

# Applause

Volume 24, Number 4 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC November 2022



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The Magnificent Mr. Colie  
Leslie Jones  
Kendra Lancaster  
Jennifer Polon  
Christopher Selby

## From the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our November Band-themed issue of *Applause*! So far, November has been packed with performances by many talented SOA students, including a lot of the *Applause* staff! But, even with the added tasks of preparing for and putting on amazing performances, we are excited to publish this paper for you to cover it all! We hope you'll enjoy our coverage of an unaccompanied cello recital, *Phantom of the Opera*, and Thanksgiving.

If you weren't lucky enough to see the incredible performance of *The Phantom of the Opera* put on by SOA's Symphony, Vocalists, and Dancers, check out the centerfold for some great photos and Ariana Lane's awe-inspired review of the show (page 11).

This issue, we were especially excited to highlight the performance of the Jazz Band at Jump, Jive, and Wail, as well as all of the well-planned, creative, and inspiring Halloween costumes that were worn around school on the 31st. If you kept a careful eye out, you may have spotted your beloved editors out and about on campus, all dressed up and enjoying the Halloween festivities with the rest of SOA (Peter dressed as Indiana Jones, Lauren as a crab, and Giovanni as his rendition of Spiderman). Can you find us on page 27 in our costumes?

*Applause* wishes you a happy Thanksgiving! We will see you in December, or as Giovanni likes to say, PEACE OUT HOMEDOGS!

Your Editors,  
Peter O'Malley, Lauren Holladay, and Giovanni Cusatis

*Peter O'Malley* *Lauren Holladay* *Giovanni Cusatis*



# Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of

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Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers

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Cover by Lauren Holladay

## SOA Calendar

by Lauren Holladay

**Nov. 18th:** MS Classical Piano Fall Concert - RMMT

**Nov. 21st - 25th:** Fall Break - No School

**Nov 28th:** Progress Reports Distributed this Week

**Nov. 30th:** Junior Dance Comp. - RMMT

**Dec. 1st - 2nd:** *Chicken Bones for the Teenage Soup*, 8th Grade Theater - Black Box

**Dec. 3rd:** Winter Jazz Piano Recitals - RMMT

**Dec. 6th-7th:** *The Four Teams*, 7th Grade Theater - Black Box

**Dec. 6th:** Gaillard Holiday Spectacular

**Dec. 7th:** Art in The Hall, Middle School Art Show

**Dec. 7th:** Dance Senior Thesis #1

**Dec. 8th - 9th:** *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, 10th Grade Theater - Black Box

**Dec. 9th:** Middle School Orchestra and Vocal  
Holiday Magic Concert

**Dec. 12th - 13th:** Band Concert

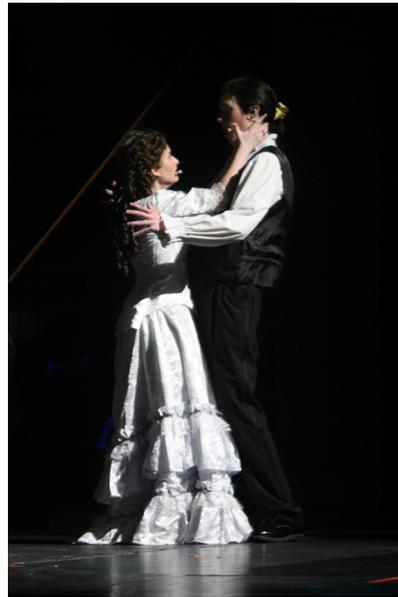
**Dec. 13th:** Holiday Tales, 11th Grade Playwriting -  
Black Box

**Dec. 16th:** Half Day for Students

**Dec. 19th - Jan. 2nd:** Winter Break



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## In This Issue

**Meet SOA's New Band  
Director, Mr. King**

by Z'Nyah Nelson

**Highlights from *Phantom  
of the Opera***

by Lauren Holladay

**SOA Jazz Band's Annual  
Jump, Jive, and Wail**

by SOA Students

## Sass Attack: Crossing Guards

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Ah, the crossing guard. A true representation of how beautiful this world can be. Protectors of children, upholders of law. A constant being in a neon jacket, rain or shine. The crossing guard is taken for granted, but what would happen if they weren't there? Chaos would reign: cars turning left, right, and center, and children darting across the street.

Unfortunately, I hear more complaints than commendations. But really, how urgently do you need to make that left hand turn? And once you are stopped by the lady who looks like the Statue of Liberty, holding up her beacon of light (also known as a stop sign), do you really need to be angry? Let it go, man; think of those children's ears, who I'm sure have NEVER heard an expletive in their lives.

And to those of you who complain about the line getting into school, shame on you. And, okay, shame on myself, because I have been heard complaining about it too. Shame all around!

Without those influential police officers who probably have the most toned arms out of all of us, the four way intersection would turn into a free for all. Sophomores and juniors who just got their license would freeze up, parents would speed though trying to get to work on time, and the seniors who don't have a late-in would slide in front of buses as they turn onto Lackawanna Boulevard, late as usual.

Every day, I wave at the police officer at the gates after school. It took a couple weeks, but now, every time he waves back, my heart soars. It is the perfect way to end a school day, good or bad. But when he doesn't see me, because his head is turned away, or he is focused on a bus, a part of my soul is crushed, my hand left gesturing awkwardly in the window. After that, the only thing left to do is hope for tomorrow.

## Opinion: The Bonds Wilson Parking Lot

by Eliana Gross

I recently got my license, and with that, I am now responsible for driving both my brother and I to school. It's great, but there are some things I wasn't expecting that have given me a newfound respect for the friends I bummed rides off for longer than I'd like to admit. For those of you who might not have experienced the school parking lot, I'll do my best to put it into words.

Driving to school, of course, is pretty simple. Driving in (for me at least) goes smoothly. You, of course, might get stuck next to the single worst parker to ever trick the DMV into letting them behind the wheel, myself included, but that just comes with the territory of parking near this many new drivers. The real problem comes to bat when leaving the parking lot. If I ever had to describe purgatory to anyone, I would put them in a car, make them sit and wait until a merciful driver (who didn't really want to let them in) finally lets them merge into line and wait at the stop sign, silently pleading with Mr. Cosgrove to let them leave because, by that time, it's 4:00 and they just want to go home.

To put it simply, the devil was proud of his handiwork when



Beatrice Criscuolo

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he made that parking lot. However, if you can find your way out of the labyrinth that is our parking lot, you can do anything. The Bonds Wilson Campus' education is so great that even our parking lot is challenging, and the learning truly doesn't stop until we leave those gates.

## Ask Kenya: Advice From An SOA Senior

by Kenya Hines

*Kenya Hines, SOA senior Theater major, reached out to anonymous SOA students to give advice for their struggles in school.*

**Student 1: I told my friend's love interest that she likes him. He said he likes her too but that I shouldn't tell her that..but I did. What should I do?**

**Kenya:** A lot of people might not agree with me but this is my column, so it's my opinion. I would've done the same thing as you by telling her. I would hate to see a failed love story because the other person thought their crush wasn't interested in them. Hopefully your friend told her to tell her crush she likes him. (I'm going to assume she did, but if not, I guess it worked out). Now, the rest is up to them.

They're both aware they have feelings for each other, so they can figure it out. Wherever their movie plot takes them is where it goes. Just know you did your part. Try not to meddle and be the middle party because that can ruin things.

**Student 2: I remember you did a fashion column last year, but I need fashion help now! I want to update my wardrobe, but I don't want to spend money on new clothes. I don't know what to do.**

**Kenya:** It's not about getting new clothes, but more about working with what you have. The ugliest shirt known to man-kind can be turned into something new. This is your sign to start sewing. Starting off with just a needle and thread can take you a long way. If you're looking for leg warmers, take an old pair of leggings to make something new. Take that tank top you never wear and make it into a headband. Another tip that can turn a whole outfit around is layering. Take what you have, clash colors, patterns, whatever you want. As long as you feel good in what you wear, you probably look even better.

Have some questions you want answered? Scan the QR code to the right! Don't worry, it's all anonymous.



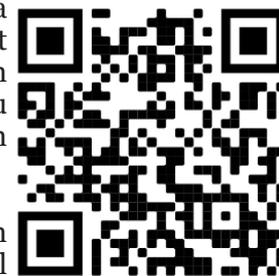
Kenya Hines

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Jonah Chinitz, 12th grade Theatre major, shows off his A+ parking job.

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To download photos from SOA's performance of *Phantom Of The Opera*, visit [www.soa-applause.com/photo-gallery/](http://www.soa-applause.com/photo-gallery/), or scan the QR Code to the right.



## This Month Among the Stars

by Yatawee Petchsuriya

### November 4th - 5th - Taurid Meteor Shower

The earth passes through a mass of debris left by Comet Encke annually. The meteor shower presents two slow, separate, and long lasting streams of five to ten meteors hourly. These streams result from Asteroid 2004 TG10 and Comet 2P Encke.



Taurid Meteor Shower

Provided

Unfortunately, this year, with the moon almost at its fullest phase, its illumination only allowed the brightest meteors to be visible. However, this year's Taurid shower may be more active, and viewing the sky after midnight with only natural light yielded some breathtaking sights that could be seen globally. The meteors emitted from the constellation of Taurus, thus, the moniker.

### November 8th - Beaver Moon

To signal the time for beaver traps in preparation for winter, when swamps and rivers freeze, November's full moon is known as Beaver Moon to Native Americans. This year's Beaver moon reached peak illumination at 6:02 AM EST and also accompanied a total lunar eclipse.

### November 8th - Total Lunar Eclipse

The eclipse occurred as the moon took on a blood-like shade as the moon orbited under Earth's shadow, known as the umbra. Longer wavelengths reached the Earth's atmosphere while other colors scattered away, causing the moon's red color to be visible. However, the eclipse was not locally seen, as it was visible throughout Japan, Australia, eastern Russia, the Pacific Ocean and some parts of western and Central America.

### November 9th - Uranus at Opposition

Uranus, at this time of orbit, was closest to earth. It was brightest during this time as the sun fully illuminated it. Although a planet in opposition provides the best view, the far away ice giant could only be seen as a blue-green dot to the naked eye. Powerful telescopes were needed for further detailed viewing.

### November 17th - 18th - Leonids Meteor Shower

Associated with the debris from Comet Tempel-Tuttle, the shower's meteors radiate from the constellation of Leo but can appear all across the sky. At its peak, fifteen meteors an hour will be produced this year, the average for most showers. Dimly lit meteors will be blocked out as the moon will be in its second quarter phase during this time. Every thirty-three years, however, the Leonids have a unique feature; a cyclonic peak occurs where hundreds of meteors are produced per hour. The event can be best enjoyed after midnight with as little light sources around as possible.

### November 23 - New Moon

The moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and will not be visible in the night sky. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters, because there is no moonlight to interfere. The moon is not visible in the sky as its illuminated side faces away from the Earth's view. This month, it occurs at 5:57 PM EST. It causes a dimmer sky where fainter objects become easier to view.



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## YALLFest Comes to Charleston

by Anna Garziera

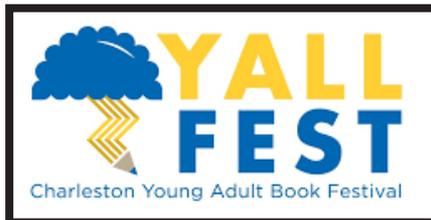
Founded in 2011, YALLFest is the largest Young Adult literature festival in the US, featuring over seventy Young Adult authors and numerous publishers. The two day event came to Charleston on November 11th and 12th this year, with events scheduled in historic buildings, cozy coffee shops, and public libraries. Readers and other enthusiasts prepared for this event all year round; students and teachers here at SOA have bought books by guest authors, researched local writers and improved their scope of literary research, in order to experience YALLFest to its full extent. YALLFest loyal attendee and SOA high school English teacher Mr. Martin shares his reasons for attending the fest. "To be honest, I don't read much YA literature, so my favorite aspect is running into students," he says.

The first event on the calendar was an ice cream social with Melissa de la Cruz, impossible to turn down, especially for the ice cream. What followed was a fun weekend of YallCrawl signing at Kudu Coffee, a Red Carpet Preview at Charleston County Public Library, book signings at Blue Bicycle Books, a Banned Book conference at the American Theater, and ending with workshops such as "Main Character Vibes: What Makes a Main Character Stick?" at the Charleston Museum.

"Neal Shusterman is an author almost all SOA students have read, so that is cool. I think it would be cool to see Angie Thomas since she is so famous," says Mr Martin, advising his students to go check out these local young authors. "My favorite memory was seeing Henry Hipp after getting his copy of *Scythe*, autographed. He had been reading it for independent reading and it was cool to see his excitement," he admits, reminiscing on past YALLFest experiences.

In 2017, Central Library Youth Services Manager Ms. Michelle Biwer attended YALLFest, and, with the help of writer Robin Willis, wrote a well rounded review of the event that later got published in the *School Library Journal*. In this article, Ms. Biwer outlines the highlights and downfalls of YALLFest. Some of the positives, she says, are that YALLFest is an event that happens in multiple locations, "not cooped up in a convention center."

One of the most valuable aspects of YALLFest is the interaction between young readers and young authors, Ms. Biwer explains. "Even though I'm a teen librarian, I don't usually get to spend much time just



chatting to teens from all over different parts of the country about books, so that was a valuable perk!" she admits, excited by the involvement of teens in the literary conversation.

With the rise in outlets for entertainment, there have been concerns regarding teens neglecting books as a way to escape reality. YALLFest offers a great way to spend an afternoon, as well as an opportunity to rekindle teens' love for literature.

**Applause wishes you a happy Thanksgiving!**

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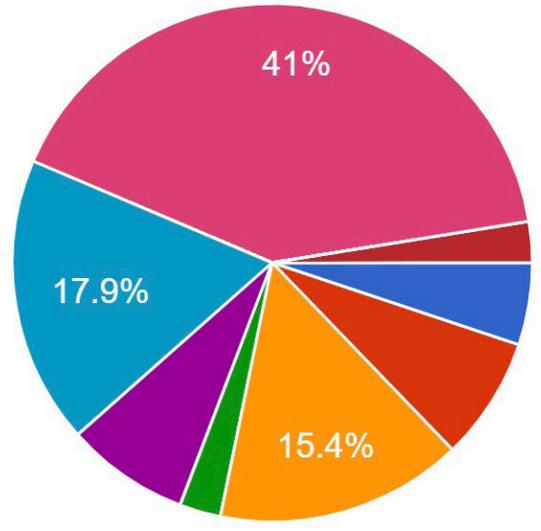
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### What is Your Favorite Thanksgiving Food?



- Turkey
- Stuffing
- Mashed Potatoes
- Casserole
- Pie
- Bread Rolls
- Mac & Cheese
- Veggies
- Green jello with pecans my grandmother makes yearly called "the green stuff"

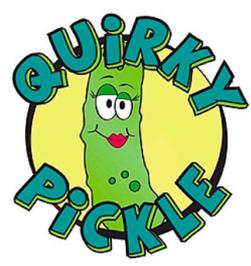
### Sophomores and Juniors Host Art Show



On October 27th, 2022, SOA sophomore and junior Visual Artists held their first art show of the year, the Fall Fine Art Show. Students displayed their art from the first quarter of the school year.



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## The Lake Logan Experience: a Boojum Time

By Guest Writer Linda Garziera

*On Wednesday, November 2nd, SOA juniors and seniors in Creative Writing left for a three day retreat to Lake Logan. Guest writer **Linda Garziera**, 11th grade Creative Writer, reports on the expedition.*

The trip every SOA Creative Writer looks forward to, and a great place to spill our tea and guts, had finally arrived. Lake Logan was advertised by our teachers as a means to “bond” and “write with nature.” The reality of the trip was more accurately described to me by junior writer Jessie Johnson, who had been looking forward to the Lake Logan trip since the start of her freshman year; “We can be weird and no one can judge us,” she explained to me on the way there.

The excitement started when South Carolina’s usually olive-green landscape began turning orange, and then red, and, Creative Writers being Creative Writers, everyone on the bus lost their mind. The place itself was spectacular, (and to employ some of my Creative Writing skills here), the landscape took our breaths away: still waters unbroken by herons, rippled by falling leaves and scattered logs, watery skies, and piles of color which padded the mountains, dams, forests, and moss.

The cabins were everything you’d ever expect, with wooden panes and flat (seemingly wooden) mattresses. We were warned against climbing out the windows early on. From these windows, the view was indeed tempting.

After unloading the bus and having lunch, we began exploring our surroundings, and Mr. Hammes, summoning his inner Gollum (warning: *LOTR* fanatic) quickly got comfortable in this new environment. We all loved seeing the teachers in their natural habitats, and it was refreshing to step out onto a pier which “might be broken, look out for cracks,” as Ms. DeTiberus let us know, and enjoy the cold after these past humid summer months in Charleston.

“Swimming” closely followed “climbing out of windows” in the forbidden list, after seniors Winslow Hastie and Jack Ross crept up to the edge of the pier and gazed longingly at the water. There seems to be a common tendency among us Creative Writers to scope out anything remotely dangerous and pursue it.

The day passed slowly and in a blur, and soon it was dark. Here is when Mr. Hammes started raving about peanut butter s’mores and did not stop until late into the night when, fire blazing (thanks to Lowcountry Advocates, Winslow Hastie, Jack Ross, and Jack Lindsay), all the grahams and chocolate and peanut butter were gone.

Friday started with SOA Creative Writing graduate, Hailey Williams, in her workshop for ekphrasis and black-out poetry, in which everyone got a little too excited destroying books and bleeding Sharpie ink into the torn out pages. We shook off any excitement with an uphill hike with Ms. DeTiberus, and then the day got even better. Hidden somewhere in the ups and downs of the various cabins was a room, obscure and undiscovered by the teachers, where fun reigned. There were pool tables, foosball tables, leather chairs and 80’s sofas, a bar stocked with candles and expired malt powder, an unplugged fridge,



**Creative Writing students on the water at Lake Logan.**

and just about every painting imaginable hung in various patterns on the wall. This was Boojum’s Cave. Naturally, we were drawn to this room like moths to a flame, or like Mr. Hammes to fantasy books. Music, seances, pool, and gossip. A great night awaited us.

Soon, a talentless talent show was put together; my friend group juggled and played terrible music on the piano, others sang, danced, jumped to the left, jumped to the right, told stories and funnier stories, wiggled their ears, and as the list grew, so did the laughter. What followed was a *Steve Harvey Show* type game which asked easy questions and progressively harder ones. Jack Ross was especially thrown off by one particular question: “If your dog ran away, what is something surprising it could take?” “A gun. I would be flabbergasted if my dog took a gun.” His team won that round.

The trip had to end too soon. The last day took a positive turn only when, to the great delight of Ms. DeTiberus, we stopped at the Spartanburg Mall to grab some lunch. No one really knew if Spartanburg was a town, and why their mall was so far out into the highway, but we were happy to be fed, and Aiden Penna was especially excited by the grape-flavored goods he found at the dispenser machines: “Oh my gosh, they have GRAPE GUM, SYDNEY!”

We’re so grateful that our lovely teachers, Ms. Hart, Ms. DeTiberus, and Mr. Hammes, were willing to take such a wacky group of people to such a secluded area in the mountains and put up with us day in and day out during workshops, walks, and those gray hours between sunset and 1:00 AM. I personally cannot wait for next year when my class can go as seniors, and prank the juniors and teachers, and maybe, just maybe, climb out of the windows, or swim.

## SOA Students and Graduates Visit the Coastal Carolina Fair

by Anna Garziera

*On Sunday November 6th, **Anna Garziera** and SOA Alumna **Alma Lutas** attended the Coastal Carolina Fair that took place in Ladson, SC with some friends. **Anna Garziera** reports on their experience.*

Established in 1957, the Coastal Carolina Fair is one of the lowcountry’s oldest events that brings people of all ages and backgrounds together for a fun-tastic afternoon. With promises of rides, food stands, shows, and chili competitions, South Carolinians drive for miles to Exchange Park in Ladson, SC to attend the festival with their families and make lifelong memories.

Our intentions of attending the fair were born in early September, when words spread in Downtown Charleston of the prominent Chili Cook-Off. When Alma suggested that my mom enter the competition, the idea was shut off immediately. “Why?” my mom asked, in her strong Italian accent, roughly translated to “that sounds like a lot of effort,” which we all know Italians aren’t known for. While my mom makes some mean chili, she is clearly not ready to share it with the rest of the Charleston area.

What we were all ready to share, however, was word of the fair, and our party of two soon enough grew to a party of eight. Among us were Linda Garziera and Merrik Moriarty,



**Juniors Linda Garziera and Merrik Moriarty at the Coastal Carolina Fair.**

juniors at SOA, as well as SOA graduate Philia Walker, and a few other friends. All packed in Alma's car, we drove to Ladson on the morning of the 6th, and arrived at the park around midday.

At first impact, the fair was everything I had ever imagined it to be. The skyline was glittered with sickeningly colorful signs, rusty bolts on sketchy rides, and displays of neon strobe lights. Wafts of burned canola oil and powdered sugar showered us at every corner; I could taste the funnel cake already.

We first stopped by the obligatory Fine Art Show, where we spotted several paintings by SOA students and teachers. Among others, a self-portrait by SOA graduate Alma Lutas, and golden framed painting of oysters by SOA high school Visual Arts teacher, Ms. Richardson. The Visual Arts graduates could spot SOA artwork from a mile away; "I saw that one in the art room," Philia Walker pointed to a piece featuring a water faucet, titled "The Last Drop."

As soon as we obtained our wristbands, we beelined for our first ride, the Wave Swinger, which looked fun enough, but not too much fun. Our expectations were confirmed, and we even got some extra excitement when a guy's water bottle fell from his seat and thumped on the patchy grass below.

Our second ride was unexpectedly good. We queued for the Arctic Express patiently, and were even met with some level of sassiness from the customer safety employee when I tried to buckle us up before he had come around to our seat. "It's like, when you go to the airport, do you try to teach the pilot how to fly the plane?" he muttered under his mustache. I couldn't think of anything to say, so I let the matter drop.

Half-torn and peeling from the seat in front of ours was a sign that read "Bigger people sitting on the outside." *Uh-oh*, I thought. I, five foot three, being part of the "smaller people" category, was going to get crushed. Upon first glance, this ride looked innocent, with an easy up-and-down wave motion that went in circles over and over. What I hadn't considered was the centrifugal force pushing the passengers to the outside, thus the sign. I came off that ride dizzy, hair like a matted mane, and with a lopsided grin.

After the ride, Philia washed down the fun with a fifteen dollar cup of lemonade. Yes, fifteen. A marketing genius had placed a lemon with sunglasses on the "hand-pressed lemonade" sign, bottled his product in a strawberry shaped cup, overpriced it, and called it a day. "At least I get to keep this cool cup," Philia sighed, unconvinced.

Ecstatic from the last ride, and refreshed by the lemonade, we were ready for more action. Without a word, we headed for The Hulk, a monster of a ride with a mechanical arm that swishes you back and forth and upside down nonstop for five minutes. The line was long, but as we queued behind two fifteen-year-old love birds, we decided that it was going to be worth it. Let me tell you now, it was not worth it. My first mistake was not tapping out like Alma as soon as we had gotten to the front of the line. Unfortunately, I realized this too late, when my feet left the floor; that's when I began to pray. At first, the swooshes did not seem too violent, and I laughed and screamed on cue with everybody else. But when I was lifted one hundred and seventy two feet into the air, upside down, held only by the harness, my soul left my body, and I passed out. I don't remember anything else about the ride, except for feeling incredibly sick right after.

The rest of the night passed slowly. Philia had had one thing in mind ever since arriving at the fair, and kept asking, "can we go to the petting zoo?" I sat down outside of the animal enclosures, and dozed off as my friends hopped on a few more rides, each time

## Sign of the Month: "Thanksgiving"

by Ariana Lane

Demonstrated by Ian Greig,  
12th Grade ASL & Deaf Culture



1. To begin, bring both of your hands to your chest, palms facing you.
2. Move both of your hands back and forth away from your body several times.
3. For the second part of the sign, bring your left hand to your chin with all fingers placed together and your right hand up, until your palm faces you.
4. Bring both hands down straight in front of you.

promising it would be “the last one.”

At the end of the day, my first impression of the fair had been fairly accurate. The masses come every year to the Coastal Carolina Fair to face their fear of heights on the Ferris Wheel, eat junk food at its finest (we almost bought a ¼ pound of deep fried cheese on a stick), and waste some money on impossible ladder climbing and ring toss challenges. But, whatever happens at the fair, they leave with a big smile on their faces, convinced more than ever that it was truly worth it.

## Applause Editor Performs Solo Recital

by Giovanni Cusatis

Unless you’ve been living under a rock, you’ve probably heard about Peter O’Malley’s cello recital from the posters around school, the morning announcements, or from the various ads in past issues of *Applause*. Once meeting Peter, it becomes pretty clear how much he loves his cello. Besides some hidden personas (how lucky are those who know Peter the Creative!), Peter is an open book, and his love for the instrument defines who he is at SOA.

On Thursday, November 10th, Peter held his cello recital at St. Johannes Lutheran Church. The church was a great venue, with the only downside being the lack of air conditioning, which was seen by Peter’s frantic wiping of sweat onto his knees. The sweaty hands were understandable after hearing and experiencing the three pieces he performed. Peter played Bach’s Cello Suite No. 5 in C Minor, which is a six movement marathon of a piece, fully memorized, making it even more impressive. He performed the suite using a scordatura tuning, which means the A-string was tuned down to a G, adding further resonance to the cello.

After Bach, he played the first movement of Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson’s *Lamentations: Black/Folk Song Suite for Solo Cello*. It was called “Fuguing Tune,” and took great inspiration from Black folk music, spirituals, and the blues. Although it was written three centuries after the Bach Cello Suites, it drew from classical literature, including the Bach suites. The piece captures emotion and the blues through the cello’s rolled chords and rhythms, which resonated well in the beautiful St. Johannes Church.

The final piece was David Popper’s twentieth etude in his book *Hohe Schule des Violoncellospiels*, a collection of forty extremely difficult cello exercises with the purpose of improving technical skill. It was clear Peter was strong in his technique as he performed octaves, chords, and fast shifts from the lowest notes on his fingerboard to notes normally only violinists would play. This piece was a great way to end the recital, as he was able to show off some of the most demanding cello techniques.

Although the attendance was a little lower than expected thanks to the tropical storm, Nicole couldn’t put a damper on the whole night, as everyone who was able to come got to witness great playing and an equally good reception with lots of cookies. If you couldn’t make it to the recital, I highly recommend you see Peter’s next recital on January 8th at the Unitarian Church. Give him a week or two, and I’m sure posters will start popping up around school.



Provided

## SOA Theater Teacher Inspired by Shakespeare

by Anna Garziera

Staff writer **Anna Garziera** spoke with **Mr. Younts**, SOA Theater teacher, about his background and his inspiration for the production of *Hamlet* performed by Theater students in October.

**Anna Garziera: What is it about *Hamlet* that made you choose it, out of all other Shakespearean plays, for this year’s junior Theater production?**

**George Younts:** I had two really good actors come up who I knew would take direction well, work on their own on the part, and memorize all of those lines. They wanted the challenge.

**AG: What were the challenges of compressing the four hour play into eighty-five minutes, and how did you decide what to keep and what to cut?**

**GY:** Basically, I pulled out the two minor plot lines and one major plot point, then I streamlined all scenes and monologues.

**AG: How did you make decisions about blocking, the stage set-up, and your portrayal of the ghost?**

**GY:** In this version, the spirit for me was truly a spirit. So, in keeping with the great chain of being that the renaissance still sort of believed in, I always knew the spirit had to come from the Heavens or be up high.

**AG: Why did you choose to have the audience on-stage for this production of *Hamlet*?**

**GY:** At the beginning of this production, the RMMT did not have seats, and once they got them in, I decided to still go with the studio on-stage style because *Hamlet* is probably one of the more intimate of Shakespeare’s plays due to all of the sharing of thoughts by the main character.

**AG: The scene where Hamlet is cleaning up after the death of Polonius seemed highly original, using a bucket of water and having a sponge ready for Hamlet’s next famous monologue comparing his friends to sponges, and even incorporating the famous quote *Macbeth*. How did you come up with this scenario?**

**GY:** Probably twenty-plus years ago, I saw a fringe production of *Hamlet* with five actors playing all of the parts in about ninety minutes, and I remember they did fun stuff with a sponge and slipped in famous lines from other Shakespearean plays. We did *Macbeth* last year, so I thought I would do a nod to that production.

**AG: What did you like most about the production as a whole? What do you wish you had done differently?**

**GY:** I liked that we did it and had a good energy. The production was pretty clear. I wish I had had one more week to work on acting choices, but we cut our process to allow *Phantom* to get into the RMMT, and then to make *Spongebob* happen for the whole school in the winter.

**AG: What was your own experience like acting in *Hamlet*, what part did you play, and how was it different from the SOA theater production of *Hamlet* that you directed?**

**GY:** I did the Polonius/Grave Digger track about nine years ago. It was a pretty simple production and it happened in a church hall in Downtown Charleston. Of course, it was much longer than the SOA one, but I relished the opportunity to act in some Shakespeare.



Mr. Younts with a student.

Anna Garziera

## Applause Speaks with This Year's Yearbook Editor

*Peter O'Malley reached out to newly-appointed Yearbook Editor, Kaitlyn Pinckney, to learn about her role on the yearbook staff.*

**Peter O'Malley: What do you do as Yearbook Editor?**

**Kaitlyn Pinckney:** Most of my work as editor consists of planning. I plan out what each mini-team is working on and when they work on it.

**PO: What do you look forward to accomplishing this year?**

**KP:** We're working very hard to get students more involved in what the yearbook class does. We often discuss ideas on how we can get middle and high school students to participate in the process, so that they can feel proud knowing they've helped contribute.

**PO: What do other members of the staff do, and how much of the work is put on your shoulders?**

**KP:** The work is split into three teams: Storytelling, Design, and Marketing. The storytelling team consists of Mia, Ollie, Mason, and Avem. They are the ones in charge of photography and interviewing the students. Our designers: Tokyou, Charlotte, Marley, and Reyna all work together on the pages of the book as well as visual aspects. They are the ones responsible for our amazing cover! Our marketers, Anya and Natalie, handle all of the advertising. Whenever you see a poster or hear an announcement from us, just know they were the ones behind it! While the teams do most of the work, I have to make sure that I am planned well ahead in advance so that I can direct each team on what needs to get done. I am five steps ahead of the rest of the team at all times. I'm always there to support my team, so when they are unable to finish a task or are feeling overwhelmed, I am more than happy to help support them and complete their work.

**PO: How does your team decide the theme for the yearbook?**

**KP:** We first came up with ideas by ourselves, then worked in small groups to combine our ideas into one big idea. Each small group would present our ideas to the class, then we had one big group discussion on the options and decided from that!

**PO: Where does your team currently stand in the process of making the yearbook?**

**KP:** Now that we have a theme and cover, we've been getting a lot of pictures and started working on the actual pages of the book. As of right now, our main focus is the middle school section of the book, then eventually we'll move into the high school section.

**PO: What can we look forward to seeing in this year's yearbook?**

**KP:** More inclusivity! We are trying very hard to have each and every student equally represented in the yearbook this year. Be on the lookout for our storytelling team! They are almost always out and about snapping some shots around campus.



Kaitlyn Pinckney

Peter O'Malley

## Phantom of the Opera Enjoys Sold-Out Weekend

by Ariana Lane

Being around such talented individuals every day from 8:30 to 3:30 can sometimes make us forget how talented our students really are. *The Phantom of the Opera* served as a great reminder of what our school stands for. If you were lucky enough to go see the play, you would likely agree that everything from the sets, costumes, and Symphony Orchestra, to the dancing, singing, and acting came together to paint a captivating and emotional story that left many in tears and even more with chills. Since the first high school convocation of the year, which left the student population in pure shock, we all knew that *Phantom* was going to be brilliant; but even with those expectations, we were blown away by the sheer talent displayed by our school.

Even a month after seeing our school's production of *The Phantom of the Opera*, you can still see the effect it had on our student body. Although I'm sure every Vocal major had hoped to never hear those songs again, I still hear people walking down the hallways humming along to "Masquerade" or turning to their friends at lunch to yell, "sing for me!!" The gothic tale of a murderous phantom haunting the 19th-century Paris theatre, Palais Garnier Opera House, managed to easily capture the attention of the entire school. It is still amazing to see how production such as this has been able to create a connection between students and a sense of school spirit.

Known as the longest-running Broadway show in history, *The Phantom of the Opera* is a musical by the composer Andrew Lloyd Webber. Webber based his musical on a novel from 1910 by Gaston Leroux, which didn't quite gain popularity until the musical was released. Andrew Lloyd Webber's original compositions are already renowned as iconic, and the SOA Symphony was able to maintain its record. If it weren't for the symphony being visible, I would have completely believed that the soundtrack was pre-recorded and played over the speakers. To be completely honest, if someone told me that now, I'd still partially believe the entire symphony was simply pretending to play their instruments

while the soundtrack played in the background, it was that amazing. Joining the musicians, the ensemble supported the story and leads flawlessly, with interesting characters, dancing, and of course, the Vocal Department's incredible voices.



Senior Vocal major Norah Bernstein as Christine Daae in *Phantom*.



The cast, ensemble, and Symphony after one of their many incredible performances.

Lauren Holladay

**Look out for your next issue of Applause on Friday, December 16th!**

environment of the opera house was easily achieved and provided an excellent backdrop for the story. *continued on page 13*

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**Grammy-Winning Trumpeter Visits SOA**

*more photos on page 34*

A native of Awendaw, SC, trumpeter Charlton Singleton began his musical studies at the age of three on the piano. He would then go on to study the organ, violin, cello, and the trumpet throughout elementary, middle and high school. In 1994, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance from South Carolina State University. SOA students and Jazz Band members report on his appearance as a guest speaker on Wednesday, November 9th.



Charlton Singleton spoke extensively about the history of Gullah Geechee culture in the southeast, but most specifically about its relation to music and jazz, his own profession. It was fascinating to hear of a history through its roots in food, music, education, arts, and tradition from someone who was and is such an involved part of Gullah Geechee culture themselves. Charlton's knowledge of the history of jazz relayed the story of the Jenkins Orphanage, an orphanage started by a priest inspired to take in young orphaned musicians before giving them an academic and, more importantly, musical education. These stories of local contribution to modern society through the influences of Gullah Geechee culture were inspiring and eye opening, particularly from the perspective of Charleton Singleton.

**Claude the Pigeon, SOA Student Band, Performs at Lunch**

by Lauren Holladay

SOA students Amelia Counts, Lila and Audra Elm, and Sam Harris performed in their band, Claude the Pigeon, during high school lunch on Friday, November 4th, for a crowd of their excited peers. Follow them on Instagram, [@claudethepigeon](https://www.instagram.com/claudethepigeon), for information on future shows and performances!



The musical commenced with a shocking solo by the story's prima donna, Carlotta, played by Meredith Layne Hungerford and Britni Johnsen. Only a few minutes into the production, the entire audience was already completely captivated. The story quickly continues, whisking us away into the world of Palais Garnier Opera House. Introductions to the main cast begin, as the story begins to unfold. Our very own prima donna is quickly joined on stage by Ubaldo Piangi, played by Kaleb King, for an impressive duet during the dress rehearsal of *Hannibal*. The secretive character of Madame Girya, played by Lauren Bas and Molly Scholer, who's songs are as morose as they are melodic, appears on stage alongside the lively Meg Girya, played by Eva Allen and Emma Ladd, all giving strong performances. The hilarious duo of Monsieur Andre, played by Devon Brunson and Austin Smith, alongside Monsieur Firim, played by Carson Daigneault, managed to bring out laughter from the audience, even in the most dramatic scenes.

Brett Hunter performed his role of Raoul seamlessly, and shared several impressive duets alongside Christine. Finally, our leading two, Norah Bernstein as Christine Daae and the dual casting of Austin Smith and Devon Brunson as The Phantom of the Opera. Norah Bernstein performed perfectly in her role as Christine Daae: utilizing her incredible vocal range, she was able to pack emotion into each song, leading to a faultless interpretation of her character. The second leading character, The Phantom, was played by both Austin Smith and Devon Brunson. They both tackled this difficult character with ease, skillfully portraying the chilling character in his descent into a jealous rage.

In the final performance, we got to see behind the curtain as the main cast stepped out of their roles to thank and congratulate their teachers, Ms. Caffarel, Dr. Selby, and Mr. Rogers. In a touching moment, the audience was lucky enough to hear the cast express their gratitude towards their teachers, and the work they put into the production. After five back-to-back productions, I can only imagine the exhaustion of every high school Vocal, Symphony, and Dance student in our school. Make sure to take it easy on your local *Phantom Of The Opera* performers for at least a few months. All together, the School of the Arts production was as impressive as it was unforgettable.



The performers congratulating and thanking their teachers after the last show.

Lauren Holladay

Provided

## SOA High School Dance Visits Disney

by Lauren Holladay

On October 18th, 2022, twenty-one Dance majors packed their bags and headed down to Orlando, Florida, where they would be staying for the next five days. With help from SOA senior Dance majors Emma Davis and Libby Glaser, the Dance Department and the Booster Club were able to put together an amazing trip full of rides, shows, trick-or-treating, and of course, dancing.

The students, ranging from freshmen to seniors, spent time in all four Disney World parks, and were additionally able to experience Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party, an exclusive event with candy, costumes, and short wait-times for rides. The group stayed at the Pop Century Resort, and enjoyed time by the pool as well. In the parks, the dancers saw shows like *The Lion King*, waited in lines for rides like Flight

of Passage, and were even able to participate in an impromptu street dance where they were able to show off their talent.

However, while all of the students had fun enjoying rides and shows in the parks, the real fun came on their last day in Disney: the behind the scenes Disney Imagination Campus Dance Workshop. In this workshop, professionals from Disney Live Entertainment taught choreography from one of the many popular Disney performances shown around the world, as well as informed students about audition processes and rehearsal practices as a Disney dancer. Additionally, the students were taught about facial expressions during their dances, and the importance of how they can highlight their performances.

Teaching the workshop was Brittney Gimsley, an South Carolina native, along with 2012 SOA Dance alumnus Kendrick Pasley, both current Disney performers. Learning from these professionals allowed the Dancers an inside look at how dance can influence their futures, and inspired many to work towards careers in the industry. Senior Dance major Melanie Gaillard strongly enjoyed the workshop, as she aspires to work as a Disney performer in the future: "Having the opportunity to participate in an experience like this and see what a rehearsal and audition would be like has been a blessing. It confirmed my dream that I'm going to make this happen!"

Throughout their time on this trip, while still focusing on their major, the dancers were encouraged to have fun and enjoy Disney. SOA Dance teacher Ms. Tillotson expressed her excitement about the trip and this opportunity for her students to escape the pressures of high school for a few days, while still being surrounded by their peers: "I hope they were able to bond with one another, have fun, laugh, let go, and be kids! At times, SOA and the world can be a stressful place, and I hope that week we were away they were able to refresh and have fun."

After such a fun-packed five days, the dancers have a hard time choosing a favorite part. But, being able to spend time with their SOA Dance family and make numerous memories together is the highlight for them all: "My favorite part of the trip was being able to make memories that will last forever with my seniors and being able to make new friendships and bonds together!" says Dance major Sophia Katsibas. While the trip may be over, the memories that the dancers made will last a lifetime.

**Visit our calendar on page 3 to see upcoming events happening at SOA!**



SOA Dance majors at the entrance to Animal Kingdom in Disney.

Provided



SOA Dance majors during their Disney Imagination Campus Dance Workshop.

## The Excellence and Artistry of *Spongebob*

by Manny Stavrinakis

Prior to the upcoming SOA *SpongeBob* musical, I feel that it is appropriate to discuss the history and significance of *Spongebob Squarepants*. *Spongebob* was aired on live television for the first time on July 17, 1999. After release, it gained enormous popularity by just the second season, and became the highest rated and the most profitable asset of Nickelodeon. Today, it is the fifth longest-running American animated series on television.

*Spongebob Squarepants* was originally written by Stephen Hillenburg to educate students about various marine life forms. The main characters in the show are Spongebob Squarepants, Patrick Star, and Squidward Tentacles, three neighbors that live in the underwater town of Bikini Bottom.

Spongebob, known for his square pants and living in a pineapple under the sea, is a yellow anthropomorphic sea sponge who works as a fry cook at the Krusty Krab. He diligently attends Mrs. Puff's Boating School, but has never passed the final boating test. He is incredibly optimistic and enthusiastic about his job and his friends.

Patrick Star is a pink starfish who lives under a rock. All of his appliances and furniture are made of sand, and his character is best known for his low intelligence. One of his only talents is his jellyfishing ability. He does this with Spongebob all the time, and it is one of his favorite hobbies. While he may not be the star of the show, his personality works together with Spongebob's to create an unbreakable bond.

Squidward Tentacles, contrary to popular belief, is not actually a squid, he is an octopus. Hillenburg only named him Squidward because "Octoward" didn't have a nice ring to it. Squidward lives inside a tiki head in between Spongebob's pineapple and Patrick's rock. Squidward works as a cashier at the Krusty Krab and is very passionate about playing the clarinet. He loves antiques and decorates his home with various paintings, and he is very arrogant and short-tempered when it comes to his neighbors. His constant search for peace and quiet is interrupted by Spongebob and Patrick in every episode. It is quite ironic, as Spongebob and Patrick are completely unaware of Squidward's dislike towards them, instead, viewing Squidward as a friend. The three of these characters compliment each other perfectly.

Along with these main characters, there are a plethora of side characters. Mr. Krabs is a money obsessed crab and the owner of the Krusty Krab, a restaurant shaped like a crab trap and the creator of the Krabby Patty. Located across the street is the Chum Bucket, owned by business rival to Mr. Krabs, Sheldon Plankton. Throughout the show, he tries to steal the "secret formula" of the Krabby Patty, but is unsuccessful everytime.

On the other side of town, there is a glass dome void of any water. This terrarium is the home of Sandy Cheeks, a squirrel from Texas. She appears sporadically throughout the show and has to wear an oxygen suit when she is out of her dome. Another character that appears on occasion is Mrs. Puff, a pufferfish and owner of her own boating school. Other characters include Pearl, a sperm whale and the daughter of Mr. Krabs, Gary, Spongebob's pet snail who meows like a cat, and Karen,



Manny Stavrinakis

Giovanni Cusatis

a computer that is the co-owner of the Chum Bucket and the wife of Sheldon Plankton.

All of these characters create a tight-knit community on the show that is extremely entertaining and the reason why it has such a great audience. *Spongebob* may just be a show about sea creatures, but the individual personalities of each character and the incredible writing of the show makes it one of the best shows of all time.

## SOA Dancers Receive Cecilia Slowinski Scholarship

by Lauren Holladay

During the summer of 2022, SOA Dance majors Addison Long and Olivia Scolnick were given the opportunity to study dance among renowned artists and other talented students. This opportunity was funded by the Cecilia Slowinski Scholarship, an SOA Dance Department scholarship that honors the founder of the department, Ms. Cecilia "Cissy" Slowinski. Ms. Slowinski, SOA's dance teacher for the first fifteen years of its existence, and her impact on SOA, are commemorated annually with this scholarship, awarded to two skilled SOA Dancers.

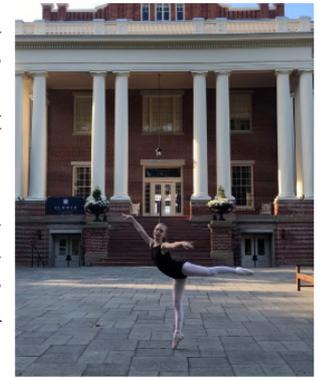
To apply for this scholarship, students were required to submit a letter of recommendation from a dance instructor and write an essay about how the scholarship and summer study program would be beneficial for the growth of the applicant, as a dancer and as a person. Judged by a panel of SOA staff members and then awarded by the Dance faculty and Booster Club, the scholarship is chosen for one middle schooler and one high schooler every year.

Addison Long, a seventh grade Dancer at SOA, was one of the two 2022 recipients of the scholarship. Not confident that she would win since she was only a sixth grader at the time, Addison persisted, and applied despite her doubts. After winning the scholarship, her summer study program landed her in Raleigh, North Carolina, studying with Carolina Ballet at Saint Mary's School.

This program, a three week dance intensive with classes from ten AM to five PM, six days a week, provided Addison the resources to study and improve in her ballet, jazz, and modern dance skills. Learning from different teachers and being surrounded by talented peers gave her the chance to develop and grow as a dancer, as well as an individual. As it was her first time away from home on her own, Addison additionally learned other life skills and how to manage her time effectively: "I had to learn to wash my own laundry and stay on schedule myself," Addison explains.

With aspirations to pursue a career in dance in her future, Addison is incredibly grateful for the chance to learn about different genres of dance, study with skilled teachers, make new friends, and improve her techniques to become a better dancer. And, Addison states, "the food was also amazing."

The second recipient of the 2022 Cecilia Slowinski Scholarship is tenth grade Dance major Olivia Scolnick. While she followed the same audition process as Addison, Olivia's summer dance program was located closer to home, at the Dance Conservatory of Charleston. The



Addison Long, 7th grade Dance major, at Saint Mary's School for her dance summer study program.

Provided

program was four weeks long, cut into two two-week segments, and featured many skilled students, teachers, and guest dancers.

Surrounded by talented peers, Olivia spent the dance intensive improving her dance techniques, as well as learning from those around her. Guest teachers, including former NYC Ballet Principal dancer James Fayette, Radio City Rockette Megan Levinson, and *Stars of America* ballet dancer Danielle Diniz, were introduced, and worked with the group on developing their skills further. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that Olivia received to work while surrounded by other skilled students, as well as professional dancers, allowed her to refine her techniques and better her skills as a dancer.

Also interested in studying dance in the future and working as a professional dancer, Olivia is grateful for this opportunity to create connections and enhance her expertise in dance for the future: "This experience was very beneficial to my dancing, and I really appreciate receiving the scholarship."

While the summer programs may be over for Olivia and Addison, the skills and techniques that they learned and the memories that they made will stay with them forever. These two students continue to flourish in their art in Dance at SOA, and the Dance Department looks forward to honoring Ms. Cecilia Slowinski with her scholarship again in the spring.

## How to Invest in Yourself and Your Time

by Anna Garziera

Learning to invest in yourself may be the most profitable investment you will ever make.

With the word "investment," the stock market or real estate might come to mind. This usually scares most high school students, and some adults, because investing capital seems like a big commitment, and the return might not be worth the risk. Though Warren Buffet might disagree, money isn't everything. This is why today I will not be talking about the investments one can make with their capital, but the ones one can make with their time.

**Knowledge:** Curiosity is the main difference between stagnant lives and those that drive forward. Notice that the most admired individuals are and always will be those who seek to widen their knowledge of the world in some way. Not just the usual geniuses like Da Vinci or Einstein, but also artists, like Picasso, or Warhol. Be it a pursuit of unbound



Olivia Scolnick, 10th grade Dance major, during her summer dance program at the Dance Conservatory of Charleston.

Provided

subjects, or in-breadth trivia facts of the world's cultures, their curiosity was what drove their thirst to always know more. There's something incredibly satisfying in learning something just for the sake of it, with no deadline or exam at the end of the semester.

**Interests:** A well-rounded individual always has a handful of niche skills up their sleeves. Academics are important (duh, we wouldn't be here otherwise) but it's no use if all you're good for in life is passing some exams. Regrettably, interests are neglected all too often. For a long time, the most dreaded question at family dinners for me was "So, what are your hobbies?" because in the face of this question, I had to lie. Truth was, Aunt Jane, I had no hobbies. No skills, no passions, nothing to show for. Having something to show for besides academic work is important, if nothing else, to apply for college. So, I urge you to find relaxation in something other than Netflix, and find comfort in knowing that you may just develop a skill that will do you good in life; both keep you interesting and keep you sane.

**Friendships:** There's nothing in your life worth more than the people in it. Growing up, I had always thought of making friends like finding coins on the ground. I thought that if you looked too hard for them, then you'd never find them. I knew that they were out there, but I thought they'd just appear to me casually one day. Only when I moved to England was I forced to actively make friends. As it turns out, friends are more like flowers. Not all perfect, not all equally fragile, rare or beautiful, but not all that hard to find. Just like flowers, friendships die when not taken care of. Investing time in friendships is as crucial as it is rewarding. Especially during these last few years, isolation has become our standard. All too many friendships have gone down the drain, with the pandemic having been adopted to be the most common excuse to avoid social interaction. Truth is, friendships are exhausting. But if you're not willing to put that effort in, your once blooming relationships may just die. And you may be left alone in an empty patch of grass.

**Retirement Plan:** Investing in your retirement plan is the easiest of them all. Just put all your pennies in a piggy bank and wait. Adults always say to start saving up for your future early, to keep the money for when you really need it. Last summer, I had the opportunity to spend a week with my best friends in Romania. Having just received my birthday money from my grandma and seeking a feeling of independence, I decided to pay for my part of the trip myself, instead of letting my parents pay for me. Perhaps this was less than advisable, considering it halved my savings, tearing my already pathetic retirement plan to pieces. Turns out, I had made the best investment of them all, which is investing in memories. Now, I hope my future job pays well enough that I can retire in a decent manner, in a decent place, and at a decent age, without having to count every penny. However, I still think that the most valued possession I will have when I'm old and graying will be the faint recollection of moments I shared with those around me, never once asking myself whether investing in my happiness was really worth it.



Albert Einstein sighted in an unusual environment, playing his violin, instead of in front of a blackboard.

musication.nyc

## SOA Juniors Perform *Hamlet*

by Anna Garziera

While most SOA students and teachers were cleaning up the first quarter grades before they were due, juniors in the Theater Department had been working since September to prepare a production of *Hamlet*. On Monday, October 17th and Tuesday, October 18th, the SOA Theater Department assembled a superb cast, spoke some of the greatest lines ever written with skill and heart, and time flew by.

The four-hour Shakespearan play was compressed by Theater

answers, in-depth detail of specific

teacher Mr. Younts into eighty-five minutes, and with Younts himself directing the performance, the production was highly successful in all four runs.

I attended the second block performance on Tuesday, and was immediately excited at the sight of the stage. Rows of seats were staggered, arranged in a semi-circular shape: this way, the audience would experience the show from only a few feet away. In the center of the stage was a painting of two faces, produced by the theater tech class. After an introduction by Mr. Younts, the show began. Darkness. Law Fox, playing *Hamlet*, appears first, and in a fit of anger destroys the painting, as modern beats sound from the speakers. From the very start of the performance, the actors were able to convey emotions strongly to the audience.



The famous graveyard scene

provided

Compared to other productions of *Hamlet* I have seen, the modern spin that SOA students decided to apply to the Shakespearean play gave the audience a more approachable entry to the Elizabethan masterpiece. Costumes were used cleverly, with younger characters such as Laertes dressed in bomber jackets and jeans, and Ophelia in an all white dress. Similarly, the dimension of the stage was used fully, with the ghost of deceased king Hamlet appearing on a platform, new king Claudius looking down from a ramp of stairs, and actors appearing and disappearing from the corridor that split the spectators in half.

With the audience onstage, joint reactions quickly became a trend throughout the performance, most notably in the humorous interpretation of Polonius, King Claudius' confidant, played by Henry Hipp. His exaggerated accent and clever use of his cane made the middle schoolers chuckle, even when his lines were spoken in an archaic language.

Impossible to ignore, however, was the heroic performance of lead actor Ramere Kelly who played Hamlet, when he accidentally cut his hand on the performance on Monday, opening night, and yet managed to keep a straight face and keep the act going until the end. Audience members report on the shock at seeing the injury. "I looked over, and there was blood dripping on the stage," reports Mr. Morelli on his second attendance of the performance. When the "To be, or not to be," soliloquy scene arrived, and Law Fox pulled out a twelve-inch kitchen knife, the audience gave a collective gasp.

The shock of Monday night, however, did not at all detract from the overall sensational production. Jolin Pan, who played Queen Gertrude, reports on the success of the play. "I'm truly so proud of everyone in the show. And of course the experience was only elevated by our light and sound guys," she admits. "I'm so happy I was able to be a part of this production, and grateful for the amazing humans I got to work with."

## New HS Band Director Brings Rich Musical Background to SOA

Applause staff writer **Z'Nyah Nelson** caught up with SOA's new band director, **Mr. Dustin King**, Western Carolina College and University of South Carolina graduate, after this year's *Jump, Jive, and Wail* to discuss his musical background and goals for his students.

**Z'Nyah Nelson: Where did you grow up and what were some of your childhood interests?**

**Mr. Dustin King:** I grew up close to Greensboro, NC. As a kid I loved

Legos and all things *Star Wars*.

**ZN: At what age did you take an interest in music and what instrument(s) did you play?**

**DK:** I started learning the piano when I was seven. In middle school, I chose the saxophone as my primary instrument, but I continued to study piano in addition to saxophone all through college.

**ZN: Who have been your biggest musical influences and why?**

**DK:** I was blessed to be surrounded by a very musical family. Everyone from my grandparents and parents to my aunts and uncles had musical abilities, and my siblings, cousins, and I were nurtured in that musical environment. My uncle, who was an North Carolina All-State band saxophonist in high school and continues to play as an

adult, was the one that convinced me to play the saxophone.

**ZN: What made you decide to choose a career in education?**

**DK:** My high school band director was a huge influence on me. It wasn't just about learning to be a better musician, but a better person and leader that put me on the path that I am still on. It was his passion to help guide high school students to success in life through music that made me want to do the same.

**ZN: Speaking of which, how do you feel learning music helps students in other areas of their life?**

**DK:** Music development in a person's life has so many cognitive, social/emotional, and life-skill benefits. Studies have shown time and again that students engaged in musical development are higher academic achievers and tend to be strong leaders in and out of the classroom. They understand what it means to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves and that the journey to get where you want to go is just as important as the destination.

**ZN: What is your top professional goal right now?**

**DK:** My professional goal is to make the SOA Band one of the best in the nation. There is tremendous talent at SOA, and I know through hard work and dedication to getting better that the band students are going to take the band program to a new level of prestige.

**ZN: Do you do any performing on your own?**

**DK:** I do still perform with the Palmetto Concert Band, a professional adult wind band based in Columbia, SC.

**ZN: What have been some highlights in your musical and teaching career?**

**DK:** There are a couple of highlights from my career that come to mind. First was my band's performance in the 2015 London New Year's Day Parade when I was teaching at Batesburg-Leesville High School. Being in London, performing for millions of people in the city and millions more watching all over the world was incredible. The second highlight was while I was teaching at Ridge View High School, performing for the USC Band Clinic in the middle of the COVID pandemic. We were the first concert in the Koger Center in over a year and there were so many obstacles to make that concert the success that it was. After it was over, countless people reached out to express the hope that concert provided, and it was simply incredible to offer a glimpse of normalcy when there was still so much uncertainty.

**ZN: What were the rewards and challenges of this year's *Jump,***



Mr. Dustin King

### Jive, and Wail?

**DK:** Preparing for Jump, Jive, and Wail was a completely new experience for me. Thinking of what music to play, the logistics of the day, advertising, and more was so different from what I have done in the past, so I learned a lot through the process. The event itself was remarkable. I would be willing to bet that there is not another high school jazz band in the country that did what the SOA Jazz & Jazz Lab Bands did. Learning a three-hour set list of music, cleaning it, and performing in the first ten weeks of school is unthinkable for most programs, which just shows how special SOA is. I hope everyone that attended had a great experience and we will be back even better next year!

### Where Are They Now?

by Riley Borkowski

*Riley Borkowski spoke with Class of 2022 Band major Jack Altenbach to learn about their life after SOA.*

#### Riley Borkowski: What college do you attend and what is your major?

**Jack Altenbach:** I'm currently a first-year student at Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. I'm majoring in Euphonium Performance at Eastman, and Statistics at UofR.

#### RB: What is it like to be a dual degree student? Does it differ from your expectations?

**JA:** For context, Eastman campus is located in downtown Rochester. It is about three and a half miles away from UofR's main campus. To get back and forth, it requires taking the university shuttle, which takes about twenty minutes each

way. It shouldn't come as a surprise that being a dual degree student requires a lot of time management skills. Classes, homework, and shuttle commutes generally take up a lot of my time, but there are many other factors to consider. As an Eastman student, I'm expected to spend a significant portion of my time in the practice room preparing for weekly lessons, large ensembles, and chamber ensembles. On occasion this will include masterclasses and recitals. At times, all this can be a huge stressor, especially when approaching exams and juries. Taking breaks, making sure I'm eating enough and going to sleep on time, working, and spending time with my friends and boyfriend has really helped me keep my life balanced. My expectation before I got to college was that I wouldn't have the time to do everything I wanted to. I feel like I've proved myself wrong in the way my life is much more balanced than it ever was in high school.

#### RB: What sparked your interest in Euphonium, and how long have you been playing?

**JA:** I started on Euphonium when I joined the middle school band in sixth grade. It's really something I enjoyed doing from the start, and that drive hasn't gone away. I feel like my interest was really sparked by encouragement from my teachers and friends. Especially at SOA, I worked with some really inspiring teachers that were constantly supportive of my progress. This and my strong intrinsic motivation



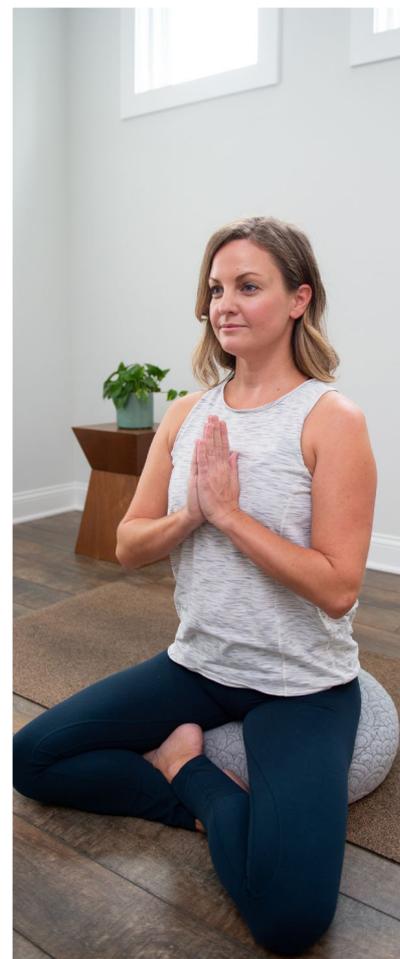
Jack strikes a pose in Rochester.

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made it really easy to figure out I wanted to go into music.

**RB: How did SOA prepare you for college?**

**JA:** When I was in high school, I took advantage of as many playing opportunities as I could. I really feel like I got the most out of SOA's variety of ensembles and came to college with lots of experience. Many people at my college did not have access to band or orchestra in high school. I feel extremely grateful that I was able to have as many opportunities as I did at SOA.

**RB: What has the transition between high school and college been like for you?**

**JA:** Transitioning to college has been a really exciting process for me. It was something I'd been looking forward to for a long time. Moving out of Charleston was really easy for me for this reason. I feel like I've adapted really well to this new lifestyle. Being in a really constructive environment, and having lots of friends has helped keep my motivation up. I've found it a lot easier to consistently practice several hours every day. I've also been really good about managing my time and being more independent. Overall, a lot of the obstacles I faced in high school have been much easier for me to deal with in college.

## Where Were They Then?

by Z'Nyah Nelson

*Z'Nyah Nelson sat down with high school science teacher Ms. Greig for insight on her life before SOA.*

**Z'Nyah Nelson: Where did you grow up, and what are some of your favorite childhood memories?**

**Mrs. Robin-Carter Greig:** I grew up in Texas, but I don't really have favorite childhood memories because I moved around a lot.

**ZN: What was your schooling like and did you do anything in high school?**

**RG:** It was really a basic high school. It was definitely bigger on football and sports and more huge, team-wise. I used to dance and was the captain of my dance team.

**ZN: What was life after high school like?**

**RG:** I did go to college at Galveston for Marine Biology. I worked as a marine biologist for about ten years. I worked with dolphins, went up in helicopters and told them if they could detonate oil rigs or not, and then I worked for the Bill Fish Tournament.

**ZN: What made you interested**

**in teaching?**

**RG:** When I was working in Miami, Florida, I started volunteering for a science museum doing hands-on lessons with school groups. I just thought to myself that this is kind of rewarding and something I want to do or try.

**ZN: What was something in your background that led you to wanting to teach forensic science?**

**RG:** I loved court, the law, and trials, so that kind of got me interested in forensic science. I also used to teach at West Ashley High School and

saw another teacher teaching it, and I still thought it was interesting. So, I convinced the principal to let me teach it, and that's really where it started.

## HS Singers and Symphony Prepare Annual Holiday Spectacular for December

by Gracie Pennington

For many Strings, Band, and Vocal students, Christmas has come quite a bit earlier than normal, and it's not in the form of Mariah Carey. Preparations have already begun for the SOA Symphony and Singers' Holiday Spectacular performance this December 7th at the Gaillard Center.

The Holiday Spectacular is SOA's annual Christmas performance that features a full program of holiday music: some are religious works, such as Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" from *The Messiah*, and others are more secular, classic Christmas songs, like "Sleigh Ride." The performance will be directed by none other than Dr. Christopher Selby, Mrs. Heather Caffarel, and Mr. Dustin King.

Students have begun to learn the music during class, and after school rehearsals are soon to come. According to Dr. Selby, progress is going great: "The orchestra is preparing well... We have fewer rehearsals than in years past, but the students are on track to have a great concert." Thankfully, the lineup of music is similar to former concerts, which makes the decreased rehearsal time more manageable. The students are putting their best foot forward to make this performance wonderful.

At the end of the day, students will find that rehearsing for and performing this event is an invaluable and magical experience, and one they will likely carry with them for a long time. "Many people tell me this is their favorite concert of the year," Dr. Selby explains, "and I feel lucky to be a part of it."



Ms. Greig working for the Bill Fish Tournament.

## Save the Date!



### Senior Cello Recital

Peter O'Malley, cello  
Yuantong Bai, piano

Sunday, January 8, 2023  
Charleston Unitarian Church  
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## Jump, Jive, and Wail: A Night of Glitz, Glamor, and Jazz

by Anna Garziera

Ever since the beginning of school, the SOA Jazz Band has been jazzed about the event of the year: SOA's "unofficial" homecoming, "Jump, Jive and Wail."

Senior Ellison Holland couldn't wait to show off her dress, which she bought in early September. "Don't I look pretty?" she said behind the flash of Peter O'Malley's camera, with a radiant smile.

To give SOA students a taste of "Jump, Jive and Wail," the Jazz Band started playing jazz outside the cafeteria during the weeks prior to the dance.

Senior William Lamar enjoys the challenge of "JJW" each year. "We only have a few months to prepare around thirty songs," he says, "and much of the band is entirely new."

With all this enthusiasm and music in mind, I was prepared to have the night of my life on Saturday, November 6th. The theme for this year's concert was "The Roaring Twenties," the era in fashion remembered for its glitz and glamor, simple shapes, short sleeves, and shorter skirts. With some degree of success, I had found a dress which might just suit the night.

As soon as Giovanni Cusatis and I arrived at the downtown Charleston bus shed, I glared at the bright lights, smelled the fresh air,

and decided that I was going to have a great time. We arrived fashionably late, so the jazz beats were already pumping.

With the shorter winter days, the sky was already dark. A string of fairy lights was suspended above the dance floor, and the room buzzed with chatter and tunes. So as to not disappoint their mothers, SOA students gathered and took group pictures with "just the boys" and then "just the girls," exhausting every cheesy pose imaginable before jumping on the dance floor.

Just like any social event, the most popular spot at the start of the night was the food stand, which offered dessert and drinks throughout the night. After my second round of grapes, the food service employee knew my face and I no longer had to ask. Well fed and hydrated, one by one, groups of students moved away from the tables (their comfort zones for the night) and onto the dance floor, starting out with unsure bobs of the head and moving towards full-blown dance routines. Lilian Thomas, an expert shagger, displayed her skills with confidence during "The Chicken Wing" and "The Pretzel." Although I usually have no dance moves up my sleeves, Elizabeth Hornig managed to teach Giovanni and me a short routine which we had pinned down by the end of the night.

Despite how impressive pre-learned dance routines look on the dance floor, the inevitable happened, and dance circles and a messy conga line appeared out of the blue, students lost in the fun and hysterical with laughter. Senior Evan Baker starred in several dance circles. "Evan was really good and energetic," says Manny Stavrinakis, one of Evan's close friends. "He was rambunctious alright."

## SOA Hosts Winter Art Show and Dance Showcase

photos by Kayla Herrman and Abby Short

On November 15th, 2022, SOA Visual Artists and Dance majors held their Winter Art Show and Dance Showcase, presenting the pieces that they have been working on since the beginning of the school year.

The eighth grade Visual Artists collaborated with the eighth grade Dancers, creating pieces inspired by the choreography that was performed during the showcase. These pieces were displayed in the art show, along with pieces by high school students. Additionally, high school students were able to sell hand painted ornaments, and multiple seniors sold prints and original copies of their works.

The high school Dancers also performed during this showcase, and some even performed choreography that was learned during a workshop in Disney.





# The Phantom Of The Opera

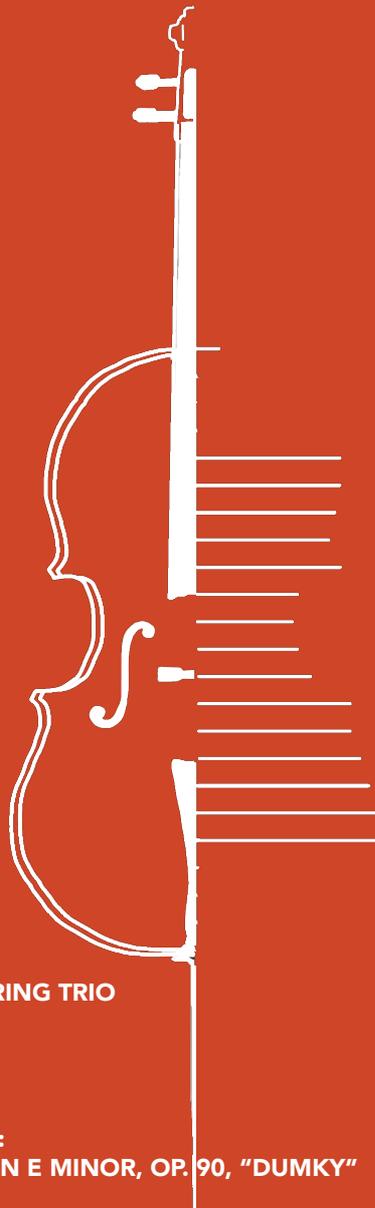
A Production of SOA's Symphony,  
Vocalists, and Dancers  
October 27-30  
Photos by Lauren Holladay





# CMC TWO

## FALL CONCERT



**ERNŐ DOHNÁNYI:**  
**SERENADE FOR STRING TRIO**

*Gabbi Smith, violin*  
*Leila Ibach, viola*  
*Devin O'Brien, bass*

**ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK:**  
**PIANO TRIO NO. 4 IN E MINOR, OP. 90, "DUMKY"**

*Alex Lim, violin*  
*Peter O'Malley, cello*  
*Harry Ding, piano*

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN:**  
**STRING QUARTET NO. 11, OP. 95, "SERIOSO"**

*Carolina Agrest, violin*  
*Trow Weeks, violin*  
*Riley Borkowski, viola*  
*Jade Williams, cello*



When I thought nothing could make the night better, the Jazz players changed into onesies. Suddenly, on stage was a shark (John Lapolla), a giraffe (Will Lamar), and a llama (Alex Park), among others. Beatrice Criscuolo chuckled as she pointed to Jazz Band drummer Bryce Waldron-Noren and his crow head costume. "That one might be my favorite," she admitted. The fun night closed off beautifully with guest singer Vivian Gordon playing one last song, and SOA students cheering raucously..

As my friends and I left the bus shed, I was saddened that the night was already over. During the night, some nostalgic graduates were spotted among the crowd. SOA graduate Connor Smith, among others, came back to relive memories of SOA through "Jump, Jive and Wail." Already, I can see that "JJW" was a night of fun that displayed the best of SOA, and one that will be impossible to forget.

## SOA Dance Major Doubles as Successful Musician

by Isis Hanna

As we all know, SOA has no shortage of extremely talented students who are already finding success in their respective fields. They balance academics and their majors as well as their extracurriculars and personal projects. Eleventh grade Dance major Max Besta is one of these students. As a junior in high school, he has already written and released over fifteen songs, the latest being his single "I'll Always Love You," released on October 15th of this year. The song is about all the ups and downs of his long-term relationship, and he describes it as "a very hopeful song, considering the melody and the reassuring lyrics in the chorus."

Max's passion for music began very early in childhood. His first memory as a kid was receiving a drum set as a gift from his dad, who was and continues to be one of his biggest inspirations. Throughout his life he has discovered how to express himself through music, whether he is just listening, playing, or even writing. His songwriting is a very important outlet for him. "I feel like I can explore different areas in my mind and ways of expressing myself," he says. "It is a release of emotion. It's fulfilling and satisfying." He finds the inspiration for his music in many different genres that he enjoys listening to, and hopes that by exploring lots of different music, he can create a unique sound for his own songs.



Provided

The process of releasing a song can be difficult, but Max has been doing it on his own for a while now. It is very time-consuming for one person to do on their own and can even get expensive. Also, once your music is out there for the world to see, you get lots of feedback and sometimes unwanted criticism. It can be hard to put your art out into the world to let people judge when those people can be very harsh, but constructive criticism is a part of being an artist. "You also get lots of feedback from listeners who know or don't know a thing for music, but it's all necessary," he says. He has become an expert at sifting through all of the feedback and finding the helpful comments without feeling offended, and of course, the heaps

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of praise that come along with producing good music are an added bonus.

Along with his solo projects, Max also is a part of a band, with whom he performed his first real gig. "Business As Usual" played at a Halloween party just a couple weeks ago, and Max hopes to continue performing live as much as he is able. This is just the beginning of a career in music for him.

Max is just one of many students here at SOA who are proving that you don't have to wait until you're older to pursue your passions. I encourage you to give his music a listen if you haven't already. His success is inspiring to all the aspiring musicians in the student body, as well as anybody who doesn't plan on waiting around to start their careers and follow their dreams. In the words of our man of the hour, "Remember, killing time murders opportunities."





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## Seniors Prepare for Life After SOA

by Beatrice Criscuolo

To my fellow seniors, congratulations! We have officially made it through the first wave of college applications. I know it was hard, even incomprehensible at times. The amount of essays, the redundant questions on CommonApp, and the struggle of getting recommendation letters all added up to a stressful couple of months. Now, however, whether you still have to apply to some more schools or are just waiting on decisions, you know you're out of the thick of it.

To check in with students around campus, I interviewed a couple seniors about their experience so far in this life changing process. For those who need to hear it, you're not alone. We're all going through the same struggles!

**Beatrice Criscuolo: Did you submit any applications for the November 1st deadline?**

**Flora Majkrzak:** Yes, I actually submitted my Clemson application

in August.

**Natalie Glaser:** Yes, I did submit my first round of applications so far. I have applied to SCAD, FIT, and Parsons.

**BC: How has your experience been with CommonApp so far?**

**FM:** So far, CommonApp has been very difficult for various schools. After submitting my application for Clemson, I had to go on their website and submit more things that weren't included in CommonApp. However, with schools like High Point, the application process was very easy because they actually used the CommonApp information. For me, it has varied based on the school.

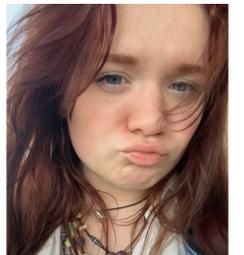
**NG:** For the first couple of applications, I used CommonApp. It's way simple to use and easy to submit my applications

**BC: How do you feel having submitted applications?**



Flora Majkrzak

Provided



Natalie Glaser

Provided

## SOA Students Celebrate Halloween with Song and Dance Performances

by Lauren Holladay

On Monday, October 31st, SOA students in Dr. Cusatis' 3B AP English class surprised classrooms around campus with their rendition of "The Monster Mash." After a brief rehearsal, the students, as well as Dr. Cusatis and SOA Assistant Principal Ms. Derrickson, put on an exciting show, complete with costumes, instruments, and even an engaging dance routine.





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**FM:** I feel a little bit nervous, but also relieved. Since I have submitted a few applications already for early decision, I'm not going to be stressed out towards the end of the year.

**NG:** I feel kind of nervous having submitted my applications because I'm not sure if I'm going to get into some of the schools.

**BC: What advice do you have for other students still working on their applications?**

**FM:** My advice is to try and submit applications early!! Not only do you have a better chance of getting in, but it takes off a lot of added stress that you don't want to have towards the end of senior year. You'll already be stressed out about the other exams and graduation, so try and get it done early. Start emailing and asking teachers about recommendations as well. Different colleges have different requirements for recommendations, so it's always good to get a head start.

**NG:** My only advice is to use Grammarly. I swear that saved my butt when I was applying to schools.

**Students interested in participating in  
"I Want My MTV: Songs of the Early 80s"  
should sign up outside of Room 1115.**

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## SOA Dance Majors Host Guest Artist Christopher Huggins



SOA Dance majors dance with renowned guest dancer and choreographer Christopher Huggins.

## *Bard in the Box* presented by SOA 8th Grade Theatre Majors



On Thursday, November 10th, Mr. Yount's eighth grade Theatre majors studied and performed a montage of Shakespeare's greatest works, aptly titled *Bard in a Box*. All students had multiple parts, from introductions to soliloquies, and did a fantastic job of embodying the characters' emotions and personalities.



(right) Melissa Daigneault and Madeleine Flessas perform a scene from *Romeo and Juliet*.



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## Middle School Dance Majors Travel to Wild Blue Ropes



On October 19th, 2022, SOA Middle School Dance majors enjoyed a field trip to College of Charleston and Wild Blue Ropes, a local rope climbing course.

The Dancers faced their fears and worked on team building at Wild Blue Ropes, and then visited the College of Charleston Department of Theatre and Dance after lunch. The sixth and seventh grade Dancers had the chance to learn in a modern dance master class with faculty member Charlie Maybee, while eighth graders experienced a site-specific dance class with another faculty member, Erin Leigh.

## Horoscopes

by Cate Traywick



### Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)



You're still clinging on to *Gilmore Girls* season, and it shows. Stop buying classic books that you know you'll never read. You may not be Rory Gilmore, but this is definitely your month to find your Dean. Cute coffee shop and bookstore dates are in your future: just go for it, Scorpio!

### Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)



Sagittarius, you keep telling everyone that you're a plant mom, but you have killed at least seven plants in the last month. I know you want to have a quirky personality trait, but this one isn't for you. Find a different hobby, please. If not for me, do it for the plants. Give jam making a try, or soap carving, or maybe even macrame. Just leave the plants alone.

### Capricorn (December 22 - January 20)



It's the second quarter, Capricorn. It's time to hunker down and be productive. Everyone can see you playing Cupcake 2048 during your classes, and it has to stop. I really thought that they blocked it, but you just had to find a way around iboss. You'd think that the fact that you got called out for the fourth time this week by your teachers would stop you, but no. Anything for the cupcakes, I guess.

### Aquarius (January 21 - February 18)



Yes Aquarius, we get it. You like Christmas. We all like Christmas, but blasting Mariah Carey the second November starts is absolutely unacceptable. At least wait until November 15th out of respect for the fall season. Also, "All I Want For Christmas Is You" isn't the only Christmas song. There are so many better options: "Jingle Bell Rock," "Feliz Navidad," "White Christmas." Just get some variety, Aquarius. Please.

### Pisces (February 19 - March 20)



Pisces. I know that you claim to be a math person, but it doesn't take a genius to write the correct version of your/you're. It's driving me and your English teacher crazy. It is not that hard, Pisces. Even when texting you get it wrong. If you can't remember, at least try to use autocorrect. Nobody likes the grammar police, but somebody has to do it.

### Aries (March 21 - April 19)



I'm not a big fan of you right now, Aries. I asked you if you wanted to answer the Question of the Month, and you flat out said no. Maybe work on yourself a little bit, because I know that if I was asked if I wanted to answer the Question of the Month, I would be over-the-moon excited. Or don't, and maybe I won't write you a horoscope.

### Taurus (April 20 - May 20)



Your BeReals are too good for them to be real. There is no way that you've looked that good in every single one you have ever posted. Maybe I'm just bitter. Or maybe you just aren't real. You probably sit around all day waiting for it to go off and then you STILL retake it five times. Fakest. BeRealer. Ever.



### Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

You slayed Jump, Jive, and Wail so hard. I saw you on the dance floor and wanted to ask you to dance, but I was intimidated by your talent. Dial it back a little bit, Gemini. We can't all be as cool and awesome as you all the time, and while you're at it, can you give me dancing lessons?

### Cancer (June 21 - July 22)



You didn't go to Peter's cello recital, and now he's upset. You could've just taken one for the team and went to watch him play Bach for half an hour, but you stayed home and played Scrabble with your mom instead. Do you just not like the cello, or do you just hate Peter? I guess we'll never know.

### Leo (July 23 - August 22)



Just when I thought there was no possible way you could get sunburnt in this overcast weather, you go and get the worst burn I have ever seen. I know you're a fire sign Leo, but this is a step too far. Go inside and check Canvas for once in your life; you have so many missing assignments and it's upsetting. Stop using "but it's so nice outside" as an excuse. Get!! Things!! Done!!!!

### Virgo (August 23 - September 22)



Virgo, stop spamming that close friend's story with memes. I'm begging. Nobody else thinks that capybaras are funny anymore, and it has to stop. Go outside, touch some grass, and drink some water. Self care is important, and Instagram isn't part of that. When you get called a screenager by your mom, don't say I didn't warn you.

### Libra (September 23 - October 22)



Hey Libra, even though you might not have gotten the Jump, Jive, and Wail date that you wanted, there's still hope. Maybe a surreptitious look at their Instagram will help you win them over, or maybe you'll accidentally like a post from two years ago and then you'll have a whole other problem on your hands...

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### SOA Celebrates Halloween 2022

Photos by Lauren Holladay

On Monday, October 31st, SOA students and faculty were encouraged to dress up in costume to get into the Halloween spirit.





“Chaos in a Box,” by Amelia Counts,  
9th grade Visual Arts



“Untitled,” by Madison Edwards,  
8th grade Visual Arts



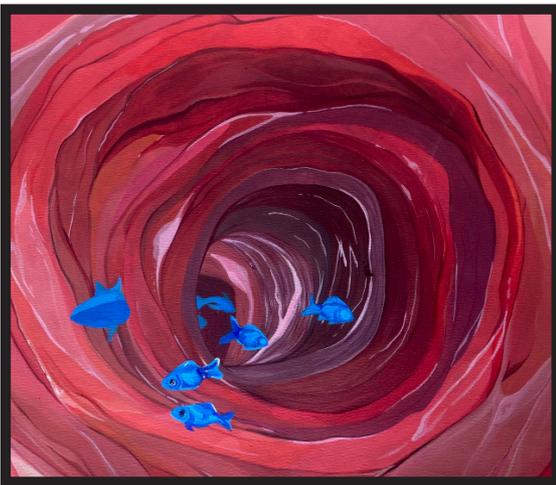
“Contagious,” by Pia Oronce,  
9th grade Visual Arts



“Bittersweet,” by Whitney Werking,  
9th grade Visual Arts



“Do You See What I See?” by Grace  
Nelson, 12th grade Visual Arts



“Untitled,” by Lucy Cromwell,  
11th grade Visual Arts - Unfinished



“Untitled” by Reyna Roblero, 11th  
grade Visual Arts



“Flowers of My Mind,” by Audra Elm,  
9th grade Visual Arts

## SOA Athletes Place Well in End of the Season Cross Country Meets

by Giovanni Cusatis

As winter sport tryouts are beginning, many SOA student athletes are wrapping up their fall cross country seasons in big ways.

Recently, many cross country runners competed at the Region and State meets. In the Region 8 3A meet, North Charleston XC runner and freshman Strings major Elijah Liu broke his preseason goal of running a twenty minute 5k, as he ran 19:59 and came in 22nd place in a very competitive race. Elijah, who at the beginning of the season said he was running mainly to condition for soccer, has enjoyed the season so much he plans to continue running and working on bringing his time down.



SOA freshman Strings Major Elijah Liu competing for his cross country team.

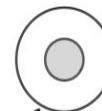
In addition to Elijah, eleventh graders James Herring and Justin Gilliard, and seventh grader Isaih Liu, competed in the Region 8 3A XC meet for North Charleston. Notably, James Herring took sixth place overall with a time of 17:53.

Academic Magnet and West Ashley also had their region meets recently. Senior Strings major Luke Shackelford competed in the Region 7 5A for West Ashley where he came in seventh place with a time of 18:06. For Magnet, senior Piano major Ben Fancher took first place in the Region 7 2A meet with a time of 17:26. Along with Ben, other SOA athletes who ran for Magnet this season included Emma Stavrinakis, Ava Whitener, and Adolina Adams. Congratulations to Coach Brian Johnson and Academic Magnet for taking third in the AA State Championship.

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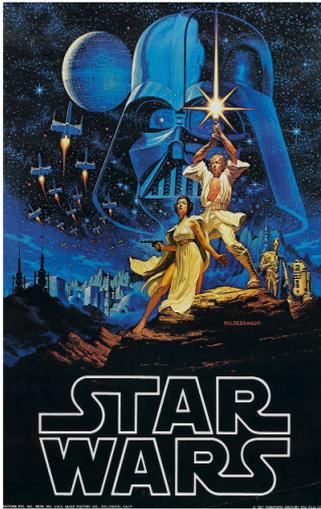
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## Classic Movie Review: *Star Wars: A New Hope*

by Peter O'Malley

In 1977, George Lucas introduced *Star Wars* to the world with *A New Hope*, which soon became the first installment of one of the world's highest grossing film franchises. It introduced actors Mark Hamill, Carrie Fisher, and Harrison Ford, brought forth a saga spanning three trilogies, television series, and



books, and featured an imaginative soundtrack (though only mostly original) by John Williams.

*A New Hope* follows Princess Leia Organa and her efforts to destroy the planet-killing Death Star and put an end to the evil Galactic Empire. Luke Skywalker, a teenager who lives on a remote desert planet, soon becomes tied into Princess Leia's fight after learning that Ben Kenobi, an old man living closeby, was once a Jedi Knight and needs to complete a mission for the princess. After meeting Captain Han Solo and his Wookiee copilot Chewbacca, Luke and Ben save Princess Leia and blow up the Death Star. A tale of power, magic, war, and love, this film introduces a galaxy and characters that viewers have connected with for over forty years.

Just two years before the release of *Star Wars*, John Williams had cemented his career with *Jaws*. His soundtrack to *Star Wars* added depth to the movie, with musical themes for each character and planet, and it is one of the biggest reasons *A New Hope* was so successful. However, much of the material in the soundtrack carries similarities to famous works of music which likely influenced Williams. For example, "The Desert and the Robot Auction," used to introduce Tatooine, is almost an exact copy of the opening to part two of Stravinsky's 1913 ballet, *Le Sacre du Printemps* (The Rite of Spring). Much of John William's literature takes from music written before. *Indiana Jones* opens with a track that sounds incredibly close to Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, Han and Leia's theme from *Empire Strikes Back* sounds a lot like Tchaikovsky's violin concerto; the list goes on. It's not necessarily a bad thing, but it's intriguing and sort of fascinating to notice

while watching a movie with John Williams' music.

*Star Wars* may have catered initially to children through action figures and television commercials, but it was not the one-dimensional and hollow film many may have expected. Darth Vader and the Empire symbolized tyranny and hatred, and Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia were representative of hope. The following films in the series (*Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi*) followed a captivating story which still holds surprise and fascination amongst audiences, and even today, *Star Wars* grows in popularity. It's stood the test of time through projects including the prequel trilogy, *The Mandalorian*, and *The Clone Wars*.

*A New Hope* brought forth one of the largest staples of popular culture in the modern world. This first chapter in a growing saga gave the world something it could resonate with and share for generations to come.

## Classic Book Review: *The Lord of the Rings*

by Madison McDonald

After reading *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien sixteen times, I am still shocked to have gained something new from it after every read. That being said, this story is a timeless piece of literature that can still be enjoyed and appreciated in modern times.

*The Lord of the Rings* is centered around a Hobbit named Frodo. Hobbits are a race of simple folk who are good-natured and kind, and are a gleaming example of a simple and fulfilling lifestyle. Hobbiton, where many of these creatures live, is a beautiful and pastoral place. This story starts comfortably and fairytale-like before plunging you into a vast world of beauty and darkness.

The first book of *The Lord of the Rings* ("The Fellowship of the Ring") maintains the lighthearted fairytale approach, dealing with elves and other fae-like beings. Some sing merrily, and others speak in meter. All are hospitable to Frodo and his traveling companions. But as the series progresses a sense of horror may fall over the reader as they encounter wraiths that hunt them, barrow wights that attempt to ritualistically sacrifice

them, giant spiders, and hordes of Orcs. By the end of the series, it will become a story about war. *The Lord of the Rings* has a lot to offer fans of all genres. On a surface level, this is a great read if you are looking for a fun and exciting book about adventure and battle, and to those who seek to dig a bit deeper, biblical, Marxist, and pro-simplicity ideas are often represented in the series.

*The Lord of the Rings* is a paragon of advanced world-building, boasting dozens of history books, finished and unfinished, about the world where the story is set: Arda. These books provide thousands of years of history, as well as short stories, poems, and maps.

Tolkien is also a prolific linguist, creating several languages that work alongside his books. Many of these languages are even able to be written and spoken as we would English or Spanish. More broadly, Tolkien will hide much between the lines using his linguistic prowess, which allows greater insight into characters if one decides to look. Some of his meanings are so hidden that it may take an understanding of multiple languages to figure out, and further insight into meter or how sentences are structured. Tolkien is amazingly conscious about his works, giving every word the ability to provide crucial information to the text.

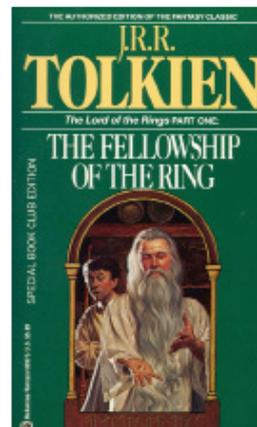
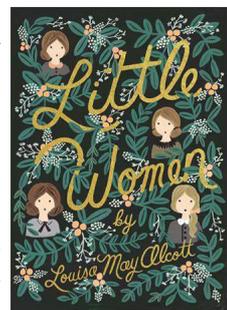
Tolkien is widely regarded as one of the fathers of the High Fantasy genre, inspiring thousands of other stories, games, and shows. His works defined pop culture for years to come.

*The Lord of the Rings* is a book that can appeal to anyone. Personally, there is not a series I would recommend more, as this series is my perfect ten.

## Contemporary Movie Review: *Little Women*

by Anna Garziera

"Take some books and read; that's an immense help; and books are always good company if you have the right sort," says Louisa May Alcott, in her famous coming-of-age novel *Little Women*. Ironically, her masterpiece has been adapted into seven films, the first one released in 1917, and the latest more than one century later, in 2019. Clearly, her timeless novel has continued to capture the attention of viewers.



A notable cast was used in the 2019 adaptation of *Little Women*; the familiarity of the actors playing Jo March (Saoirse Ronan), Meg March (Emma Watson), Amy March (Florence Pugh), Aunt March (Meryl Streep), and “Laurie” (Timothée Chalamet), ensured that an already devoted audience felt an ever deeper fondness for the characters.

The most commonly beloved character, of course, is Jo, the hot-tempered, defiant young woman whose feminist beliefs grant her independence from her family in actions and thoughts. “Women, they have minds, and they have souls, as well as just hearts. And they’ve got ambition, and they’ve got talent, as well as just beauty. I’m so sick of people saying that love is just all a woman is fit for,” Jo March tells her viewers, as well as her sisters.

In this sense, actress Saoirse Ronan plays this character perfectly, with her intelligent eyes and bright smile. Not only are the talented actors well-chosen for each role, the costumes and sets in this movie are detailed, and complement the overall coming-of-age feel of the movie.

I have never read *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott, but I can guarantee that the 2019 adaptation carries the storyline and emotions of the book well. This movie will leave your soul satisfied, and your eyes damp with happy tears.

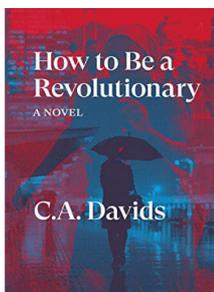
## Contemporary Book Review: *How to Be A Revolutionary*

by Beatrice Criscuolo

“Blind date with a book,” the sign at the Itinerant Literate, a bookstore down the street from SOA, said. There was a tall stack of brown paper wrapped books, just begging to be ripped open. However, you had to wait until you purchased whichever unknown book you picked up to open the paper. The only clues to the story were written on the outside. Five or six adjectives and a price. You couldn’t even see what the cover looked like.

My spidey-senses tingling, I brought home the first one I saw, after comparing its adjectives with all the other rectangles of brown paper.

Fortunately, the twenty dollars paid off. *How to Be A Revolutionary* is a beautifully written, sneakily complex novel.



*How to Be a Revolutionary* juxtaposes the height of communist China, to Apartheid in South Africa, to the Civil Right’s movement in first person prose, but the character’s narratives are shockingly similar. All wished to speak out against the injustices affecting their communities, but were silenced, fearing violence.

The story begins in Shanghai, with a lonely South African consulate worker, Beth, and a mysterious old man living on the floor above her. Beth first hears the man, Huang Zhao, typing on his typewriter, but does not meet him until he appears suddenly in her doorway on the hunt for the right word. They grow closer, discussing the work of Langston Hughes and customs unique to their contrasting cultures. Before Beth realizes it, she and Zhao are friends, and Zhao has mysteriously disappeared.

After Zhao’s disappearance, Beth receives his typewritten pages, along with a sense of insecurity. Strangers engage her in odd conversations, her internet usage is blocked, and her unease heightened. As Beth enlists the help of a friend to translate Zhao’s text, she realizes the danger she is in. Zhao’s work is a first-hand account of events he witnessed at a protest and his family’s tragedy, both experiences that the Chinese government wanted him, and everyone else, to forget.

Zhao’s story brings back memories of Beth’s own tragedies as a teenager trying to protest Apartheid. When her best friend is killed, she is forced through a series of trials to reveal the truth, and eventually ends up leaving her hometown in search of an anonymous life.

As both Beth and Zhao struggled through these life-changing events, they read the work of Langston Hughs, and realized that even if they were feeling lost, they would never be alone.

With its trio of poignant stories, *How to Be A Revolutionary* combines history with emotion. Though they take concentration to navigate, Beth, Zhao, and Hughs’ narratives leave you with a wealth of information and, more importantly, a more empathetic outlook on life.

## Video Game Review: *Valorant’s* Latest Agent: “Harbor”

by Yatawee Petchsuriya

*Valorant* is a free to play first person shooter game by the company Riot, that is headquartered in California. Along with the

new release of the agent “Harbor,” the game has made a splash with a great representation of Indian culture. Harbor, whose real name is



Varun Batra, originated from Mumbai. During a mission under the organization REALM, he stumbles upon an ancient artifact among ruins outside Mumbai. The artifact instantly attaches itself to his wrist, activating its powers.

His theme song “Raja” has resonated with Indian viewers, and players worldwide through the use of traditional Indian music. Each agent is accompanied with a spray, a decorative image that can be applied to surfaces of a map. Harbor’s signature spray, a mandala, is common in South Asian artwork and shows the company’s attention to detail and their commitment to representation.

Harbor plays the role of a Controller, which allows him to block enemy vision and take control of the area. His kit includes two walls: one of them is High Tide, which can create a wall of water by clicking and dragging the mouse around. The wall is able to curve around corners and go through walls, blocking enemy sight and enabling quicker pushes. The second wall is called Cascade. Harbor ejects an opaque wall of water which passes through any object directly in front of him. Players that make contact with the wall are slowed, no matter if they are enemies and teammates.

Harbor’s ability Cove, a bullet proof smoke, is a sphere of water that conceals enemy vision. Players may hide inside if they need to get out of the line of fire. Although the bullet proof feature is convenient and unique to the agent, he can only place one smoke each round, in contrast to other agents, which can usually be placed three times.

His ultimate ability, called Reckoning, uses his artifact at full power. Harbor creates a pool with a large area of effect. Enemies within range are slowed and targeted with geyser strikes. If they are hit, they are then concussed and become stunned with blurred vision. Although it is rather easy to avoid strikes, it forces enemy players to give up angles and reveal their positions, allowing you to stall aggression and get some easy picks. If they do



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happen to get hit, the ability's slowing effect and concussion will make them vulnerable to your firepower.

On the defensive side, Harbor can prevent enemy pushes and earn his team better angles. He is most effectively utilized with agents such as Raze, Killjoy, Sky, and Breach. The maps he is best utilized on are Ascent, Breeze, Fracture, Icebox.

Overall, Harbor brings a kit that incorporates different aspects of other agent's gameplay and brings another cultural perspective to the roster. He is a distinctive character with much competitive potential as a support.

## Contemporary Album Review: *re:turn*

by Gracie Pennington

Up-and-coming indie band Origami Angel has come out of the woodwork once again this September with a new album titled *re:turn*. Unlike their previous albums, which consist of mostly indie rock and midwest/fifth wave emo, this one has a more calm, indie pop feel to it. There are three songs on the short album: "penn hall," "francis," and "live from the ufo," all of which are stylized in lowercase.

The album opens with "penn hall," a short little song. To me, it is the most instrumentally interesting track on the album:

piano keys, drums, and upbeat guitar melodies work together to create an instrumental that is so upbeat that it seems almost like it is tripping over itself and everything

is moving too fast for the singer to keep up. I interpret it as a song about moving away to college and being away from someone that the singer cares about, and the feeling of longing and loneliness from missing that person. I think the most impactful line from this track is "I need that sense of you being here with me / But I'm trying hard not to seem like I am tearing apart at the seams."

My favorite song from the album has to be "francis." It's got a nice, jangly-sounding guitar rhythm and a slow drum beat, and piano following the vocal melody. There's a sense



of warmth that it brings, especially in the line "When you're sound asleep / And it starts to pour / And suddenly, I feel warm." It makes me imagine laying on the carpet at night in warm lamplight, bundled in a blanket while gazing out the window and watching rain pour down. It reminds of little pockets of warmth in an otherwise dreary situation. In terms of the song in its entirety, I understood it as a song about someone (perhaps the same person from the last song?) coming to visit, and finally getting to be near them after missing them for so long.

The last song on the album, "live from the ufo," is perhaps the cutest and most positive out of the three. In this track, the singer describes that he feels as if he has no control over his life, as if he were on an alien TV show. However, in the last stanza, he says, "And if everything is controlled by someone / I'd like to thank them for making me know you," perhaps showing that, even though it was a completely random event that he met the one he cares about, he's glad that whatever happened to make that happen, happened.

In consecutive order, the songs make sense as a sort of story. First, the feeling of missing and yearning for someone who you no longer live near, then getting to finally be with them for a little bit, then finally to acceptance, and accepting that you can't always be together, but you can be thankful that you even know them in the first place and get to hang out with them sometimes. It conveys these feelings so wonderfully and crisply, and I highly recommend any indie music fan to check it out.

## Contemporary Album Review: *Midnights*

by Isis Hanna

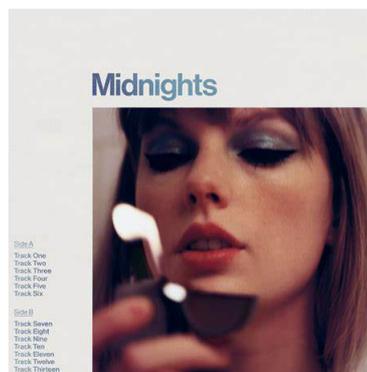
After two years of radio silence, Taylor Swift is back with her tenth studio album, titled *Midnights*, which dropped on October 21st at 12:00 AM sharp (except for seven surprise songs that dropped later that morning). Swift describes it as "Thirteen sleepless nights throughout [her] life," with songs inspired by the dramatic thoughts that have kept us all up into the early hours of the morning at one time or another. With fun and upbeat songs like "Karma" and

"Lavender Haze," as well as the newest infamous track "You're On Your Own, Kid," this album is a rollercoaster of emotions from start to finish.

The opening track "Lavender Haze" is, in my opinion, a perfect way to set the tone for the album (despite the fact that opening an album titled *Midnights* with the line "Meet me at midnight" is a little corny). It's a pop track all about being in love, reminiscent of songs from her 2019 album, *Lover*. The term "lavender haze" is a slang term from the 1950s meaning the feeling of being in love with someone, and the song is presumably about Swift's love for her long-term boyfriend as they attempt to keep their relationship as private as possible from the prying eyes of fans. It's a perfect anthem for people with a love for someone special as well as fun dance music.

On the opposite end of the mood-spectrum would be "You're On Your Own, Kid," a melancholy tribute to adolescence. It is sung from the point of view of a teenage girl who slowly realizes how alone she is. The lyrics are strongly nostalgic and would resonate with pretty much every teenager, especially those who feel like they're growing up all alone. Most of the song is rather soft and slow, until both the music and vocals pick up at the very end. The bridge of this song absolutely destroyed me the first time I heard it, and it never fails to bring me to tears each time I listen. Although debate has sparked about what the final message of the song is, I believe a sense of hope springs up in the last final lines; "So make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it / You've got no reason to be afraid" certainly doesn't sound very sad to me, though it is a beautiful line. It feels like Swift is sending a comforting message to the listener, telling us that "we can face this."

"Anti-Hero" was the first of two songs from this album to get a music video, and is the song that most radio stations have been playing when they want to support *Midnights*. It has taken on the role of a lead single, despite being released at the same time as the rest of the album. Unfortunately, a lot of fans are not happy with this song and the amount of recognition it's getting. It doesn't help its case that the worst part of the song has now become an overplayed TikTok audio that people are already sick of. The hate is not surprising, given the uproar that ensued last time we actually got a lead single from Taylor. However, I liked "ME!" and I love "Anti-Hero," so I'm going to defend it the best I can. The song is about Taylor's struggles with fame, feeling like she isn't a real person anymore while also worrying that she is getting too old and the industry could throw her out at any second (hence the "sexy baby" line



that no one seems to get). Cringeworthy TikTok line aside, the lyrics flow incredibly well, and I swear every time I hear the line “She’s laughing up at us from hell,” my jaw drops like I didn’t know it was coming.

Overall, *Midnights* returns to Swift’s roots in pop music as opposed to the folk sound her latest projects, *folklore* and *evermore*, take on. If you are a fan of the classic Taylor Swift sound, or are just looking for a new pop album to vibe to, this is surely your album.



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## Grammy-Winning Musician and Former SOA Teacher Charlton Singleton Visits SOA HS English Classes



Charlton Singleton visited English 1 classes in the high school this week to discuss Gullah Geechee influences in contemporary music, religion, and society at large. He also brought along his Grammy, which he was awarded for his work with Ranky Tanky, a Gullah inspired musical group.



**SOA Students Party at Jump,  
Jive, and Wail on Saturday,  
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## Strings Majors Play at Region Orchestra, November 12th



The 11-12 orchestra.



Dr. Selby and Yuriy Bekker, 11-12 conductor, talk at break.

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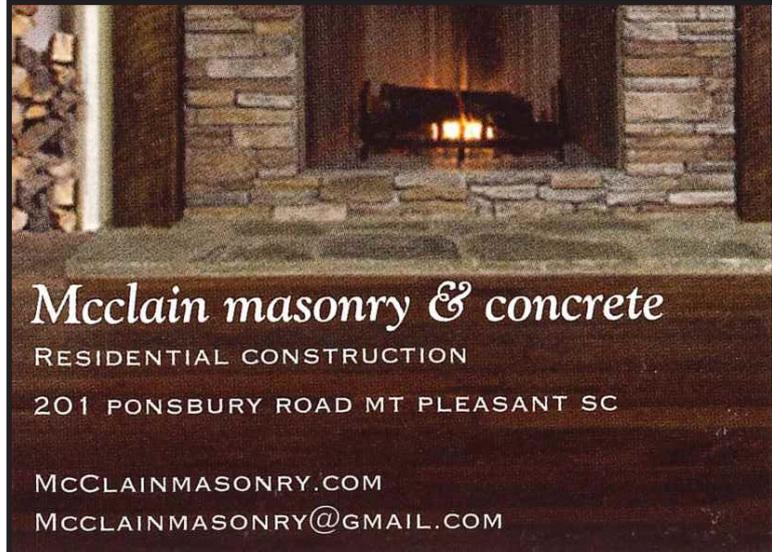
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## Band Trivia

by Gracie Pennington

1. Is the saxophone a woodwind or brass instrument?
2. What U.S. city is considered the birthplace of jazz?
3. Which brass instrument uses a slide to change notes?
4. What is the shape of the mouthpieces on brass instruments?
5. Which instrument was Miles Davis known for?
6. Which instruments in Band use double reeds?
7. Which instrument family has both pitched and unpitched instruments?
8. What kind of percussion instrument is a glockenspiel?
9. What instrument family does the piano belong to?
10. What decade is known as "The Jazz Age"?

## Alex Selby, Senior Strings Major



Provided

6/10

1. Woodwind
2. Memphis
3. Trombone
4. A cup shape
5. No idea, but trumpet?
6. Bassoon?
7. Percussion
8. Pitched
9. Percussion
10. The 40s

## Carl Macklin, Senior Band Major



Provided

10/10

1. Woodwind
2. New Orleans
3. Trombone
4. Cup
5. Trumpet
6. Classical band oboe and bassoon
7. Percussion
8. Metallophone
9. Percussion
10. 1920s

## Answers

1. Woodwind 2. New Orleans 3. Trombone 4. A cup 5. Trumpet 6. Oboe and Bassoon 7. Percussion 8. Metallophone 9. Percussion 10. 1920s

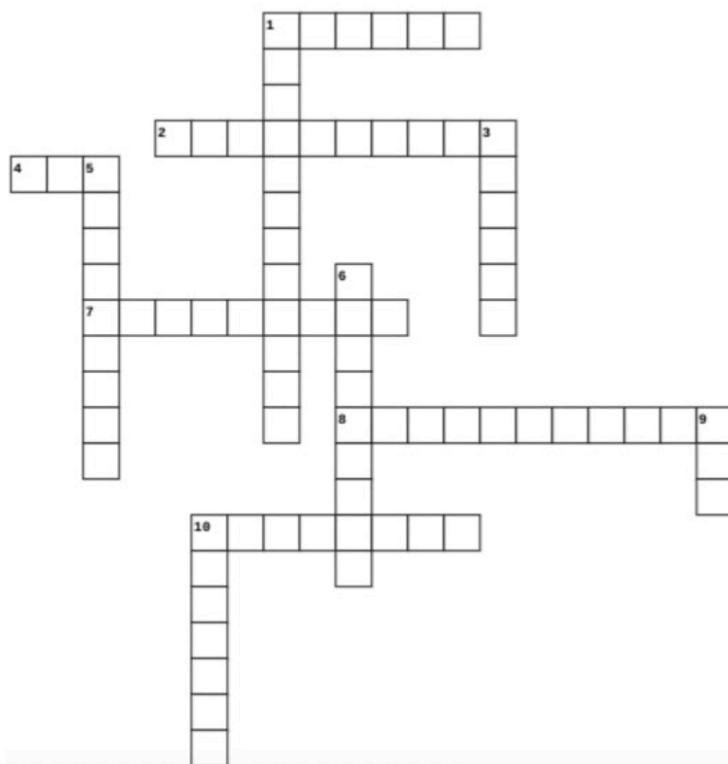
## November Playlist

by Beatrice Criscuolo

With the time change behind us, we're gearing up to cozy in for winter. Here are some familiar favorites to help you watch the leaves come down.



# Thanksgiving Crossword

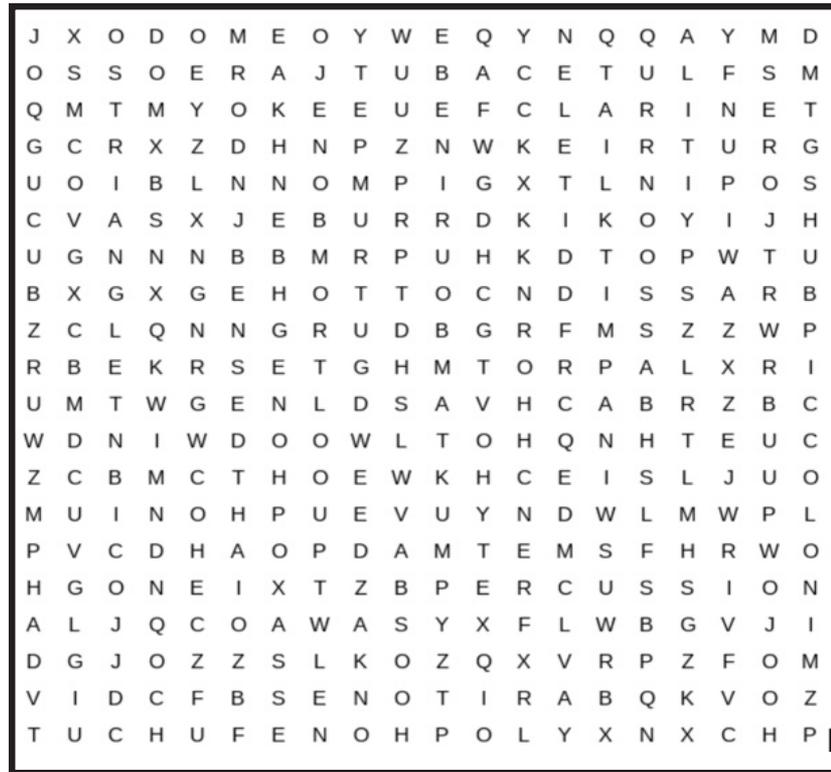


## Across

1. A large game bird native to North America.
2. A symbol of plenty, consisting of a goat's horn overflowing with flowers, fruit, and corn.
4. Meat from the upper part of a pig's leg.
7. The remaining portion of Thanksgiving dinner.
8. The Friday after Thanksgiving.
10. The people that were transported on the Mayflower in 1620.

## Down

1. A national holiday dedicated towards giving thanks.
3. The season between summer and winter.
5. An English ship that transported a group of families to the New World in 1620.
6. A small red acid berry used in cooking.
9. A starchy vegetable that is grown underground and in the same family as the potato.
10. A large orange fruit consisting of a stem and many seeds.

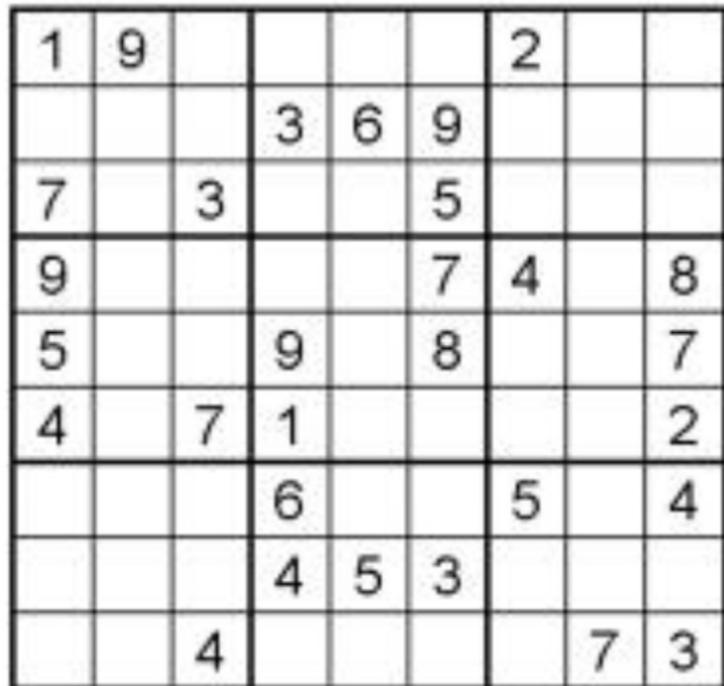


# Band Word Search

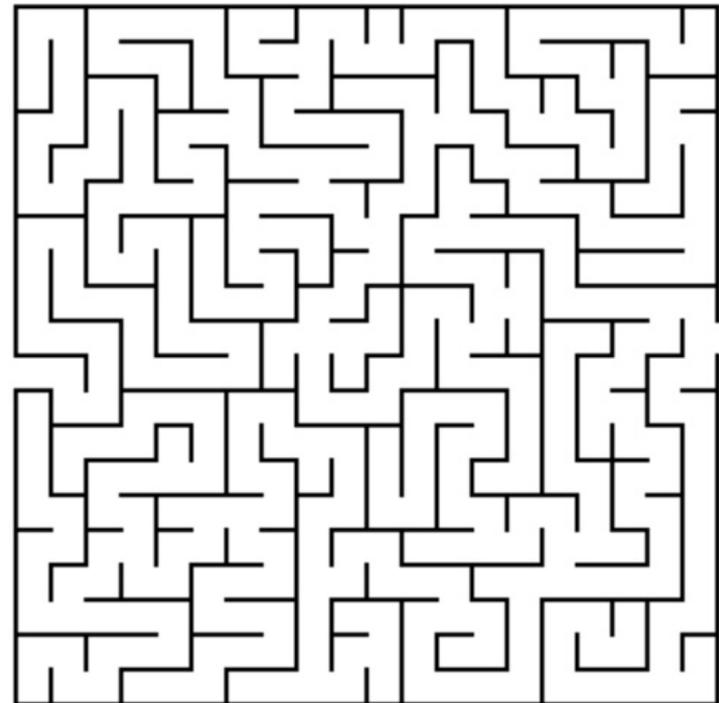
Brass  
 Percussion  
 Flute  
 Clarinet  
 Bassoon  
 Saxophone  
 Xylophone  
 Baritone  
 Trumpet  
 Frenchhorn

Trombone  
 Euphonium  
 Tuba  
 Tambourine  
 Piccolo  
 Timpani  
 Woodwind  
 Cymbals  
 Triangle  
 Bells

# SOA Sudoku



# Help Ms. Greig find her beaker!





“I like to eat grass.”

Otto Wiggington,  
6th grade Creative Writing



“I like to dip my carrots in ketchup!”

Maddy Miller, 7th grade Band



“Sushi sucks and watermelon is trash.”

Kam Frazier 8th grade  
Theater



“If your nose isn’t running, it’s no good.”

Mr. Hammes, Creative  
Writing Teacher



“Orange juice is better than apple juice.”

Ruby Reddington, 9th grade  
Vocal

## What’s your most controversial food opinion?

by Isis Hanna and  
Cate Traywick



“I love to eat ice cream in the winter.”

Ms. Do, Focus Facilitator



“Takis in cream cheese is really tasty.”

Melia White, 10th grade Piano



“Jelly on grits is good, and nobody appreciates it!”

Autumn Lawyer, 11th grade  
Theater



“One time I put ramen in Cinnamon Toast Crunch milk, and it wasn’t bad.”

Kenya Hines, 12th grade Theater



“Pigs won’t eat cucumbers so why should I?”

Mr. Phillips, High School  
Computer Science