with lots of food, music, and other festivities!

Piccolo Spoleto Festival

May 27th - June 12th

Locations across Charleston

The classic Charleston tradition returns, celebrating the arts all across town! The perfect time to enjoy many theatre and dance performances, visual art exhibitions, and more in true SOA fashion!

Charleston RiverDogs: Run Charlie Run 5K

May 28th

Joseph P. Riley Jr. Park

Annual 5K race from the front of the park to home plate to benefit MUSC Children's Health!

Shag Night on the Dock

Tuesday evenings in May (6pm - 8pm)

Freshfields Village

Looking to dust off your dancing shoes or learn to step like a local? Spend a Tuesday night this month on the Lakeside Dock and groove to the beach tunes!

Sunday Brunch Farmers Market

Every Sunday (11am - 3pm)

The Pour House

100% local market featuring dozens of farmers and artisans, as well as live music and delicious food!

Vinyl Saturday

First Saturday of every month

Monster Music and Movies

20% off of all vinyl, new and used.

May Creative Writing History: The Printing Press

by Madelynne Burt

Our Creative Writers are finishing up the year's last stories, and Seniors in particular are getting hyped to receive copies of their books.

While the spring warmth thaws us out, jokes of carpal tunnel may be passed around the members of this major, but it could have been a lot worse. We could all still be writing exclusively with pencils, but one aspect that allowed writing to be a viable



An example of a Japanese woodblock printing piece

career option was the printing press. As you read this, you are probably holding a copy of *Applause* or scrolling through it online. All the letters in their neat little rows, well formatted and paired with color images. A lot went into creating machines that could mass produce written works so easily, and it all started in Asia.

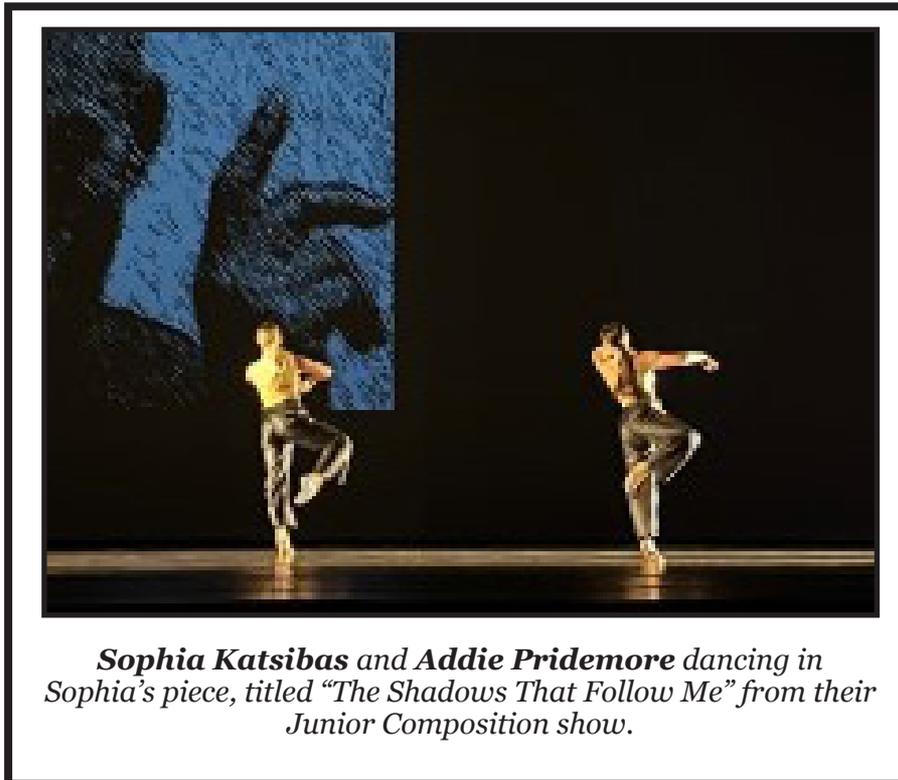
The earliest version of the printing press appeared in the 700s AD during the Tang Dynasty. Really, the first printed work was a Buddhist Sutra, or scripture ordered into creation by the Japanese Empress Shotoku, the first to mass produce a piece of literature. The method they used is a lot like what some of our Visual Artists do. They took pieces of pliable material and carved the texts into it. They would then press the ink into the carving and press a piece of paper (yes, they invented that too!) into the ink with a wooden block to get a clean print. As you can see, this method has stood the test of time as us artists still use it today, but this isn't about Visual Artists!

When Europe heard the news of this nifty little gadget, they just had to try it out. A German goldsmith named Johannes Gutenberg created his own version of the printing press, similar to a wine press. The newfound spread of ideas and education doubled the literacy in

Europe within the century and ushered Europe out of the middle ages. Religious texts, histories, news, fiction novels, and scientific data were able to be recorded.

Though Gutenberg and the original printing press creators from Asia didn't get to gloat in the rewards of their creation, the world quickly learned to appreciate how powerful it was to be able to spread consistent ideas far and wide; an early creative writer named Louis-Sébastien Mercier (who happened to be one of the first to write science fiction) wrote, "[Printing] is the most beautiful gift from heaven. It soon will change the countenance of the universe... Printing was only born a short while ago, and already everything is heading toward perfection... Tremble, therefore, tyrants of the world! Tremble before the virtuous writer!" As a friend of a few Creative Writers, I can assure you we should heed this man's warning! They are up to big things and are the ones responsible for recording history, the human experience, and the most marvelous of stories. So, if you are friends with one of them, give 'em a pat on the back!

Reelin' in the Years: A Celebration of the Seventies
Tuesday, May 17th, 6:30p.m.
Rose Maree Myers Theatre



Sophia Katsibas and Addie Pridemore dancing in Sophia's piece, titled "The Shadows That Follow Me" from their Junior Composition show.

Student Artwork



by Amelia Counts, 8th Grade



by Victoria Hickerson, 9th Grade



by Saya Briceno, 6th Grade



by Saige Patterson, 9th Grade



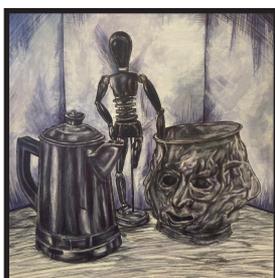
by Philia Walker, 12th Grade



by Eliza Bradham, 8th Grade



by Ella Thompson, 6th Grade



by Tui Tin, 9th Grade



by Peyton Adams-Smies, 8th Grade



by Michelle Barrios-Aguilar, 8th Grade



by Cameron Hazel, 8th Grade

SOA Slang Dictionary

by Norah Bernstein Madelynne Burt

Clap back- to make a comeback to a comment targeted at someone.
“After he insulted her fit, she **clapped back** with a retort about his shoes.”

lol- meaning to “laugh out loud.” Different, more awkward when spoken.
“**l. o. l.**”

Hits different- when something is just so satisfying that it stands out amongst all others.
“That movie just **hits different.**”

Receipts- proof or evidence of something happening, often in the form of a screenshot.
“I don’t believe you. Let me see some **receipts.**”

Salty- a way of saying that someone has an attitude.
“Why is she so **salty** right now? All I did was ask her a question.”

Say less- to tell someone that you are convinced of a subject.
“You want Chick-Fil-A too? **Say less.**”

Senioritis- the deathly disease all Seniors get around Winter Break as they near their final months of high school.
“My **senioritis** is sooo bad, why would I write my *Applause* articles?”

Sliving- coined by Paris Hilton. A mashup of “slaying” and “living.”
“This vacation is so slay. We are really **sliving.**”

So yas and slay- often used to compliment someone when they just look good.
“Her Instagram post was so **yas and slay.**”

Sass Attack: The Infamous Powderpuff Game

by Madelynne Burt

“*Sass Attack*” was started in 2007 by Applause writer David Sass and has been an Applause column for fourteen years. Our senior Creative Writer, Madelynne Burt, has decided to continue the tradition.

By the time you’re reading this, the powderpuff game will be far unimportant, but the drama is always relevant.

The annual powderpuff game, a football game shared between Junior and Senior girls at the beginning of April, kicked off the Senior festivities, including spirit week, Senior theses, prom, and graduation. The game is a highly anticipated event for all who participate: players, cheerleaders, coaches, fans, and even teachers.

Although powderpuff was a hype event, including all of the practices, prep, and especially the game, it was quite chaotic, to be blunt.

The day started as a success: the entire crowd had spirit, whether they were rooting for the Seniors or Juniors, the players were enthusiastic, and the coaches even more so, but it quickly turned for the worse.

By the fifteen minute mark, we, the Seniors, were all still waiting for a touchdown and couldn’t believe the aggression the Juniors had. The flag football shifted to tackling, bruising, and pulling. Hair, shirts, and even arms



and legs; the combative Juniors took it upon themselves to make the game a less than light-hearted one. The refs barely called any of the prohibited aggressive behavior, so the Juniors’ attitude went unchecked.

The cheerleaders’ performances were top-tier, especially the Senior’s, who, despite many technical difficulties, persevered; the Junior cheerleaders, however, attempted to restart a total of three times unsuccessfully, due to a mishap with the audio. How does an arts school, full of vocal and musical performances, fail to play a song on a speaker correctly? Embarrassing.

Our commentators, Tripp Carrington and Ryan Hinkse, did a fantastic job, even if the players could hardly hear them over the crowd.

Seniors walked off the field, battled and bruised, but not defeated. The game was abruptly ended by administrators making us aware that the school day was almost over. With a score of 0-0, all players were disappointed. After hours of practice in the rain and the heat, we didn’t even get a dub. At least we had fun while it lasted.

From the Reelin’ in the Years rehearsal on May 10th, 2022

See the show on Tuesday, May 17th!
Photos by Norah Berntsein and Ryan Hinske



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In Conversation with SOA Creative Writing Thesis Authors

Applause staff writers interview Creative Writing majors about their Senior Thesis works.

Aiden Wood

by Giovanni Cusatis

Giovanni Cusatis: What is the title of your book and what is it about?

Aiden Wood: It is called *End of Dependence*. It's a collection of short stories and poems focusing on the theme of family and magical realism.

GC: What was the process of writing a book like? Did you have any struggles in the process?

AW: The writing process was definitely interesting; it was crazy to know I was creating my own book. There were a lot of times where I thought I couldn't finish, when I almost quit, but my friends and family kept me going.

GC: How was writing your book while being virtual different than if you were in person?

AW: Being virtual was difficult. Sometimes I felt disconnected from the whole process. Other times, though, the comfort space of my own home let me peacefully write.

GC: Did the finished product of your book mirror what you planned in the beginning?



AW: I think so. I'm happy and proud, and that's what I was hoping for.

GC: How was the cover created?

AW: Some random dude painted it for me, I think his name was Adam?

Lauren Center

by Jada Fickling

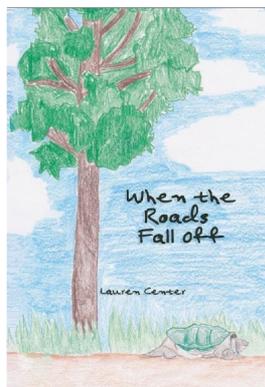
Jada Fickling: How did you settle on your title and front cover for *When The Roads Fall Off*?

Lauren Center: The front cover is based off the first piece in the book, a short story I wrote called "Shelly." It's about two kids who find a snapping turtle on the side of the road and want to make it their pet, but feel like their aunt, whomst they are staying with, won't really approve of that. The story is based off of something that happened to my mom when she was a kid. The front cover is that image of the turtle itself on the road.

My title, *When The Roads Fall Off*, is based on the final piece in the book, an essay that shares the same name. It's based on this sort of niche concept that's a bit of a mouthful to explain (so you should read my book to find out!). It's about snapping back to reality and realizing that all good things must come to an end. For me, it's my adolescence. And while that's a huge bummer, I'm coming to terms with it.

JF: What did you enjoy most about writing your book?

LC: The things I enjoyed most about writing my book were those moments when I got into a flow writing a piece. It was those times I overcame my writer's block and churned out a good draft and/or when I got a lot of edits done and got a piece to where I wanted it to be.



JF: Was there another author whose writing style influenced your own?

LC: Off the top of

my head, I honestly can't think of one. I guess the closest thing I can think of is the way I write dialogue, which I believe should be written how people talk. So there's slang, swearing, and grammatically correct sentence structure isn't a priority. But I like that.

JF: What was your biggest challenge when writing your story, and if given the opportunity, would you do anything differently?

LC: I won't lie, my biggest challenges were time management and actually coming up with material to work with. It was very hard for me to isolate the specific themes and ideas I wanted to write about into images or scenes that would work well narratively. And I think that led to the time management issues where I wasn't able to come up with a lot of material. If I could change anything, it would be giving myself more time early on to just brainstorm ideas so that the stress of feeling like I didn't have enough written would have never happened later in the process.

JF: Do you plan to work in the Creative Writing field after graduating from SOA?

LC: I don't really know. I'm not completely sure what I want to do after college, but I feel like no matter what I do, I'll be able to fit Creative Writing somewhere in there.

Railey Fogle

by Jada Fickling

Jada Fickling: How did you settle on your title *I Built This Home For You*?

Railey Fogle: I settled on my title after thinking about the same one for months. I was close to naming it something else, but *I Built This Home For You* just felt like what it should be.

JF: What did you enjoy most about writing your book?

RF: I enjoyed finishing it of course, but I also had a lot of fun just finding a recurring theme throughout the book. It was really interesting to see how much I write about the same things.

JF: Was there another author whose writing style influenced your own?

RF: One of my favorite poets, Sam Sax, has definitely helped sculpt my writing into what it is today. After I first read some of his work, I think my writing took a big turn.

JF: What was your biggest challenge when writing your book, and if given





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the opportunity, would you do anything differently?

RF: Honestly, coming from a poet, the hardest thing was just pumping out more and more poems. If I could go back and change anything, I probably would have started writing a lot more last year to prepare earlier.

JF: Do you plan to work in the Creative Writing field after graduating from SOA?

RF: I actually am planning on minoring in Creative Writing at DePaul, but it all depends on what things are like when I get there.

G. Gray Perrine

by Ryan Hinske

Ryan Hinske: What is the title of your book, and what topics does it explore?

G. Gray Perrine: My book is titled *rotten and sprawling*, a reference to the roots that grow beneath (and ruin) many roads in Charleston. It's about a few things-- bear with me, I'm gonna sound lame-- eco-feminism, mental health, and the small griefs we collect throughout our lives.

RH: What does your book's cover art mean to you?

GP: Firstly, I love the color pink. Second, I loved how gentle the image was-- two hands holding a flower. The flowers remind me of "instructions on making the body hospitable," which is definitely one of the poems closest to my heart. My title is gloomy, but the cover is delicate. How could these blooms have grown if something hadn't rotted to feed them? My collection reflects a lot on pain, but I didn't want that to fully define the work. There are still flowers, despite the decay.

RH: Was there any poem or essay you wrote that became the basis for the rest of the book?

GP: I wouldn't say it became my basis, but "instructions on making the body hospitable" certainly had an effect on everything I wrote after it. It's long, so it hits on every theme I wanted, even ones that I didn't realize I felt. It sort of worked as an outline. If other poems didn't have many thematic similarities, I would cut it from the collection or edit.

RH: Who was your mentor and how did they shape your work?

GP: My mentor was Lisa Hase-Jackson, a fellow poet and author of *Flint & Fire*. Her insight was invaluable. She helped me move through writing blocks-- she's one of those writers



whose work inspires you. She made me more confident in my writing, which is a big reason there's so much variation in form and genre.

RH: What was your greatest challenge during the writing process?

GP: Biggest challenge was just the pacing. We had ten pages due every two weeks; by the end, I felt like I'd never be able to write anything again. Despite the exhaustion, though, it was still harder to finally let go and hit publish. It's my baby! She's too young to go to the Amazon seller page...

RH: What have you learned most from this experience?

GP: I've learned to trust myself more. If you don't agree with someone's critique of your work, you don't have to tailor it to their taste. It's *your* art.

RH: For rising Creative Writing seniors, what advice would you give about writing their books?

GP: Write down every single idea you have. Every. Single. One. You will need them.

Zion Palmer

by Sullivan Eppes

Sullivan Eppes: What inspired you to write a series of short stories, rather than a full novel?

Zion Palmer: Well, I wrote an anthology (a collection of short stories and poems). I found that when writing a collection, I was able to create more scenes, more instances where characters or my words were able to convey this distant feeling of differences and injustices within African American culture.

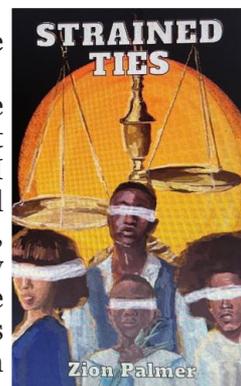
SE: Is there a theme connecting all of the stories?

ZP: The central theme that connects most of the poems and stories in this collection are the stereotypes that follow us, the lifestyle that we endured, and how we are represented within society.

SE: How did you settle on a title?

ZP: Coming up with a title was one of the more difficult parts of the process. Once I made my way to my final edits within the process, I was able to really pay attention to what drove the characters, and that was the bond or a connection that drove this narrative that helped establish individuality within my pieces.

SE: How did you decide on a concept for



your cover?

ZP: I came together with my artist and we started coming up with ideas. I was looking for something different, something very distinct from depictions I've seen before. I wanted it to stay in the line with my central themes and ideas, then we came up with the idea of African Americans themselves being blinded by the identity that is forced upon them, and the pressure of being an African American in certain environments.

SE: What story did you have the most fun writing?

ZP: I had the most fun writing "The Eyes of Man." It has this quick pacing to it and rhythm that's able to get the point across, steadily molding and morphing from the beginning to the end of these images, such as silver bindings and freedoms. How we can't all shape the image of the American Dream.

SE: What was the biggest challenge you faced while writing?

ZP: The biggest challenge was writing about the same topics/themes and trying to lead away from sounding repetitive. So, I tried to make every story different in that sense as well.

SE: Are you happy with your stories?

ZP: I'm happy with most of my stories, some more than others. I think that the earlier pieces have a better emphasis on what I was trying to get across due to their freshness in my mind early on in the writing process.

SE: Do you hope to pursue a career in creative writing?

ZP: No, I think this might be the end stretch for my writing path. I believe what I've learned over the past seven years will be something that will always be part of my writing, even if I'm not expressing my full intent through creativity on the page.

Gus Varallo

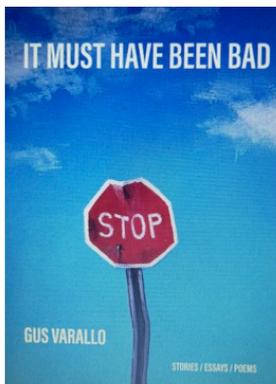
by Madelynne Burt

Madelynne Burt: How would you describe the theme and objective of your Senior Thesis?

Gus Varallo: My thesis talks a lot about growing up and the many difficulties that come from learning how to be a part of society. Youth and socialization are both major themes throughout, as lots of the characters in my book are young people that take heavy influence from the world around them and make decisions based off of it.

MB: When it came time to start writing, how did you organize your time? Did you start with a list of ideas or just start writing what came to your mind?

GV: I did start with a list of ideas at first, but I abandoned it around halfway through the writing process. I found that my pieces tend to be at their best when I write them right after having some inspiration, and I felt like keeping a backlog of writing ideas made a lot of the concepts on there feel stale after a couple of weeks. My time management strategies were not as free-flowing as my ones for idea creation, mostly because I set a personal goal of never writing less than ten pages every two weeks. I often set page quotas for myself when the deadline approached, which helped me finish the book on time.



MB: Because you wrote an entire book in under a year, I'm sure you faced some writer's block. How did you get back on track and/or find inspiration?

GV: A lot of my book deals with events from the past, so when I had periods of writer's block, I often took breaks to think about my childhood. Many times, I'd end up thinking about memories that didn't really have much significance, such as my recollection of throwing stones at a stop sign during fifth grade recess. I'd often adapt these moments into fiction pieces, where I could use my creative freedom to give them more meaning. I did this with my memory of the stop-sign by turning it into a short story about familial issues. It's actually the title piece of my book.

MB: When choosing what genre to write in (prose, nonfiction, or poetry), how did you decide what story needed to be a certain one?

GV: Most of these decisions were based on how much content each of my ideas could hold. If I was writing about a short event, such as a brief moment in my life, I usually wrote a poem out of it. If I was writing about a broader event, I'd write an essay out of it. And if it was broad and fictional, I'd turn it into a story. The medium of writing I chose also varied based on what perspective I'd like to approach a specific issue with. Usually, topics that played a large role in my personal life were addressed through poems and essays, while more impersonal and general ideas were addressed through stories.

MB: When brainstorming your cover and title, how did you decide what would pull together all of your pieces and incorporate all of your themes?

GV: Making my book thematically coherent was something I stressed a lot about during the early phases of writing, but as I wrote more, I realized that I naturally gravitated to the same themes. I write a lot about family and childhood, for example, and many of my pieces were linked together through those similarities. But, I really learned more about the main themes of my book when I let my mom read through its manuscript. She commented that lots of my characters deal with uncertainty, whether it be about their home lives or their futures. I felt that this trait really represented the book best, hence its title, *It Must Have Been Bad*. That phrase represents lots of the speculation that the characters do in my book and how all of their problems, past or future, have not fully been resolved.

MB: What advice would you give future Senior Creative Writers for their thesis?

GV: Firstly, don't fall behind on pages. I guarantee that you will want to revise heavily after the first draft is complete, so don't waste the month of revision time given to you by catching up. I did my best work during the revision period, as I felt like I could spend more time on each individual piece. And after you guys go through nearly seven months of constant writing, you'll love the opportunity to take a breather and look things over. Also, don't worry about writing a few duds. You don't have to publish everything in your one-hundred pages, so if you write something you don't like, feel free to cut it.

MB: Do you plan to continue writing past your time at SOA?

GV: I would like to write more after graduation. I plan on taking plenty of creative writing courses in college, and while I'm not sure if I'll go on to get my MFA, it's definitely an option I'm considering seriously. But, of course, I'll find time to write on my own, and I'm planning on continuing my writing career far into the future.

Kiran Narula

by Judith Hamrick

Judith Hamrick: How did you settle on a title for your book?

Kiran Narula: *This Dollhouse I Call Home* comes from one of my essays with the same title. Writing this essay was a huge turning point in my writing for me, and was probably one of the first

pieces to make me realize writing is not just a hobby but one of the only ways for me to sort out and understand my own feelings. I chose this title to reflect how important this essay was to me and so people will know it's important when they read it.

JH: How did you brainstorm your cover with the artist?

KN: My cover artist is one of my best friends, Issy Good, and I've known and loved her artwork since I've met her. I wanted her to have some creative liberty, so I sent her some pieces and basically let her come up with her own ideas! What she created was beautiful and I think captures my work perfectly.

JH: Are there other works or writers that have influenced your thesis?

KN: I am always inspired by the poets I am reading. This year I've been reading a lot of Cynthia Cruz, Ocean Vuong, Mary Jo Bang, and Carl Phillips. I also read a lot of my mentor's work, Alison Palmer. A lot of my thesis was also heavily influenced by other mythological stories.

JH: How has your mentor influenced your work?

KN: My mentor was amazing throughout this process. She was someone who really gave me her full attention and was great to help me come up with ideas. I really don't know where I'd be in the revision process without her.

JH: What did you enjoy most about this process?

KN: When I was all finished with writing, I put the pieces of my book in their proper order and made a table of contents. It was just so fun to see all my work compiled like that. Definitely a big moment.

JH: What was your biggest challenge



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while writing?

KN: Our deadlines were pretty back-to-back throughout the year. I've never written as non-stop as I did this year, and it can be very draining. There were points where I just didn't think I could write anymore or come up with any new ideas. But you just have to push through those moments and let these ideas come to you. It was worth it in the end!

JH: Do you hope to pursue a career in creative writing?

KN: Yes! I will be attending college as an English writing major. I'd love to be able to teach writing and also continue publishing my own work.

Cassidy Lewis

by Grace Baker

Grace Baker: In your collection of poems in your book *People Watching*, what themes and messages do you wish to convey?

Cassidy Lewis: A lot of my poetry focused on the trying ups and downs of emerging womanhood, the female body, and just growing up in general. I think my work's impactful in the way that a lot of people can relate to it and a lot's left for interpretation.

GB: Has anyone in your life inspired your book and how?

CL: Oh for sure; I'm constantly inspired by everyone in my life, hence the title! I just feel like my work is so much more meaningful when I'm drawing from people who matter to me. This definitely manifested in the epistolary poems in my thesis addressed to friends and family.

GB: In what ways did your original ideas at the beginning of the year change throughout the writing process?

CL: I initially had specific themes I wanted to focus on but realized about halfway through the year my work was more quality when I stopped trying to write it with certain images, themes, etc. in mind.

GB: What were some of the challenges you faced in their development?

CL: I'm a big procrastinator, especially with things that require lots of time and creativity, so I definitely had to buckle down towards the end of the writing process to ensure I'd be proud to share all my work at the end of the journey. I had to be resilient to get it done, but the end result made it so worth it.

GB: How does your cover art reflect the content of your poems?

CL: I wanted the art and title to be synonymous, so having different faces on the cover was a must! A lot of my poems are addressed to or about the different individuals who've helped shape me, so it only felt right for the title to reflect that.

GB: Are you planning on pursuing a career in creative writing?

CL: I don't think being a writer full-time would ever happen, but I write all the time and I don't think I could ever stop. Regardless, whatever I end up doing, writing will be something I'll always keep in my back pocket.

Ned Walpole

by Grace Baker

Grace Baker: Your book *Stories of a Saltwater Soul* captures

**themes of place, family, friendship, and childhood. What inspired you to write your collection of short stories, essays, and poems on this personal topic?**

Ned Walpole: Well, I would say I've always felt that I've been shaped by where I live and what it means to me. It means a lot. The reason I'm the way that I am is because of it. I wanted to center most of it so people can see how it shaped me and what it means to me.

GB: How have other authors or your peers inspired your work?

NW: Ernest Hemingway has always been one of my favorite authors. I wouldn't say I'm a minimalist like him but definitely his nature and the things he writes about. He writes about being outdoors, hunting, fishing, and things he likes to do. I feel we have similar details in our works and how we write about nature. I think it's because I was exposed to him at a young age and I just always liked reading his work.

GB: Was there anything about the collaborative environment in your major that helped your writing process?

NW: The workshops and the ideas and suggestions made by everyone else about pieces helped. The workshops, they're not fun, but they definitely help. You read a piece and everyone talks about its strengths and weaknesses and offers any suggestions.

GB: How did your original ideas at the beginning of the year evolve into your final thesis?

NW: I wouldn't say they're very different since I have the same themes from the beginning. There are a few original things I didn't put in. One of the themes I had was masculinity, I didn't do a piece on that. Another one was not feeling like I belong with certain people in different places, and I didn't write about that. I went in knowing I wanted to write fiction and nonfiction about where I live, how I grew up, how it shaped me, and stories that I've heard. I actually didn't think I'd have any poems in here, but I have like five. Topic-wise though, nothing much changed.

GB: What challenges did you face in their development?

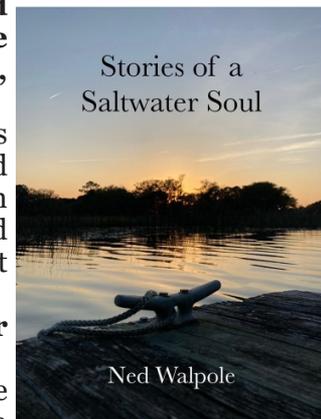
NW: I actually thought at the beginning of the year it would be easy. That didn't happen. It actually took a lot of thinking and a lot of failure and success, a lot of give and take. I had to go back and revise a lot. I was trying to jump into pieces and just go with it, but I don't write like that. There's a lot of tedious work and that was probably my biggest challenge, getting everything together. I had a bunch of ideas, but I just couldn't flesh them out.

GB: How does the cover art of your book connect to your subject matter?

NW: It's a picture of a cleat with the sunset in the background and the water. I picked a cleat with a rope because it, and the title as well, ties everything together. And it's from one of my favorite places to go to clear my mind. It was taken on my dock.

GB: What advice would you offer to rising Seniors writing their books next year?

NW: Stay on top of things, definitely that. It's really easy to fall behind so I'd just keep writing. Also, don't get down with it, because I did and a week would go by, and I just wouldn't do anything. There would be times I'd be in class and on my phone for an hour and a half when I could've written a whole essay. So keep on it and stay in front.



Madelynne Burt

by Peter O'Malley

Peter O'Malley: *Portraits in Headlights* follows the relationships and lives of several separate characters. Do any of these characters' experiences draw parallels with your life or people you have encountered?

Madelynne Burt: More often than not, my characters and storylines are drawn from my own experiences or stories I've been told. I rarely write a complete short story entirely based on reality, but I am constantly pulling from my own life. I take note of people's quirks and demeanors because the truth is, real moments always make the best stories. The opening story, "Forest Legend," is based on a tale an old Charleston local told my mother a few years ago, "Grandma's Chevy," took inspiration from a family story, and many others come from my friends, coworkers, and acquaintances.

PO: Who was your mentor for your thesis? In what ways did they help with the process of creating the book?

MB: My mentor was Anthony Varallo, the author of the novel *The Lines* and four short story collections, a teacher in the College of Charleston Creative Writing Program, and fiction editor of *Crazyhorse*, the school's literary magazine. Mr. Varallo helped me through the process of brainstorming, producing, and revising my thesis. His new view on my work brought a fresh perspective to the stories, and his critiques immensely helped me grow as a writer. I would not have been able to refine my pieces to the extent that I did without his guidance.

PO: Did the final product match your original goal? If you had more time, what would you have done differently?

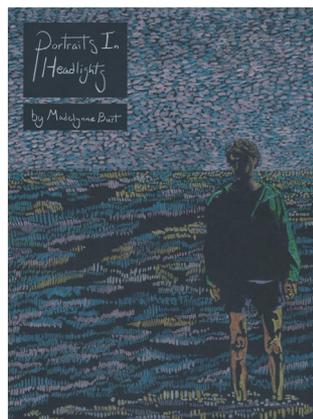
MB: At first, I wanted to compile a collection of stories connected by a theme of childhood idols and how people's lives and futures can be influenced by the people they are surrounded by. My book ended up being a collection of short stories that explore the world through the lens of childhood and other influences. I decided to include characters from all walks and stages of life because I was intrigued by the differences in phases and aspects of growth.

PO: What advice would you give future Senior Creative Writers for their thesis?

MB: My main piece of advice would be to push off senioritis until as late as possible. You don't want to reach the time you should be revising and only have 50% of your pages complete. It's best to cram all of the hard work into the beginning of the year so that when it comes time to edit, you can use that in-class time to its fullest extent. You might pull a few less all-nighters than me if you can stay on schedule.

PO: Do you plan to continue writing next year?

MB: I earned a creative writing scholarship at Transylvania University, so I plan to pick up a writing-related minor and be a part of the school's newspaper, *The Rambler*. I have so many pieces that I loved and spent a lot of time on this year that didn't make the final cut for my book, so I may continue working on my stories and possibly even publish a second collection in the future. I hope to continue writing, regardless of where my career takes me.



Where Were They Then?

Giovanni Cusatis spoke with creative writing teacher Ms. Beth Webb Hart about her time before SOA.

Giovanni Cusatis: Where did you grow up? What are some of your favorite childhood memories?

Beth Hart: I grew up at North Litchfield Beach, an obscure nook (north of Charleston) on the South Carolina coast. Very few people lived at the beach year-round, and I had just a couple of friends to pass the time with. My parents ran a restaurant in Murrell's Inlet where they worked most nights, and so my two younger sisters and I had to create a way to entertain ourselves. In order to quell the boredom, we made up story after story with long, outlandish plots, and I became aware (at age eight or so) that once a character is up and walking in your mind, they really take on a life of their own. As Faulkner once said, "All I have to do is catch up with them and write down what they say and do." After my sisters and I would finish a story, we'd act it out on the screened porch for our babysitters as the sea oats tossed and the waves crashed behind us. I suppose if it weren't for a whole lot of free time, I never would have started writing.

We moved to Greenville, South Carolina when I was twelve years old. I had an English teacher who encouraged me to apply to the local fine arts magnet high school, the Fine Arts Center, and once I was accepted, I chose to focus on poetry. My teacher, poet Jan Bailey, cracked open the world for me by exposing me to quality poetry and fiction. She soon pointed out that all of my poems were narrative and forced me to try my hand at a short story. My first story was about three crazed nuns in a parochial school who locked their students away for cracking the campus birdbath until someone confessed to the crime.

GC: What was life like after high school? Where did you go to college?

BH: I went to the undergraduate English and Creative Writing program at Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia because I yearned to study with the very professors who had taught some of my favorite authors such as Lee Smith, Jill McCorkle, and Annie Dillard. At Hollins, I read and wrote voraciously and submitted my stories to be workshopped on a regular basis. It was an immeasurably beneficial experience because it helped me to identify my voice.

GC: Where did you work before SOA?

BH: After I graduated from college, I moved to Washington, DC to work for Share Our Strength, a nonprofit hunger relief organization, where I spent three years working with writers, bookstores, and college/graduate creative writing programs to coordinate Writers Harvest, a literary benefit that took place in over 100 locations nationwide to raise money for community food banks and soup kitchens. During this time, I had the opportunity to work with some of the country's most gifted authors including Toni Morrison, Don DeLillo, Charles Baxter, Richard Russo, Gloria Naylor, Maya Angelou, and Bret Lott. After encouragement from some of these authors and a blessing from RHW Dillard, my Creative



Baby Ms. Hart with her parents.

Writing professor from Hollins, I decided to attend the Masters of Fine Arts Creative Writing program at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York. I started my first novel, *Grace at Low Tide*, during this time. Portions of the novel served as my graduate school thesis.

GC: How did you get into teaching?

BH: I was teaching Creative Writing to undergraduate students at Sarah Lawrence (and greatly enjoying it), when I fell madly in love with a music professor and composer at the College of Charleston (who I was set up on a blind date with during a graduate school winter break). Once I completed my MFA, we decided to marry, and I started to look for a job in Charleston. I submitted an application to SOA in 1998, and the Creative Writing department founder, Ms. Rene Bufo Miles, called me to set up an interview (Ms. Miles was the only teacher in the program at the time, as the school was just in its second year).



Ms. Hart with her husband and two kids.

I taught a class about point of view in fiction to a group of seventh grade Creative Writing majors as part of the interview, and I really hit it off with the students, Ms. Miles, and Ms. Rose Maree Myers, the principal. I guess the rest is history!

GC: What are some of your favorite literary works?

BH: I recently read the most exquisite nature memoir, *The Home Place*, by Clemson ecology professor and ornithologist, J. Drew Lanham, so I want to throw that title out as an exceptional new read. As a whole, I especially appreciate authors who force me to look at the world differently, who challenge my perspective and help me to grow. I'm particularly drawn to books that point to or leave room for hope in the midst of suffering. For that reason, here are some of my long-standing favorite literature works:

- *The Fire Next Time* and *Notes of a Native Son* by James Baldwin
- *The Bluest Eye* and *Beloved* by Toni Morrison
- *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* by Annie Dillard
- *Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson
- *A Good Man is Hard to Find and Other Stories* by Flannery O'Connor

GC: How are you involved with writing outside of school?

BH: I've published six novels, but I haven't written very much lately as I've had a full plate teaching, editing college essays, raising kids, and helping aging parents and in-laws. I have an idea for a new novel that I hope to start working on this summer.

GC: Do you have any advice for students?

BH: Every author, every artist has blind spots. We need to share our works-in-progress with a group of trusted peers and be willing to receive their critiques. I've been in a creative writing workshop setting since high school as either a student or a teacher, and my strongest work is always the one that is picked apart by a round table of fellow authors who are willing to point out where the piece can be improved. This always involves putting my ego aside and opening my mind. My advice to SOA students: be willing to receive and fruitfully utilize constructive criticism.

May Fashion: Bitmoji Breakdown

by Kenya Hines

You all know what a Bitmoji is. If not, they're your personal little avatar that may look exactly like you. I say "may" because there's

some sixteen year old boy reading this who has the skintone set to the color purple with a septum piercing, sunglasses, and a receding hairline. Unlike others, I tend to keep up with mine. I change my mini-me whenever I have a new hair-do, switch up my style, or have a mental breakdown. Growing up playing dress up games (that I may or may not still play) gave me a look into all the different ways I can mix and match clothes. This being said, for the May issue of *Applause*, I've decided to dress as my Bitmoji for three days!

On day one, I decided to dress in the outfit I normally have it set on. I wore a white button down with bootcut jeans, paired with a red tie and matching red, sparkly, platform sneakers. When I got chilly throughout the day, I added a black windbreaker on top. While I was planning to achieve an outfit that made me look like I was going to my first My Chemical Romance concert, my friends said I looked like Light Yagami. Either way, it came out the way I wanted it to, despite the fact it was a bit wrinkly. Mom, if you're reading this, I should've listened to you and ironed my shirt instead of throwing it in the dryer for ten minutes. Please don't rub this in my face.

For day two, I sported a comfy retro look. I wore my rainbow FUBU pants and matching velvet jacket. I had a neon yellow shirt underneath and my white platform sneakers that are holding on by a thread. Matching this was much harder since Bitmoji only had the shoes and top, so I had to make do with what I had. Wearing this, I was ready to join the *Soul Train* line and go to sleep right after. Thank you Forever 21 clearance section.

For my last outfit, I wanted to include my silver button down, but my shirt looked so good that I would probably embarrass the Bitmoji CEO. Because of this, I decided to sport one of my favorite outfits. I wore my trusty white button down, a matching white skirt, my black vest, and black platform boots. For an extra "pop," I put on my black, white, and pink *Jujutsu Kaisen* socks. This outfit was surprisingly very easy to match on Bitmoji (minus the socks). I got an absurd amount of compliments from the Hot Topic employees and a few glares in American Eagle. That's how I know I look good.

Overall, I'd say these three days were a success. I now have the urge to make my outfits and Bitmoji match everyday. I'm thankful for the Bitmoji feature that allows me to change the colors of certain clothing pieces, but one thing I'd add is more accessories! They do pretty good with adding earrings and hats, but I want my avatar to wear things like fingerless gloves, tights, and leg warmers. No, I'm not sponsoring Bitmoji (although I wouldn't be opposed to... my Cash App is open!), but I think everyone should give this a try.

Seniors Share College Plans

by Lauren Holladay

Applause staff member Lauren Holladay talked with two seniors, Tripp Carrington and Anais Robledo Murillo, about their plans after graduating from SOA.

We have finally reached the last stretch of the school year, and



students at SOA are itching to be done with final exams. It's only a matter of time before Summer Break, and while we are all excited to be exempt from the stress and assignments for a while, School of the Arts students and faculty are sad to be saying goodbye to the class of 2022. After getting their diplomas at the end of the year, SOA graduates will create their futures in colleges and careers all around the globe. Two of these aspiring graduates, Tripp Carrington and Anais Robledo Murillo, look forward to their time after SOA, and are excited to begin the next phases in their lives.



Tripp Carrington

Tripp Carrington, a Vocal major since ninth grade, will be attending University of Southern California in Los Angeles next year. After receiving finalist status from a program called QuestBridge, Tripp was able to apply to multiple universities without paying for application fees. He decided on USC after being accepted and earning a scholarship because of the numerous opportunities available for artists.

Attending USC as an English major, Tripp recognizes the vast amount of paths he could take with his education: "Lots of lawyers majored in English, and many professors did, too!" Interested in both fields, he is excited to pursue what has been his favorite subject throughout high school while having the chance to explore multiple career paths. However, while he is interested in occupations in both teaching and law, Tripp is also focused on continuing performing in his life.

Having been at SOA since freshman year, Tripp expresses love and gratitude for his years as a Vocal major. He feels that SOA has prepared him socially, professionally, and creatively for his future, and he acknowledges the multitudes of people who have helped him grow during his time at School of the Arts: "I have met so many amazing people here that have taught me life perspectives that differ from my own, and I feel much more open-minded and knowledgeable having known them." While Tripp is sad to be saying goodbye to SOA, he is excited to begin the next chapter of his life in Los Angeles.

Another 2022 graduate, Anais Robledo Murillo, looks forward to her life after high school. A Strings major who has attended SOA for four years, Anais applied to numerous schools, including University of South Carolina, University of Chicago, and Columbia University. She focused her applications on schools that were located in cities that interested her, along with schools that had diverse student populations: "More than anything, it was really important for me to ensure I would be in a safe and fun environment with a student body I could learn from." After applying, Anais has decided to attend Columbia University in New York, New York.



Anais Robledo Murillo

Before going to college, Anais is excited to learn about herself and her aspirations for the future during a gap year. Anais applied to Columbia as a psychology major, but she is not set on a career field yet. With this, she hopes that her time in her gap year will make her future plans more clear. While thinking about her goals for her career, Anais will also be backpacking through South America, practicing aerial rope, and living in Columbia during her time away from school.

During college in New York, Anais aims to continue playing cello

in the Columbia University Orchestra, as well as finding somewhere she can continue practicing the circus arts in New York. With these goals, Anais recognizes the importance that SOA helped her with time management, along with solidifying the importance of arts in her life. Anais is excited to graduate, and she emphasizes her enthusiasm for living without a set schedule while doing things she loves, as well as seeing how life is without spending so much time at school.

With graduation quickly approaching, all of SOA's seniors are buzzing with excitement to be finally completing their high school careers. After finishing exams, turning in last minute assignments, and getting their diplomas, the seniors will leave campus to begin the next chapter of their lives. Soon, SOA will welcome a new group of seniors, and the class of 2022 will start their futures with new dreams, hopes, and goals for the time ahead.

Creative Writer Perspective: Gus Varallo

by Emma Brubaker

Emma Brubaker: What did you do in preparation for your SOA audition?

Gus Varallo: When I got to campus, we were directed to the Creative Writing hallway, which was where all of the other auditionees were being held. We waited there for a while before being brought into Ms. Hart's classroom. We were told to write a short story in one hour without any prompt, which I really liked at the time. It was a lot different from the prompt-heavy writing classes I took in elementary school. Periodically, Ms. Hart would pull us out of the room and redirect us to Mr. Hammes' desk, where we'd be interviewed by either Hammes or Mr. Scapellato. This whole thing sounds very nerve-racking, but it wasn't, as both parts of the audition were very structured and organized. All the directions in the writing portion were very clear, and the interview questions I was asked were easy to understand. The whole experience did a great job of showcasing the type of work I'd be doing in Creative Writing and the environment I'd be doing it in.

EB: How did you celebrate once you were accepted into SOA?

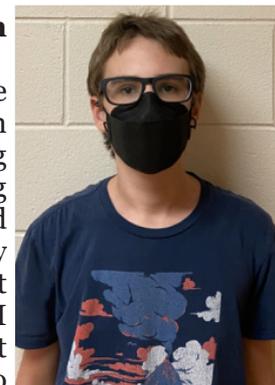
GV: I think I got my decision about a month after the audition. I can't remember everything we did to celebrate (I'm sure we had a celebratory dinner, though), but my parents bought me a brand new Nintendo 3DS as a reward for getting in.

EB: How long have you been at SOA?

GV: I've been here since my first semester of sixth grade, which was in 2015.

EB: How has COVID-19 affected the Creative Writing department?

GV: Luckily, COVID didn't disrupt Creative Writing as much as it did for the other majors. We could still hold virtual workshops over Zoom, and writing at home wasn't all that bad. However, some things did change when the pandemic hit. Firstly, our field trips to Fripp Island and Lake Logan were canceled, which bummed us all out a lot. But I'd say the most damaging effect of COVID was how hard it became to socialize with my classmates. When we could all gather in one room, we often talked amongst ourselves about the pieces we were writing, plans for the future, and our day-to-day lives. It not only helped us bond, but it also was a great source of inspiration and feedback for our projects. If someone was having a problem with approaching a certain topic, we could bounce ideas



off of one another until something stuck. However, the awkwardness of Zoom and the need to get work done in the shortened schedule greatly hurt this aspect of class, and it wasn't until I went back in-person that I realized how much I missed it.

EB: How would you describe the difference between middle and high school Creative Writing?

GV: First off, you get to go to the aforementioned Fripp Island and Lake Logan trips, which are both lots of fun. Also, the content being taught in each level of Creative Writing is very different between grades, as middle school is more focused around writing fundamentals (using concrete images, creating interesting characters, avoiding melodrama, etc.), whereas high school centers on teaching more advanced techniques to improve one's "craft" (forming narrative and authorial voice, "finding windows" into writing about certain topics, using narrative uncertainty, etc.). Instruction also tends to focus on forming your own writing style instead of following broad tips about how to write well, and finding out how your voice is unique in the larger writing landscape is a major point of emphasis.

EB: Do you plan to continue with your major after high school?

GV: I plan on honing my craft after high school, and I've decided to become an English major because of it. I'll be attending USC Honors this fall, and I'd like to take many creative writing classes there alongside my analysis-based ones. Developing my skills in the writing room has shown me the important role kinship has played in my career, so I'd like to be a part of the writer community at USC as well. I also would like to write another book for my bachelor's essay, and, as always, write until I can't anymore.

What to Expect in The Upcoming Visual Arts Showcases

by Aryana Chinn

In the midst of the spotty exam schedule impacting highschool students, the Visual Arts students are selecting their favorite pieces to prepare for a display. While the entirety of the department is participating in the showcase, I had the honor of getting a behind the scenes look at some of the highschool student's pieces that will be featured.

Starting with the Freshmen, I was introduced to Victoria Hickerson, who told me about an illustration of some pumpkins she did earlier in the year as a still life project. The piece demonstrates amazing attention to detail using colored pencils and markers. Hickerson mentioned it won a Gold Key in the Scholastic Art and Writing Contest.

Taylor Lauren Davis was able to give me an insight into what the tenth graders have been up to with her piece done in oil pastels and pencils. As the Sophomores are currently working through attempts at modernism, Taylor pulled from the concept of commentary on the real world. Taylor remarked, "The message for mine specifically is about how in the 2020's, because of COVID, marital issues and divorce rates have gone up. It's a scene about home life and things like that." Though it's not her usual medium, Taylor certainly made a piece that stands out.

From a Junior's perspective, I got in touch with Rory Gregory to talk about their featured oil piece, "Sexuality and Guilt 2." Gregory explains their inspiration for the piece, saying, "The fact that I don't feel like I have a super specific label that represents me makes me

feel ashamed and not really like I'm a part of the LGBTQ+ community, but I am. It's really weird and confusing, but that's what I wanted to convey with this piece." For being a pretty serious topic, the colors they used are bright and vibrant, but Rory did a good job portraying the frustration through the emotions of the subject's face and position. "I used symbolism of aphrodisiacs to show the sultry and raw emotions associated with sexuality, and I wanted to include a lot of red because it brings an almost carnality to the piece." Gregory's AP series is on this topic, so if you are interested in themes like this, be sure to check their work out in the showcase!



Abby Short

I coordinated with another Junior, Abby Short, about pieces she is excited for you to see in person. Featured is Abby Short's oil painting, "Math Meltdowns." On the subject, Short explained, "[The piece] was inspired by one week of school where I had an AP Chemistry and a Calculus test on the same day right after spring break. I went a little crazy that week and started using my canvas to memorize formulas and equations." She mentioned her pride in the way her fingernails turned out in the painting because she feels that that style of nail is her signature look; it is most definitely Abby!

It is clear that these are just a few of the inspiring pieces that will be shown in the showcases coming up; middle school Visual Arts will hold theirs on the 24th, high school on the 25th, and the Senior Thesis show will finish on the 26th. They look forward to seeing you there, and don't be afraid to ask about their pieces. More often than not, there are some pretty interesting stories the artists have visualized.



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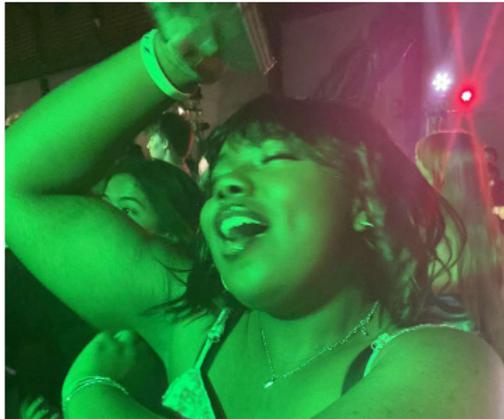
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The SOA Jazz Band and Vocalists put on the spectacular Jump Jive and Wail on Saturday, May 7th, enjoyed by every student who attended. This highly missed dance last occurred in 2019. Applause thanks Mr. Turner and everyone else who made this event possible.





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SOA 2022 Powderpuff

photos by Lauren Holladay and Julia Dubay

What's your favorite banned book?

With recent controversy surrounding banned literature, **Kenya Hines** asked the Applause staff about their favorite prohibited books.

Judith Hamrick- *The Secret Life of Bees*

Carsyn Smith- *The Hate U Give*

Aryana Chinn- *Fahrenheit 451*

Kenya Hines- I don't read.

Carl Macklin- *An Abundance of Katherines*

Peter O'Malley- Hopefully Madelynne's Creative Writing Senior Thesis book (she never answered my interview questions)

Kingsley Gainey- *Gender Queer*

Kayla Herrman- *Charlotte's Web*

Norah Bernstein- *The Canterbury Tales*

Lauren Holladay- Reading? What's that?

Julia Dubay- *The Apocrypha*

Ryan Hinske- *Catch 22*

Jada Fickling- *The Bluest Eye*

Emma Brubaker- *Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*

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SOA Spring Break 2022

April 10th - April 16th



Mr. Colie started his spring break off by playing the Cajun festival with his Zydeco band.



Maya Yanes, 8th grade Visual Artist, attended her parents' wedding.



11th grade Theatre major Carsyn Smith went to the Southeast Punk Flea Market with her dad.



Emma Ladd, Freshman Vocal major, visited Washington D.C. and saw a production of *Mean Girls*.



Henry Hipp, 10th grade Theatre major, and the rest of the cast of *Gentlemen's Guide To Love And Murder* ate lunch in between rehearsals over Spring Break.



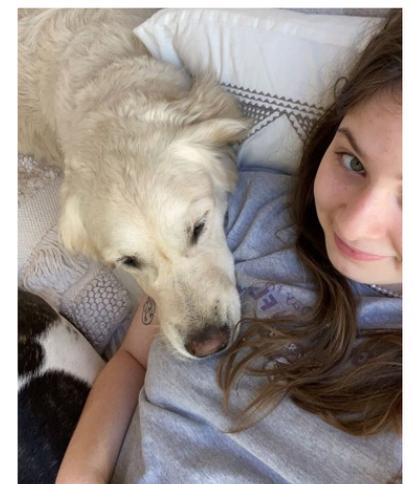
Marley Eckert visited the SCAD museum.



Linnea Ransford, 11th Grade Vocal major, and Sarah Overby, 11th Grade Strings major, enjoyed ice cream after a day at Kiawah Island.



Ella Tolbert, 11th Grade Theatre major, and a friend went on college tours all around Georgia and North Carolina, taking pictures with mascots, such as Wake Forests Demon Deacons.



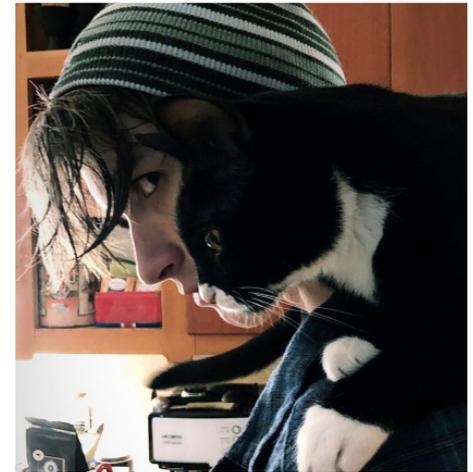
Ashley Gotlib, Senior Vocal major, dogsat over her break.



Julia Dubay, Junior Strings Major, visited Downtown Greenville.



Peter O'Malley, Junior Strings major, visited the Museum of Illusions in New York City and lost his head.



Sullivan Eppes, Sophomore Theatre major, stayed in Charleston with his cat.



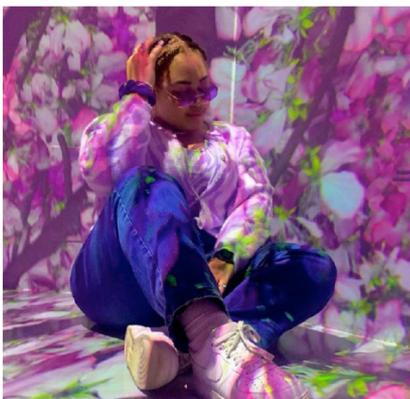
Melanie Gaillard, 11th grade Dance major, toured Anderson University over break!



Sophomore Strings major Manny Stavrinakis went to the Chicago Fire MLS game in Chicago.



Kingsley Gainey, Junior Visual Arts major, went to the pool after going to the SC Punk Flea Market.



Autumn Bosier, Senior Visual Arts major, visited the ARTECHOUSE in Washington D.C.



Mr. Martin, High School English Teacher, worked in his tomato garden with his son David.



Addie Pridemore and Natalie Benton, 11th grade Dance majors, went to the beach for sunrise, and it was so cold!

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Sign of the Month: “Study hard!”

by Aryana Chinn

Demonstrated by Ian Greig
ASL & Deaf Culture



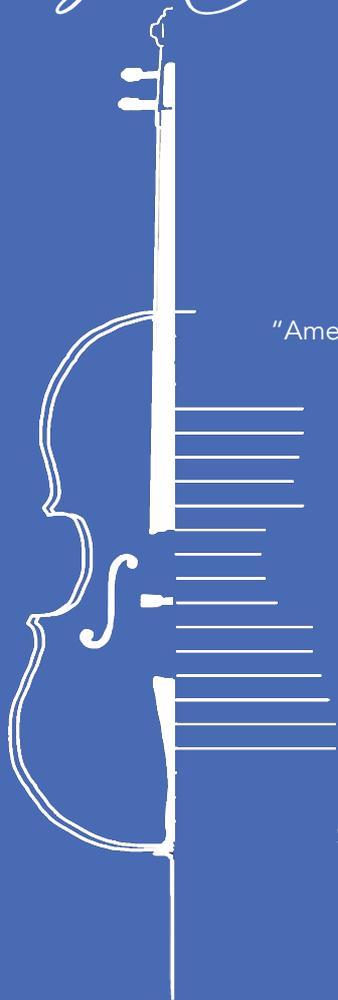
1. Flatten your palm and angle it towards you. Take your other hand and wiggle your fingers over the flattened palm.
2. Make a claw shape using your pointer and middle finger with both hands. Bring one hand stationary in front of you, then raise the other and hit it against the first one.



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Spring Concert



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mvt. 2 & 4

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Alex Selby, violin
Megan Black, viola
Decker Elam, cello

BOCCHERINI

Quintet in C Major

Elaina Gable, violin
Carolina Agrest, violin
Riley Borkowski, viola
Peter O'Malley, cello
Jade Williams, cello

TCHAIKOVSKY

Souvenir de Florence
mvt. 1

Jenny Weiss, violin
Elaina Gable, violin
Ben Weiss, viola
Riley Borkowski, viola
Timothy O'Malley, cello
Peter O'Malley, cello

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Horoscopes

by Kingsley Gainey



Sagittarius: November 22–December 21: You're extremely optimistic and push others to be the best version of themselves. We love that and need people to motivate others like that. You're very good at talking with people and overcoming arguments.



Capricorn: December 22–January 19: You may be stubborn, but you stand your ground, and to you, you have never lost an argument (and never will). But don't hold yourself to as high of standards as you or others have been. Give yourself room to breathe. You seem like the kind of person who would cry over "Under Pressure" from *Encanto*.



Aquarius: January 20–February 18: The vibes might be hard to work with this time of year, but you have already made it through the rest. You're very smart, sometimes it's hard to tell, but just keep up what you're doing and you'll get to where you want to be sooner or later. Take time to focus on your goals and work hard.



Pisces: February 19–March 20: Someone might be trying to mess up your good vibes, but don't let them! You have a great personality, and people love being around you. But don't be a people pleaser as much as you are. We love you, but we want you to love you too.



Aries: March 21–April 19: You're brave, but you hold yourself back sometimes. Do that thing you've been wanting to do, buy the outfit no one likes, have the hairstyle you've always wanted. Times may be changing and you're changing with them, but don't change yourself for someone else's happiness.



Taurus: April 20–May 20: You're one of the most hardworking people we know. You need to chill out sometimes. Things probably haven't been going your way recently, but you don't need to cry over spilt milk. Take control of your life the way you want.



Gemini: May 21–June 21: You're very smart and everyone knows it, but you need to make up your mind sometimes. Don't let people make it up for you. Be an original person, have an original thought. Also, you should spend less time on TikTok. It's for your own good.



Cancer: June 22–July 22: You are one of the most sensitive people ever, but in the good way, you know? You're amazing to be around and are the "mom friend" in the group. You deserve the energy you put into care for others back. Speak up for yourself more and take care of yourself too.



Leo: July 23–August 22: You're one of the most lively people in your friend group. You're fun to be around and have top notch vibes. Keep listening to your heart and it'll take you where you need to go. But take time for yourself. Go to Starbucks and get that drink you love.



Virgo: August 23–September 22: You are very self aware and are overly critical of yourself and others. But everyone still enjoys being around you because you're one of the best people to talk trash with. You need to go outside more though. Go touch some grass.



Libra: September 23–October 23: You're the peacemaker in the group and are for sure a people pleaser. You attain the balance around you, but you need to shake things up a bit. Change something you're unhappy with, make a new routine.



Scorpio: October 24–November 21: You're very rational and honest. Some people might not like how straightforward you are, but we need people to genuinely tell us if our fits aren't cute sometimes. Keep being honest.



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Classic Movie Review: *Full Metal Jacket*

by Peter O'Malley

Stanley Kubrick's 1987 war drama, *Full Metal Jacket*, follows a platoon of US Marines and the horrors they witness in the Vietnam War. Split into two distinct parts, starting in boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina, and later in Vietnam, I'd imagine many would say *Full Metal Jacket* could have worked well as two individual films. However, I found that the stark contrast between these two settings is what makes *Full Metal Jacket* so great. The platoon's time in Parris Island is very strict and regimented, while in Vietnam, the soldiers spend time conversing and hanging out (of course with the constant imminent threat of attack). As independent these two chapters are, Kubrick draws parallels between the soldiers' training and experiences in the war, and important themes and ideas are presented in both.

So many war dramas have been made in the past century, and only a few have stood out to me as true works of cinematic art. Amongst those include *Saving Private Ryan*, 1917, and *Full Metal Jacket*. Kubrick was a master of well-written characters, a story that keeps viewers interested, and stunning visuals (also Quentin Tarantino, Francis Ford Coppola, and Martin Scorsese). This mastery is very prominent in *Full Metal Jacket* and his other works, notably *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *The Shining*. I could understand Private Pyle's pain through the first half, sympathized with the recruits' hate toward the drill sergeant, and clearly felt the tension illustrated through the dialogue of many scenes within the film. A still photo could have been taken from almost any frame in the movie and analyzed like art, and unlike many films where the visuals accompany the dialogue or vice versa, both go hand-in-hand. *Full Metal Jacket's* writing, cinematography, and story effortlessly drops the viewer right into the world of the Vietnam War and the lives of its soldiers.

In the past two issues of *Applause*, I reviewed PG-rated films, and pointed out their PG ratings as a means of accessibility to

younger readers. I would like to clarify that *Full Metal Jacket* does not share *Indiana Jones* or *Napoleon Dynamite's* PG rating. *Full Metal Jacket*, rated R, handles numerous mature themes and, being set in the Vietnam War, displays a very graphic level of violence. Some scenes are hard to watch. However, if you're permitted to see it, I strongly recommend viewing this excellent film.

Full Metal Jacket, directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick, is one of the greatest war dramas I have seen. Its writing and cinematography stand out as key elements that make this film so impressive, and I encourage you to watch it.

Contemporary Album Review: Adele 30

by Carsyn Smith

Adele has made her return! With her fourth studio album, *30*, Adele tells stories on what she has been doing on her hiatus, such as tackling family issues and mental health. Adele has been a bit overlooked in my view, just because of how long it's been since we've last heard from her. But this project reminded me of why I had listened to Adele all those years ago. My personal favorites from this album include the leading single "Easy On Me," "My Little Love," and "I Drink Wine."

"Easy On Me" destroys the narrative of "the popular song is always the most overrated," and displays powerful emotion. The strength in her voice when singing shows true perfection and control. In lyrics such as "I know there is hope in these waters / But I can't bring myself to swim," she paints pictures that represent the feeling of hopelessness and pressure beautifully. Along with the lyrics, the soft piano instrumental complements the song and makes you feel like you're falling slowly in a world that is crashing down quickly.

"I Drink Wine" is another great example of the piano's ability to make a song feel personal and relatable. The aforementioned songs have received quite a bit of attention from the public, but for some reason I haven't been hearing as much buzz about this song. Some may say that's because it has more of a "basic melody," but I think this aspect of the song

enhances it and makes listeners focus more on Adele's vocals and lyrics. She talks about trying to be her true self, while also wanting to love someone and escape the pressure from everyone else, a topic I have never heard in a song. Adele's vocals shine in the song, and she has an amazing choir performing in the background, adding a gospel-like tone that I thoroughly enjoyed.

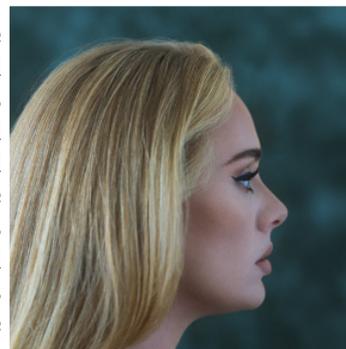
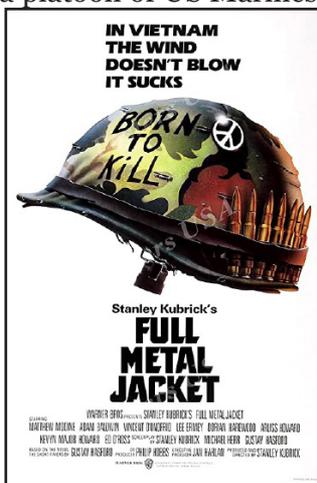
"My Little Love" is my favorite off this album. In this song, Adele takes a different approach. She includes audio recordings of conversations with her child where they discuss their feelings and share their emotions. This tune is the one that brought me to tears. As she sings her heart out about how she is trying to stay strong for him and how much she loves him, I realized how much Adele has been through since the last time the world truly saw her. The strength in lyrics such as "I'm holding on (barely) / Momma's got a lot to learn (it's heavy)," is breathtaking. However, what got me the most was the message at the end where Adele speaks about herself feeling alone, something that I think we have all felt at one point or another.

Overall, from the storytelling, riffs, instrumentals, and even just the icon that is Adele, I haven't been more proud of a comeback project. I can't wait to see what the future has in store for this Wonder Woman, and I hope not to cry too hard at her concert!

Classic Album Review: *Can't Buy A Thrill* by Steely Dan

by Grace Baker

In preparation for the Bonds Wilson Campus' performance "Reelin' in the Years: Songs of the Seventies," I've chosen to write my final review on Steely Dan's debut album *Can't Buy a Thrill*, featuring some of their biggest hits, including "Reelin' in the Years" and "Dirty Work." Unlike many bands of their time, it started as a duo with lead guitarist Walter Becker and keyboardist and lead vocalist Donald Fagen after meeting at Bard College. With a connection at ABC Records, they worked with a producer to form Steely Dan underground. *Can't Buy a Thrill* was released in 1972 amid the Vietnam controversy, and many of the songs feature political affiliations about the draft and leadership. As a band with no previous track record or rules, they made their own, receiving commentary from *Rolling Stone*, calling them "the perfect music antiheroes for the Seventies." Their ardor



for jazz, folk, and rock, and their successful integration of distinct genres created a portal between decades of music.

Frankly, their music is not for everyone, considering it varies between genres, and its label of “smart rock” implies their progressive and evocative sound. The first track “Do It Again” is the perfect example of a unique instrumental masterpiece. It begins with percussion and slowly incorporates guitar riffs and keyboard, therefore creating anticipation with the minute-long intro. Fagen possesses specific mannerisms in his voice that create smooth transitions between words, which is another reason Steely Dan’s songs all work so cohesively. Their next hit on the album shifts from the sole vocals of David Palmer to a chorus with backing. For “Dirty Work,” jazz musicians were incorporated, and a saxophone solo is played over a piano melody after the second chorus to introduce a new flavor not seen earlier in the song. This lack of consistency throughout the album is seen when comparing each track and within the tracks themselves.

It is unusual for their intros to start with one instrument, but it is not long until the sole piano is combined with synchronized vocals in “Kings.” Mainly name-dropping past leaders of the world, the song is about praising history, and the entire song acts as a toast giving off good spirits. “Midnite Cruiser” takes a turn with a more somber tone, conveying the ambiance of a midnight ride. Jim Hodder, a member in the early years of the band, took over the lead vocals for this track, as well as the lead guitar role.

“Only A Fool Could Say That” has the most lively and jazz-oriented melody on the album, and I am in love with it. Fagen takes advantage of his free rein and expresses a variety of vocal ranges, contributing theatrics to the music and lyrics. This is a song that incites dancing and joy, and the lyrics convey “fools” who believe their lives are over before they are lived. It ends on an interesting note with a clip of laughter, followed by a phrase in Spanish that roughly translates to the title of the song. Of similar folk tone, “Brooklyn” has David Palmer on lead vocals, and the song personifies the city he grew up near. Female background vocals can be heard, incorporating more soul and jazz that could be found in Harlem for decades.

A song immortalized by the first three

seconds, “Reelin’ In The Years” sums up the importance of keeping memories, both good and bad, close to the heart. The verses are sung at a fast pace that conveys the message of fleeting time. Attend the upcoming concert if you’d like to hear a live rendition of this staple Steely Dan piece, because I’m sure any recorded studio version cannot capture the intense and heart-elating guitar solo in the center of the track.

Steely Dan used their music to educate and send a message of youth while redefining the future with their lyrics as seen in the final tracks “Change Of The Guard” and “Turn That Heartbeat Over Again.” The band itself has not let time defeat their legacy, seeing as they have a tour scheduled this year. They’ve influenced and been steered by music through the ages and reinvented syncopation to an extent that had not been seen before. The rendition of “Reelin’ In The Years” to be performed on May 17th will be put on by our students, and this song that was written fifty years ago will be revitalized in our theater. Grab a seat to hear music by one of the most advanced bands of the seventies.

TV Show Review: *Abbott Elementary*

by Kenya Hines

With a lack of good sitcoms recently, *Abbott Elementary* has come to save the day. The thirteen-episode Hulu series is currently all the rage. It’s about a group of teachers who work in an underprivileged school in Philadelphia, trying their best to make it a better place. Its *The Office* style filming fits perfectly, and their reactions to the camera are nothing short of hysterical. Every time I turn on an episode I find myself laughing to the point of tears.

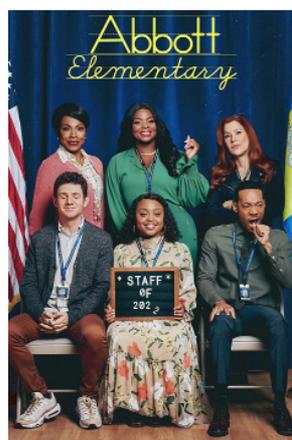
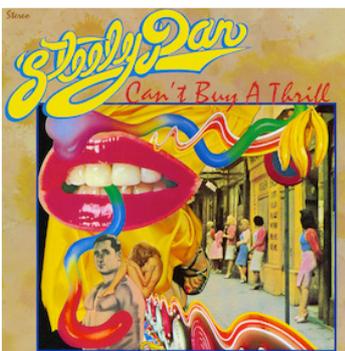
Many different sides to each character are shown, and not a single one is boring. My favorite character is Tariq, the boyfriend of the main character, Janine. He’s pretty much your average SoundCloud rapper, and everything that’s scripted for him is absolutely hilarious. My favorite of his lines is, “I’m a feminist, that’s why I let you pay for all my stuff.”

Usually I would have made a list of pros and cons, but I have absolutely no cons. The episodes are as short as my attention

span, which makes this perfect for me. Things are pretty fast paced, but it’s not so fast that you don’t pick up on what’s happening. You can tell they didn’t try to shove five different plot lines in one episode; when a problem arises, it’s solved before the next episode nine times out of ten.

I also enjoyed the balance between comedy and heartfelness. In each episode, there is a moment where a character addresses genuine concerns or feelings, and whatever is mentioned doesn’t take away from the entertainment. For example, in one episode where Ava, the principal of Abbott, has a meeting with the school board, she gives a sincere speech and manages to not let her humor falter.

Like stated before, the writing is phenomenal, and it does a good job of bringing in certain things from today’s media without



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being super corny about it.

Although the season has ended with a few unanswered questions, thankfully the show has been renewed for a second season. It is not yet confirmed when it will be released, but hopefully sometime before 2022 ends. I didn't realize how special every Tuesday was for me until the season finale aired. It's definitely a binge worthy show if you have nothing to do this weekend. On a scale of one to ten, I'd give it a fifteen.

Contemporary Movie Review: *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*

by Judith Hamrick

More wizarding world content is here, people! Nobody move! As usual, it's always refreshing to consume a new piece of *Harry Potter* lore; however, I've always considered myself to be the president of the imaginary #Dumblesnore haters club, so you can imagine my thoughts going into this movie when we still haven't been given a sub-series on the Marauders yet.



Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore, the third installment in the *Fantastic Beasts* film series, follows Newt Scamander as he leads a ragtag group to stop the tyrannical Gellert Grindelwald in his campaign for the laughable position of Supreme Mugwump of the International Confederation of Wizards.

Strangely, my largest problem with this movie is the title; *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore* is misleading in every way imaginable when reflecting on the movie. Begging the question: Are the secrets of Dumbledore really all that secret? Audiences are meant to assume before viewing that the title exclusively refers to the famous Hogwarts headmaster, Albus Dumbledore, when in reality the real secret lies with his brother, Aberforth. In the previous film we learned that arguably the most entertaining character of the series, Credence Barebone, is actually a member of the Dumbledore clan, specifically Aberforth's long lost son. Hardly any other information released in this film could be considered new news to anyone that knew of this family's backstory

beforehand.

This franchise seems to have chosen the *Star Wars* prequel route of "political thriller," and it's hard to say if it's doing the macroscale battle for good and evil justice in this case. What was once a universe full of magic and potions has become another full of recognizable problematic politics. Slowly but surely, the franchise is being stripped of all of its enchanting elements, beginning with verbal spells and ending with basic colors. Eventually answering the question no one was asking: What if the color gray was a movie?

The heart of the story obviously lies in the romance between Dumbledore and Grindelwald. Though I will always prefer to watch Johnny Depp, Mads Mikkelson did deliver a wonderful characterization alongside Jude Law. Their romance brings wonderful representation to the wizarding world that audiences have been screaming over for ages.

The title character and his counterpart are built up very well, but thus far, nearly every other aspect of the film's development has been lackluster and unsuccessful. The beloved beasts are clearly becoming less vital to the story, and around 90% of the characters have zero real attributes or backstory. As time passes, I fear I'll find myself only coming back to stare at Claudia Kim and Callum Turner as Nagini and Theseus Scamander.

Overall, *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore* has left me with no reason to maintain interest, as it feels like the closing chapter in a series of five. This series struggles with getting to the point and tends to beat around the bush when it comes to plot, but as always, I will continue to show up in hopes of an improvement.

Chicken Nuggets/Popcorn Chicken Review

by Kenya Hines

Wendy's: 10/10- The absolute best; no one is touching them. Especially spicy nugget

season... my mouth is already watering.

Chick-fil-A: 9/10- So, so, so amazing. They come out fresh every time and crunchy on the sides.

KFC: 8/10- The Finger Lickin'

Good sauce truly seals the deal on these. Would recommend with a side of potato wedges.

Popeyes: 7/10- Definitely looked better in the pictures, but that didn't change the fact they tasted very good. Just a little bit greasy; nothing a napkin can't fix.

McDonalds: 6/10- I don't care about those "What's truly inside of a McDonald's nugget??!!" videos your mom showed you on Facebook. I'm still going to eat it.

Checker's: 5/10- It seems as if I'm always giving Checker's the mid ranking, but it's for a reason! Nothing really stands out about it. They get a participation award.

Sonic: 4/10- Overall, very dull and has no flavor. Nothing more to say. Sonic, do better.

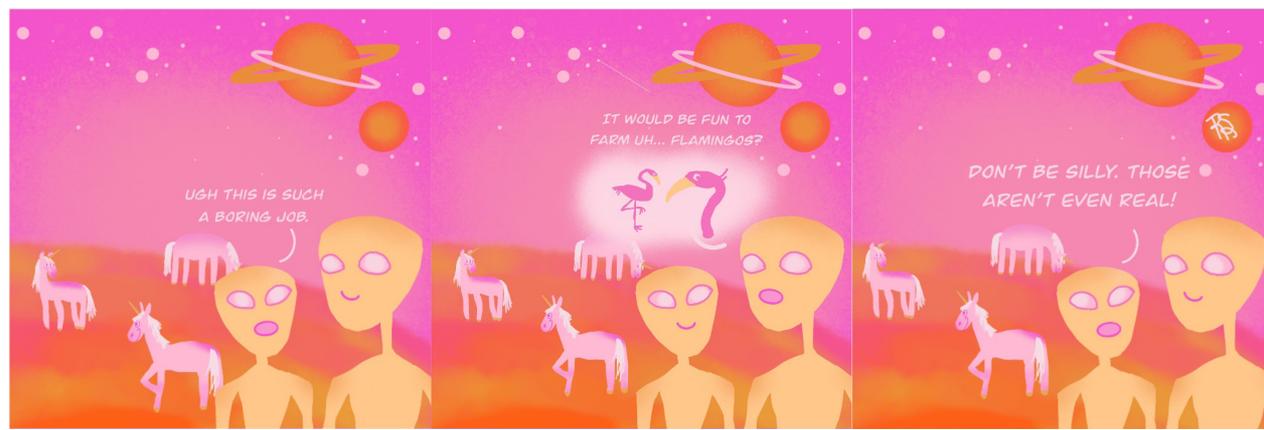
Hardee's: 3/10- It's the fact that I actually enjoy chicken from here, but they dropped the ball with this one. Tasted like a brick.

Arby's: 2/10- Shouldn't expect much from a place that serves meat that looks like intestines, so I'm not surprised. They tasted expired and disgusting.

Burger King: 1/10- When I first got my hands on these nuggets, I was very excited. They looked very delicious and were the epitome of



Wendy's 10/10 Chicken Nuggets



happiness. Then I ate it. You have to be some gutterbutt, lowlife, downright nasty fast food chain to be below Arby's in the food department, but Burger King managed to do just that. The only requirement to outdo them is to make food that is actually edible, and they STILL failed to do so. The nuggets are practically deer ankles and flamingo toes, but you didn't hear that from me. It makes whatever mystery slime that's in McDonald's nuggets a five star meal. Nothing but dry nothingness in a box. If someone is selling ten chicken nuggets for only a dollar, everything but chicken is going to be inside of it. Like I've said before, stick to making burgers. I didn't order from Chicken King.

SOA Performance Review: *Percy Jackson*

by Aryana Chinn

On Friday the 28th, a group of friends and I ended the day by attending SOA's production of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*. I hold the liberty to say we all fully enjoyed it, and the players have left jingles in my head throughout the week (including during my exams; thanks, Tyler). One of the hurdles this musical surpassed was coherence without background knowledge; though the performance was based on a beloved book series from everyone's childhood, it was easy to follow if you hadn't previously read the books and had a pretty satisfying ending, albeit open-ended.

The fun of this review is that you'll get two sides of the story. I have never read the books and had only watched the movie once when I was seven; all I remember was the characters in a casino for a minute. Due to me being more interested in dissecting stories and theater, that's what I will be focusing on. My friend Emily Apostolico, a Junior Visual Artist, however, is a *Percy Jackson* super-nerd and had some things to say about the story from a true fan perspective.

Aryana Chinn: First off, how accurate did you feel that the musical was compared to the books?

Emily Apostolico: The show was pretty accurate to the books. There were some

instances where, due to the run time, they had to cut scenes, like Percy falling out of the gateway arch, the trio freeing some zoo animals, and one of my personal favorites: when they travel up to Mount Olympus by going to the highest floor of the empire state building.

AC: Which of the omitted scenes would you have liked to see added to the musical?

EA: I would have liked to see them do one of my favorite scenes, in which Aries sends the trio on a mission to an abandoned water park as a favor for him helping them.

AC: That would have been a fun scene for the set crew to piece together.

It would have been fun to see more of Aries too. I feel like Parker L. did a great job with all of those edgy characters.

EA: Yes, Aries was one of my favorites in the musical.

AC: How did you feel the main players reflected the personalities of those they played? Do you think they stayed true to their characters or put a spin on it?

EA: I think that there was a little spin on both Annabeth and Percy, but I think it was due to the way the musical was written, not the players. In the books, Annabeth is very cunning, but in the musical, she seemed desperate to prove herself. In *The Lightning Thief* book, she was the main strategist and led the characters when it came to survival. Percy's character in the book was definitely confused, and that was portrayed well, but more angry rather than sad, like he was in the musical. However, Grover was really on brand, taking responsibility for protecting the trio and always looking for food.

AC: The comedy reliefs balanced the musical. While Percy had ballads of daddy issues, loneliness, and angst, we had characters like Mr. D, Hades, and Grover to keep things light.

EA: Scenes featuring Mr. D and Hades were some of my favorite moments to watch. Jesse P. was very accurate in portraying Dionysus' hatred for the kids, while Andrew J. 's character voice for Hades had me and my friends laughing non-stop. Even now, sometimes we imitate his accent while talking to each other because it makes us all laugh.

AC: There were some pretty powerful singers in the cast, Avery D. as Annabeth, Ethan T. as Percy, and Morgan S. as Clarisse reminded me that SOA students have other talents outside their majors.

EA: I did thoroughly enjoy the singing, and I had fun singing along to the numbers I knew. I think my top three are "Campfire Song," "Just Drive," and "Put You in Your Place."

AC: I loved "Put You in Your Place"! My only regret is that I didn't get to see the Thursday show, where Cody N. played Annabeth and Zachary B. played Luke. Any last sentiments?

EA: My only wish is that they would make a musical for all of the books, but I know that would be a lot of work. I just want to see my favorite boys, Nico Di Angelo and Leo Valendez.

AC: Perhaps some of the creatives at SOA share your sentiments; it would be awesome to see the rest of the books musicalfied. Thanks for talking with me today. I feel like the readers will appreciate your *Percy* expertise.

SOA Performance Review: *Les Mis*

by Madelynne Burt

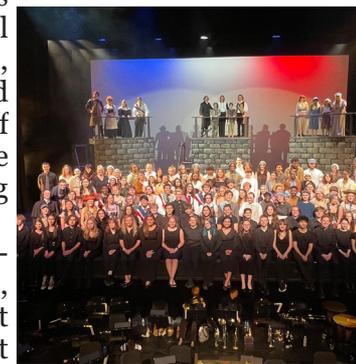
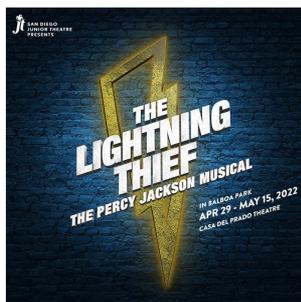
The vocal department has been trying to put on a production of *Les Misérables* since 2020, and seeing their dedication pay off after over two years was so gratifying. Since their sophomore year, Seniors Tripp Carrington and Ryan Hinkse have been preparing for their roles as Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert, respectively, and did not fail to impress.

Tripp was an utterly convincing Jean Valjean, evoking a range of emotions in the audience.

His expression, vocal performance, pronunciation, and overall portrayal of the character were top-tier, deserving of a Tony award. With a theater-filling voice, Ryan brought life to Javert with compelling

character choices in his authentically emotional performance. The audience was at the edge of their seats, trying to decide if they should sympathize with the antagonist with the ironic flaw of enforcing what he believes is right.

The live music, performed by SOA students, created an ambiance throughout the Gaillard that portrayed the characters' emotions. The live sinfonietta, an impressive group of orchestra students, brought a fresh



sound to the notorious soundtrack and was worth paying attention to.

Some notable cast members include Norah Berstein as Cosette, Devon Brunson as Enjolras, Vivian Gordon as Fantine, Brett Hunter as Marius, Lauren Huser as Madame Trenardier, and Meredith Layne Hungerford as Éponine.

The entirety of the production would not have been possible without the vocal performances of the high school vocal students and their dedication, with an honorable mention to the four incredible middle schoolers who had the opportunity to perform with the high school vocalists.

After hours of rehearsal and preparation, the show was indeed a success, and the students who participated should be proud of their performance.

Carsyn's Takes on the Met Gala

Carsyn Smith reflects on four of the 2022 Met Gala's outfits.



Blake Lively

Y'all better stop referring to her as just Ryan Reynolds' wife! A great metaphor and a two in one dress...
10/10



Genesis Suero

AHHH! How did a reporter do better than half the celebs there?! STUNNING! Sign her up in the next movie, now! 1000/10.



Stormzy

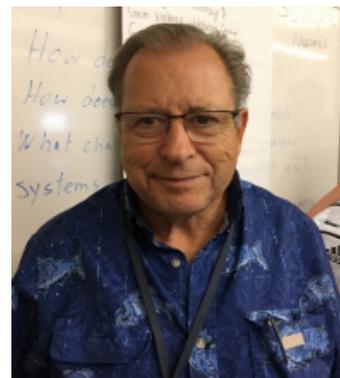
WHITE ON STORMZY IS AMAZING NO QUESTIONS ASKED. 100/10



Sebastian Stan

If the theme was "Bucky Barnes fell into a bucket of Pepto Bismol," he would have ate.
4.1/10

Mr. Naas Quote of the Month



As John Wesley said, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

Former SOA Computer Science teacher, Mr. Naas, has shared his wisdom with Applause for many years, and we would like to continue that tradition after his retirement.

Often we get wrapped up in ourselves as we define our goals and execute our strategies to obtain these goals. Today, your major concerns may be increasing your GPA, conquering a difficult music arrangement, preparing for SATs or ACTs, completing a major project, writing college admittance essays, getting an internship, etc. All of these are extremely important in your current and future lives. This quote is telling us to remember that all our

work and preparation to fulfill our goals and become successful is to achieve a satisfied and enriched life. I am not about to state that I have spent my entire life doing all the good I can. What I will tell you is that the things that I have done in my life that benefit others without getting anything back for myself are the most meaningful memories that make me feel good about myself. John Wesley and I are not talking monumental acts of kindness (although that would be awesome) but an overall focus on kindness starting with the smallest niceties; holding doors open, sending an encouraging text/card, helping someone with their homework, buying your mom flowers, and more. I challenge you to start today and try to do one little act of kindness a day. I give you my money-back guarantee that this will make you feel even better than the recipients of your acts of kindness. Let me know how it works out for you by emailing me at joenaas@hotmail.com.

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Spider-Man Seen Once Again in Charleston

by Sullivan Eppes and J. Jonah Jameson*, *Daily Bugle*

Spring is in the air, and unfortunately, so is Spider-Man. He has been terrorizing this city, and the police have not done a thing about it. I, for one, am sick of it. The police claim that Spider-Man makes their job easier, but that's just because they don't have to clean up the mess he makes. The real heroes of this city are the ones volunteering to pick up after the vigilantes who don't know how to pick up after themselves.

*J. Jonah Jameson is a fictional character in the Spider-Man universe.



From SOA Theatre's April 28th production of *The Lightning Thief*



REELIN' IN THE YEARS

Tuesday,
MAY 17
in the
ROSE MAREE
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Creative Writing Trivia

by Jada Fickling

Questions:

1. In which country was Lewis Carroll's book *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* banned?
2. In which state is the book *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee set?
3. In which book series was the word 'muggles' popular?
4. What is the name of the first book written by Stephen King?
5. What is used as the portal to Narnia in C. S. Lewis' children's fantasy series?
6. Elizabeth Bennet is a character from which book?
7. What is the name of the memoir written by Michelle Obama in 2018?
8. How many seasons does the book-adapted TV series *The Vampire Diaries* have?
9. Who introduced the phrase "wear your heart on your sleeve"?
10. *The Lion King* is a rumored to be movie loosely inspired by which of Shakespeare's dramas?

Spotify Playlist

by Carsyn Smith and Judith Hamrick

Visit "SOA Applause" on Spotify or scan the code below to listen.



May Origami: Crane

by Julia Dubay

1. You'll need a square sheet of paper.
2. Fold in half.
3. Unfold, turn, and fold again.
4. Unfold and make a triangle crease.
5. Turn, and make a perpendicular fold.
6. Unfold, turn upside down, and press down the center.
7. Create a rhombus, then fold in the left and right corners to make a smaller rhombus.
8. Create two valley folds to the centerline with the right and left flaps.
9. Flip upside down and flip down the top corner.
10. Pull up the top flap and crease down.
11. Turn over and flip up the triangle fold.
12. Fold in the side flaps.
13. Fold up the bottom half on the top side.
14. Valley fold the lower half flaps.
15. Bend up and fold inward what will be the neck and tail.
16. Fold down the head on one side.

Zachary Brinegar Senior Theater Major



Jada Fickling

6/10

Autumn Bosier Senior Visual Art Major



Jada Fickling

6/10

Answers

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Japan | 10. <i>Hamlet</i> |
| 2. Alabama | |
| 3. <i>Harry Potter</i> | |
| 4. <i>It</i> | 9. William Shakespeare |
| 5. The closet | |
| 6. IDK | |
| 7. <i>Becoming</i> | 8. Eighth |
| 8. Nine | |
| 9. Shakespeare | 7. <i>Becoming</i> |
| 10. <i>Hamlet</i> | |

6. *Pride and Prejudice*

5. Wardrobe Closet

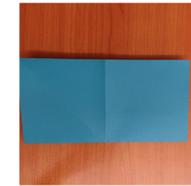
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| 1. Japan | |
| 2. Alabama | |
| 3. <i>Harry Potter</i> | 4. <i>Carrie</i> |
| 4. <i>It</i> | |
| 5. The closet | |
| 6. <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> | 3. <i>Harry Potter</i> |
| 7. IDK | |
| 8. Six | 2. Alabama |
| 9. Shakespeare | |
| 10. <i>Hamlet</i> | 1. China |



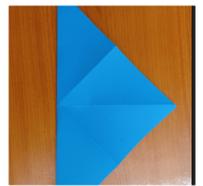
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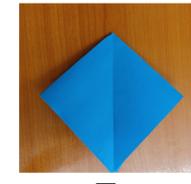
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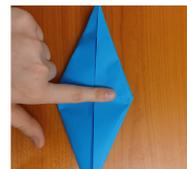
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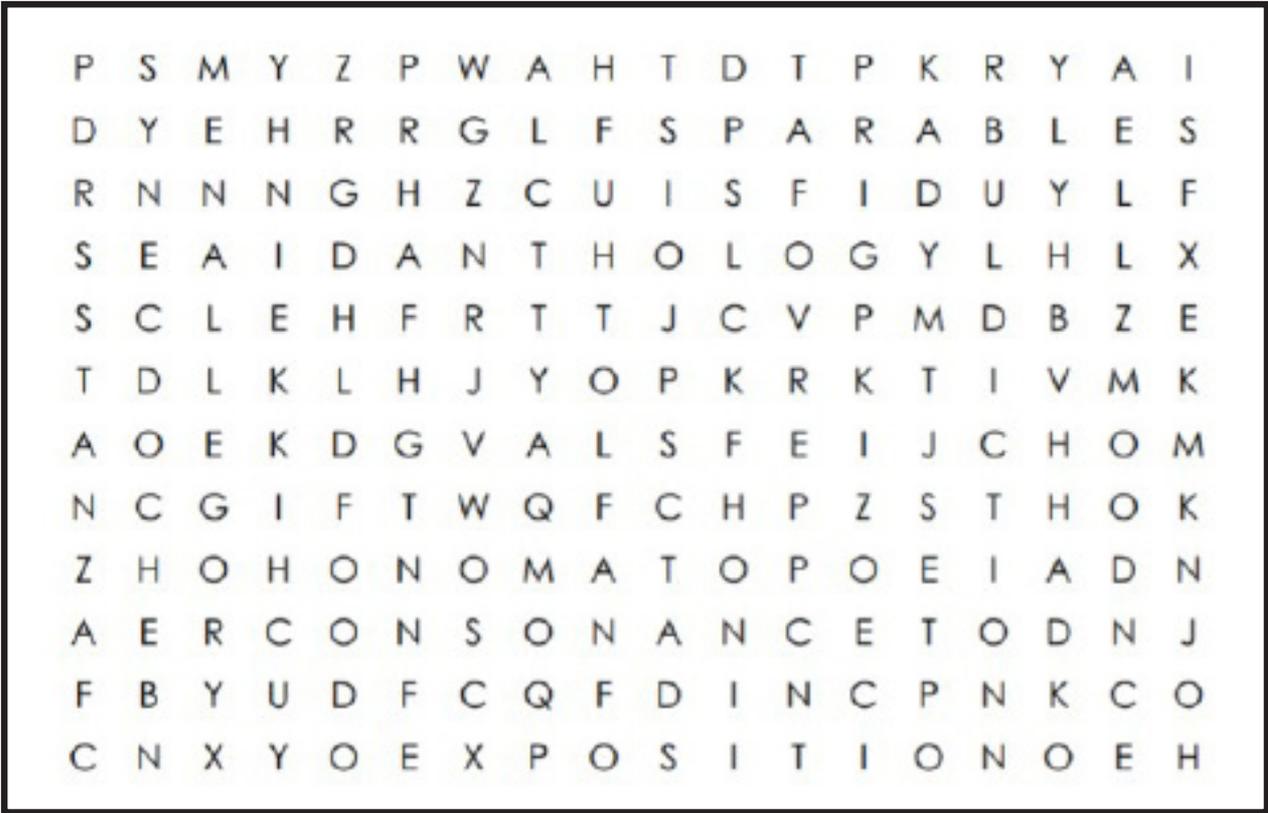
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15.



16.



Creative Writing Word Search

Allegory
 Anthology
 Consonance
 Diction
 Exposition

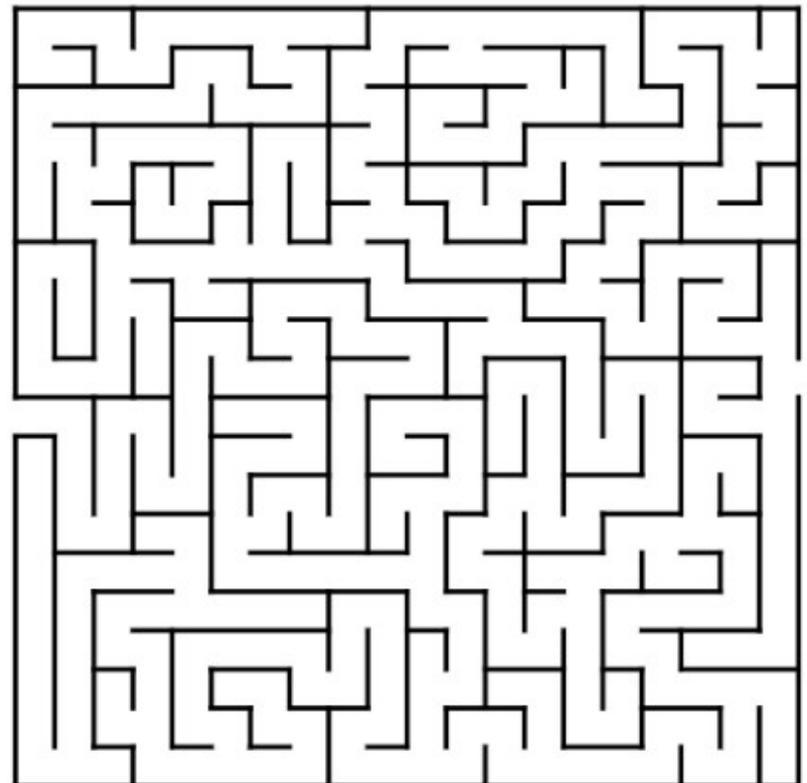
Mood
 Onomatopoeia
 Parable
 Stanza
 Synecdoche

SOA Sudoku

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



Help Ms. Hart find her notebook!





"Probably getting Gavroche in the high school musical, Les Mis."
Ben Hobbs, 6th Grade Vocal



"The last day of school."
Harper Whittington, 7th Grade Visual Arts



"I made my Creative Writing teacher a birthday card every day for two quarters (even when it wasn't his birthday) with Kermit the Frog on it because he's scared of puppets."
Rachel Wheelton, 8th Grade Creative Writing



"Seniors winning zero to zero at Powderpuff this year."
Mariam Nguyen, 12th Grade Piano

What's your fondest SOA memory?

by Kayla Herrman,
Lauren Holladay, and Julia Dubay



"The fashion show! I'm so proud of my amazing students and all of the fantastic garments they made! The models and my students were fantastic, and it was a night to remember."
Ms. Cheseborough,
High School Fashion Teacher



"When myself, Mr. Southwick, and Mr. Hammes dominated Ned Walpole, Adam Maierle, and Aiden Wood in 3v3 basketball after a month of their trash talk. (But really: mountain field trips and teaching SOA kids)."
Mr. Wells, Middle School History Teacher



"When we were helping move the keyboards from the jazz rooms to the theater, we had a dolly that we carried them on and pushed each other around on... we ended up getting in trouble, but it was fun."
Nelli Sundara, 9th Grade Piano



"Going into the art room for the first time... seeing the vastness of it."
Carter Smith, 10th Grade Visual Arts



"I rap-battled Mr. Grant and lost terribly."
Zackeus Kynard, 11th Grade Creative Writing



"I'm not proud of it, but you know the signs in the band hallway? I head-butted one and broke it..."
Jahmes Jones, 12th Grade Band