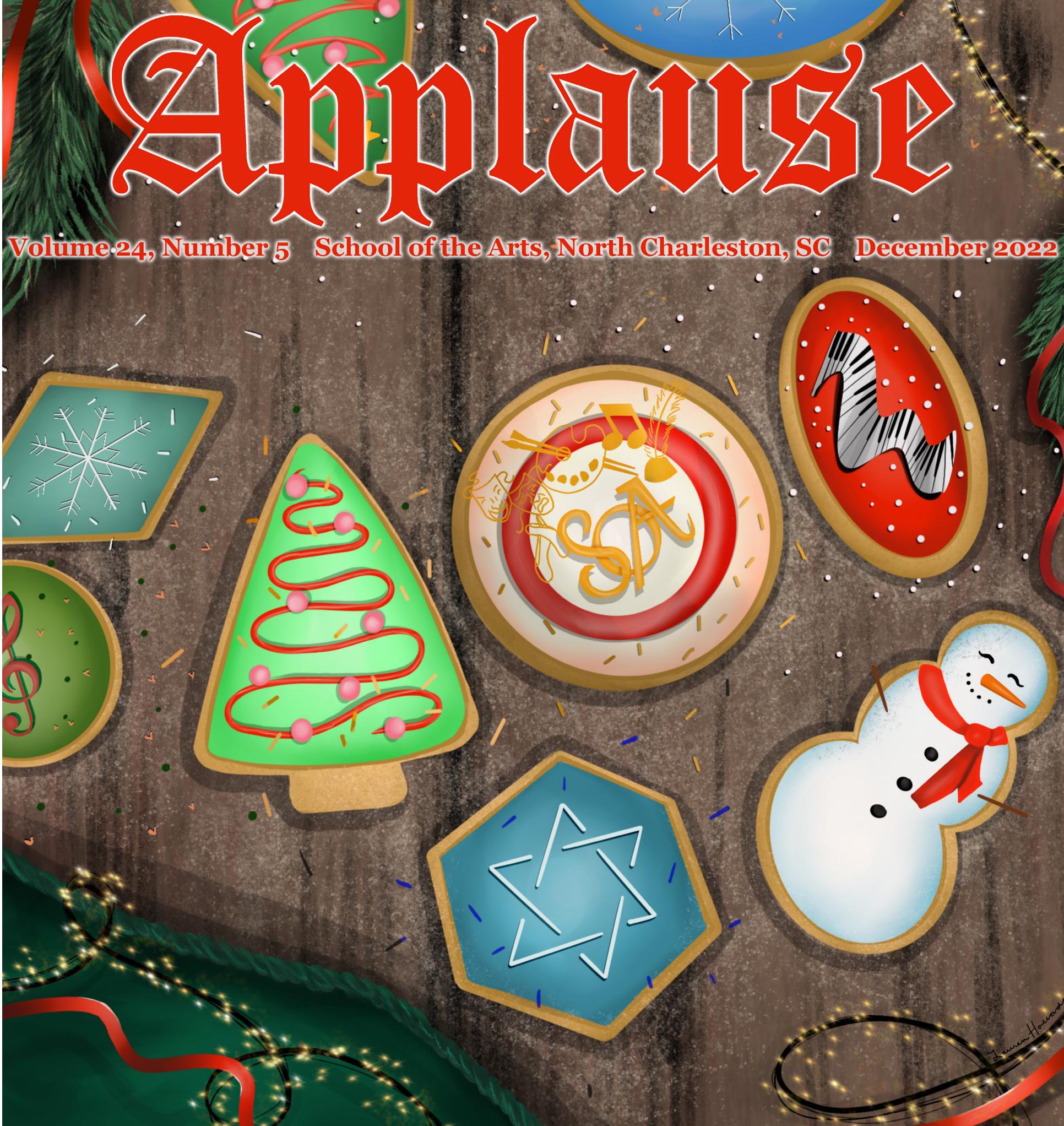


Applause

Volume 24, Number 5 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC December 2022



Jessica Howard

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David Thompson Studio,
Architecture & Design

EMERALD

Katy Richardson & David Bundy
Dr. Shannon Cook
Criscuolo Family
The Duren Family
The Forss Family
Shamus & Lynn Anne Gillen
The Hungerford Family
Tina & Chris McDonald
The O'Malley Family
Tyson and Erin Schuetze

RUBY

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The Bernstein Family
Tarah and Scott Crabb
The Hannah Family
The Hayes Family
Betty Hinz
Macie Hoffman's Beloved
Parents
The Johnson Family
Harold & Katie Johnson
The LaRoche Family
Ohio Supports Applause
Paul & Nancy Pennington
John, Amanda, and Parker
Wilson
Sullivan Wood

SAPPHIRE

The Bednarczyk Family
Nayeon Casey
Sylvia Edwards

The Kamen Dewhirst Family
Tiombe & Kevin Plair
Barbara Richardson

AMETHYST

The Baker Family
The Carrier Family
Andrew & Ginger Colvin
John & Anna Cusatis
Bret and Sarah Davis
The Do Family
Susan Dunn
The Finch Family
Da'Lonzo Gibson
Adina Baer Gross and Family
Brian and Amy Mandrier
The Mears Family
The Mundy Family
Jeff & Jennifer Partin
Ruby E. Pennington
Derek Pickens
The Plante Family
The Simons Family
The Steed Family
The Stratos Family
Lisa Jones-Turansky
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TOPAZ

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Meredith Harman
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Tristan Hill
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Katharine Johnson
Nurse Alissa Julian, RN
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The Leary Family
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Patrick Martin
Ben & Paige McCauley
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The Morelli Family
Rebecca Mortensen
Thomas and Nicole Payne
Princess Petunia Pickle Bottom
Laura Smith
Melanie Wise
The Wright Family

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Kylene Gerideau-Grant
Robin Greig
Beth Webb Hart
The Ivanov Family
Ms. Rumph
David and Katy Southwick
VCD

TURQUOISE

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

From the Editors

Dear Readers,

Happy Lauren Holladays! Turn up the heat, stir a cup of hot chocolate, set up your speakers, and blast Mariah Carey through your entire house! We've been watching *Die Hard*, playing concerts, seeing performances, and reaching out to you guys to create this forty page paper over the past month. Flip to page 10 to see our review of the Festival of Lights and read about the recent Holiday Spectacular at the Gaillard on page 11.

We're excited to feature SOA's Piano program in this edition of *Applause*, with highlights including an interview with Piano teacher Mr. Harvey on page 12, piano trivia on page 38, and a feature on John Lapolla, an SOA senior pianist involved in events around town.

We hope you have a wonderful winter break. See you in 2023, SOA!

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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Cover by Lauren Holladay

SOA Calendar

by Lauren Holladay

Dec. 19th - Jan 2nd: Winter Break
(Schools and Offices Closed)

Jan. 3rd: Teacher Workday (No
School for Students)

Jan. 4th: Students return, Conductor
Jonathon Heyward Q&A, RMMT 10am

Jan. 11th - 13th: Theater Senior
Thesis, RMMT

Jan 16th: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day (Schools & Offices Closed)

Jan 17th: Teacher Workday (No
School for Students)

Jan 17th: End of Second Quarter/First
Semester

Jan 18th: Strings Senior Thesis,
RMMT

Jan 23rd: Report Cards Distributed
This Week



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SOA Sells Out Gaillard for Holiday Concert

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Applause Talks to Piano Teacher Mr. Harvey

by Giovanni Cusatis

Visual Artists Showcase Work in Downtown Gallery

by Lauren Holladay

Why We Love Bad Christmas Movies

by Anna Garziera

Ah, Christmas. Mine and your favorite time of the year. Setting aside the Grinches among us, it is impossible for the average healthy man not to be rejoiced at the sound of a Christmas jingle, the sight of a Christmas wreath, or at the opening credits of an old Christmas classic.

“Why is that?” I ask myself as I sip on a mug of hot cocoa, wearing my Santa hat, in mid November. The reality that few of us dare to admit is that the magic of Christmas follows us like a shadow all year round, and as soon as the temperature drops to a chilly fifty-five, the sunnies come off and the woolly hats come out.

With this magic all around, kids and adults alike are counting down the days until Winter Break begins, all with a very clear picture in mind: it’s Christmas Eve, and the family is wrapped up in a cozy blanket on the couch, dog in lap, all lights dimmed except for those on the tree, which glimmer just slightly in the reflection of the TV screen. You had all agreed to watch a different movie this year, try something new, but disagreement was raised, words flew, and the *Home Alone* theme song is now playing, and life is just right. Maybe next year.

All Christmas movies are the same. Questionable acting, terribly bright costumes, and the infallible scene where some poor kid enters a luxurious toy shop, chu-chu train and all, that makes children around the world drool with appetite. What does it matter whether or not you watch the same movies every year? The familiarity of it is the best part. With baggy PJs and messy buns, Christmas Eve is definitely not the time to step out of your comfort zone.

In fact, around Christmas time especially, humans are drawn towards simple solutions. And what’s simpler than the resolution of a Christmas movie? The boy gets the girl, the magic of Christmas is restored, and the parents finally come home. The blatant positivity of it all is what can make a stressed businessman merry, and his child fall soundly asleep at nine P.M., which makes him even merrier.

In turn, this may make his wife merry too, and just like that, love is in the air. Christmas movies, like one million other things during Christmas time, remind the loved ones that they’re loved, and the lonely that they’re lonely. There’s no time like Christmas to have a significant other, when gifts are exchanged, warm cookies are baked and the excuse for one last kiss comes easy, with just a twig taped to a door frame doing the trick. If this is true, it’s really no surprise that the most popular birthday month is September... Think about it. I’ll wait.

Opinion: Morning Trains

by Eliana Gross

When I rode the bus in middle school and early high school, my then bus driver Ms. Parker always said we were the only kids to ever get mad that the bus was stopping us from going to school, since most kids want to avoid going to class every chance they get.

What she didn’t seem to understand, and neither did I until I started driving, is that driving down that street and seeing unmoving cars backed up to the light is the most defeating sight since the



Home Alone (1990)

Aftershave scene from *Home Alone* (1990).

American World Cup results. It means “If I had left just one minute earlier, I wouldn’t be stuck behind this thing.” It kills morale.

One of the worst things about the train is never knowing how annoyed you should be about it. It will either be a short inconvenience lasting maybe five minutes, or the longest train this side of the Mississippi that decides that all of the drivers banging their heads on their steering wheels can wait just a little longer. Those trains stop moving and stay stagnant for upwards of thirty minutes.

The most recent train I personally have been stuck behind stayed still for twenty minutes after I got there at 8:15, but, according to my peers who were also stuck, hadn’t moved since 7:15. I believe that the train has to, in some way, infringe on our rights. I just can’t prove it yet. However, in an effort to find the positive in this betrayal of liberty, at least it teaches us patience the same way Mr. Miyagi taught that kid karate.

Sass Attack: Holiday Hallmark Movies

by Beatrice Criscuolo

“*Sass Attack*” was started in 2007 by Applause writer **David Sass** and has been an Applause column for fourteen years. Our senior Fashion major, **Beatrice Criscuolo**, has decided to continue the tradition.

You should never willingly watch a holiday Hallmark movie. But if there’s nothing else on, or you’re too lazy to find the remote, or you’re okay with losing brain cells, or you need something sappy and mindless to take your mind off a stressful day, a holiday Hallmark movie is the way to go.

Full of clichés, chunky sweaters, and Christmas cookies, Hallmark movies are the perfect example of what not to do during the holiday season (like watch one to begin with). You should never run into a handsome past love. You should never decorate cookies with a family who found you lost in the snow (with no memory, of course). And you should never, ever wear that coat with that scarf. Early 2000’s fashion choices aside, the main character, often a single woman who is home for the holidays, invariably and reluctantly finds herself falling in love. Whether it’s to their Grinch of a boss who rediscovers their love of the holidays or to their Grinch of a neighbor who was complaining about Christmas decorations, each love story is full of awful ice skating, singing so bad you have to mute the TV, and cringe-worthy miscommunications. And somehow, each love interest is always a Grinch with no family.



Provided

Beatrice Criscuolo



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Eliana Gross

But once you start a Hallmark movie, you can't turn it off in the middle. Even after realizing it really is too cheesy to watch, you have to sit through it all. Including the commercials catered to elderly viewers, but those are, of course, perfectly timed snack breaks.

Watching holiday Hallmark movies, while worse than their (still pretty bad) non-denominational, year-round counterparts, is still a viable holiday activity when there are no cookies left to decorate or the rain outside still hasn't turned into snow in the forty-degree weather. So, this Winter Break, enjoy not enjoying (but secretly loving) a holiday Hallmark movie!

Editorial: SOA Remembers Joe Engel

"We're all gathered here this morning to remind ourselves what happened seventy years ago," Mr. Joe Engel told a group of SOA seventh graders in 2018. "So many people disappeared, millions and millions went to the gas chambers, families were divided," he continued.

"They took away the kids from their parents. I was one of them."

A native of Poland, Mr. Engel escaped the WWII Nazi death camps as a teenager and dedicated much of his life to enlightening students and adults about the horrors of the Holocaust. He passed away on November 26th at the age of ninety-five.

"Mr. Engel's legacy lives on through the students he taught and inspired," said Mr. Michael Morelli, who, along with former SOA media specialist Lynn Kramer, arranged for Mr. Engel's first SOA appearance in 2015, and his return every year until 2019. Mr. Morelli met Mr. Engel through SOA history teacher Ms. Megan Orchard, when the two co-taught a Holocaust unit at C.E. Williams.

"Mr. Engel was an amazing man that I strive to be more like daily, and fall quite short," said Ms. Kramer, recalling fondly his final visit in May 2019, when SOA dedicated their Daffodil Garden in honor of the children who died during the Holocaust. Mr. Engel, she noted, reached tens of thousands of young people, and trained large numbers of teachers to educate their students about the Holocaust.

Mr. Morelli lectured his students every year on the horrific subject, he says, "But when Joe spoke, you could feel the tone change. It became real to students. Standing in front of them was a man who survived it, a man who endured such extreme evils and somehow made a great life for himself, all the while keeping a positive attitude towards his life experiences."

In March of 2018, *Applause* recorded Mr. Engel's lecture to seventh graders in the AMHS Lecture Hall. He spoke powerfully for more than an hour, explaining, "I dedicated my life after the war to going to schools and telling the kids what actually happened."

Mr. Engel explained that when the Nazis first invaded Poland, he was nine. He remembered the first lesson the Germans taught: they brought twenty young Jewish boys to the forest and shot them. Shortly after, due to the destruction of his city, the young boy and his family were homeless. They walked to Warsaw, a two-and-a-half-day journey, only to see the city destroyed: 80% of the buildings had been reduced to rubble; the churches, synagogues, markets, and houses were burnt down. There was not enough space in the cellar they found and occupied for everyone to lie down at night, so they would take turns sleeping.

"Life was miserable," Mr. Engel recalled. The buildings lacked facilities; the cold was bitter and froze his fingers, and the heat was suffocating with so many people. Yet it worsened when Hitler created ghettos, city blocks fenced by electric wire and guards to imprison the residents. They had to get up at 5:00 AM to receive their food rations, shower under the pistols of the German soldiers who "could do to you anything they wanted," he explained. "They could kill a Jew for no reason

whatsoever, cut us with knives, all kinds of terrible things."

He lived in the ghetto for six months. "After a while," he said, with caustic irony in his voice, "they decided the ghetto was too good." He would be "resettled," he was told. He was split from his parents, who, with the other older adults, were crammed into tiny trains "like sardines," shipped off to concentration camps, never to return. Younger groups followed, boarding cattle trains.

"They took away the kids' dolls, bicycles. Whatever they had to play with, they took it away."

Like him, no one believed the horrors happening at Auschwitz



Joe Engel visits SOA

Lynn Kramer

or Birkenau until they were also forced into a small train compartment, survived the three-day journey with no food or water, and arrived at the gate with the sign that read "Arbeit Macht Frei." "If you work hard enough you might survive," was the warning, he explained. There they met Josef Mengele, "The Angel of Death." "He pointed out with his thumb who should live and should die." Mengele selected fifty to a hundred to be sent to camp and the rest he sent to take showers before they were resettled. "But that was a lie!" Instead of showers, he explained, hydrogen cyanide was turned on. "After fifteen or twenty minutes, everybody was dead."

The Nazis gave those who went into the camp numbers and special clothes, and enforced hard labor, Mr. Engel recalled. Their physical tasks were often just meant to exhaust people and keep the mind busy, futile demands, such as digging and filling up a hole over and over again. The conditions were terrible.

Four people slept in a bunk, he explained, and one would be found dead by morning. "It is unexplainable what one human being could do to another one." Joe Engel was fed sixty calories a day, bread for breakfast, soup and bread again for dinner, between long intervals of work because the Germans knew it was the minimum calorie intake needed for people to survive.

"A doctor takes an oath to help people; over there they took an oath to kill people."

Many took their lives on the electric fences, he said, and fellow prisoners would scavenge any food or newer pants from a dead body "because everybody was for himself there." He would search the pockets of a dead man for spare bread. Small children were taken to

be experimented on in hospitals and later brought to the gas chambers. Six million Jews went to the gas chambers,” he said, “a million and a half small, innocent kids. Life was unexplainable.” Before cremating the dead, he explained, the Nazis skinned them. “They made lampshades and gloves out of human skin. If you had gold teeth, they pulled them out.”

On January 19th, 1945, when the allied forces began breaking Germany’s strong-hold, he was taken from camp and sent further into Germany on a train to another camp, where he would have surely died. However, having been placed in an open-air train, Mr. Engel decided to risk his life in an attempt to save it. Realizing he “had nothing to lose,” he told himself, “I’m going to take a chance. I will escape.” When darkness arrived, he jumped out of the fast-moving car into a snowbank halfway through the journey. For four hours he waited in the snow to make sure he was not caught. He dug a foxhole in the frozen ground of the Czech forest with his bare hands and sheltered there for days, living off food scraps from a nearby farm. One day, he recalled, he finally approached the owner of the farm and asked him for help as the winter was frigid and he was famished. When Engel told his story, the farmer was touched. He shared the location of a resistance base close by and promised to talk to them and allow Engel in, who after much scrutiny, was invited.

“I’m going to take a chance. I will escape.”
-Joe Engel

He stayed within the resistance until the end of the war and tried everything to sabotage German plans. The organization included Jews, as well as people from neighboring countries with anti-Nazi sentiment, and together they continued to act as an opposing force to the German soldiers until they were freed by the allies in 1945. During that time, fourteen-million people lost their lives, including five of Joe Engel’s nine siblings. Out of his hundred-and-fifty cousins, only four survived, and he considered himself a lucky man.

“How did you survive?” asked an SOA seventh grader. Mr. Engel replied that it was both the comfort that the war couldn’t last forever and his own determination that saved him. He would do all that the guards said to avoid being punished or shot. For instance, he once forgot to make his bed and the Nazi soldiers, for entertainment, made him undress in the snow in winter, threw a bucket of water on him and let him freeze. Slowly he was rehabilitated by fellow prisoners, but this incident, among many, has lived in his memory and ours as the cruelty and inexplicable evil carried out by the Nazi regime. Every Friday, he recalled, the Nazis hanged two young boys in front of the others, “just before the Sabbath,” he recalled. “Every Friday afternoon!”

Mr. Engel’s life is an inspiration to all of us. He learned English in the US after he immigrated with difficulty in 1949 through New Orleans and moved to New York before landing in Charleston. It took a few years, he said, “to normalize,” after the traumatizing treatment he was forced to undergo in Germany, but by observing the way people ate, dressed, talked, and walked, he said, he was slowly able to turn the grit and passion he had used to escape towards teaching people about his experiences. He is grateful to America, he told our students, for the personal freedom it offers and nourishes.

Mr. Engel taught us by example the importance of hope, resilience, and courage. He urged us to never forget the struggles humanity has endured against the most horrific forces of evil. At a time when stories of antisemitic attitudes and actions, along with other forms of bigotry fill the media, let’s remember Joe Engel’s call to pay attention to the lessons of history: “This is a reminder for us to see and listen and prevent things like that. They should never happen. Nowhere.”

Keep your eye out for our sixth
issue of *Applause* on
January 20th, 2023



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Artists at SOA Present to Their Peers at Convocation

Photos by Peter O'Malley and Kenya Hines

SOA Creative Writing, Fashion, Visual Arts, Theater, and Dance majors shared their work with their peers on Friday, December 2nd.



10th Grade Theater Performs *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*

Photos by Isis Hanna



Your Winter Solstice Outfit

by Beatrice Criscuolo and Anna Garziera

Despite your plans for the winter solstice, the often forgotten holiday has to be honored. For us, that means dressing up so we feel beautiful, a feeling that doesn't always depend on the clothes, but instead, how you feel in them. Feel beautiful this holiday season, no matter what you're wearing, who you're with, or what you're doing.

This being said, if you need some help finding the perfect outfit, keep reading.

Fancy Dinner Out

Keep it classy. Charleston restaurant dress code (no matter the restaurant) can go from sneakers to heels, but to fit in anywhere, classic neutrals are the way to go. From slacks and a sweater to a sleek dress, look your best out to eat with these tricks.

Add an accent color to draw the eye. A bright lip or bold scarf or pocket square works wonders to elevate your outfit, and adds a bit of holiday flair.

Give your feet some love! The right sneaker adds a bit of fun to a stuffy dining room, and if you're going for a heel, there's only one thing to say: be dramatic.

Holiday Party

Any gathering that happens from December 1st to New Year's Eve is a Christmas party by default. In that case, we urge you not to ignore the ugly Christmas sweater dress code like you did last year, thinking you were too cool for the red and green knit.

Without exception, in every Christmas party there are guests who deem themselves too good for the childish tradition of wearing unapologetically Christmassy clothing, and without exception, these guests are the odd ones out. If your Christmas spirit is too little to even wear a Christmas sweater, stay home instead.

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve, the beginning and end of the year, can only be celebrated while looking your best. Put your Christmas jammies away and jump on the dance floor.

Nothing says New Year's louder than a sequin dress and glittery clutch. Any SOA fashion major will tell you that New Year's Eve outfits are more than often too over-the-top. This being said, New Year's only comes one time every year, so feel free to go all out: this is your night.

Sixth Grader Speaks Up About Banned Books

by Cate Traywick

Now more than ever, there is a push to ban books in schools. Novels with racial and LGBTQ+ themes are the big two on the chopping block, with over 2,000 books containing these topics banned in the past year alone, and SOA sixth grade Creative Writing major, Margo Schuetze, says that something must be done to counter this.

During YALLFest, an annual literary festival held in Charleston, a panel was held about book banning, featuring authors of banned (yet



Beatrice Criscuolo and Anna Garziera.

Provided

bestselling) books, like Nic Stone (*Dear Martin*), Adam Silvera (*They Both Die At The End*), and Angie Thomas (*The Hate U Give*), where they discussed the damage that banning books does to a community.

After they said their piece and opened the floor to questions, Margo raised her hand to comment on how book banning affects her. "So many people find themselves in books," Margo said, standing in front of hundreds of literary enthusiasts. "I see myself in these books and that's why I think it's so important for everyone to have access to those books so that they can see that they are loved and that they are not the only ones there." It was at this point that Nic Stone invited Margo up onstage to speak into the microphone to make sure that everyone in attendance heard every word that she was saying.

Margo went on to describe how she fights against book banning each day, by loaning out her books that have been banned to her friends and neighbors. "I even send my books to my grandma!" she exclaimed. Finishing up her speech, she insightfully stated, "Everyone should read these books because then you'll know what other people are going through, and maybe you won't feel alone anymore."

After Margo sat down (but not before a gargantuan round of applause), Nic Stone spoke about how important it was for adults to listen to young people: "She is eleven, and she knows more than so many adults I know. These kids are so much more empathetic than we are, they know far more than we do, we need to listen to them."

After another round of applause, the panel wrapped up, and on a more positive note than it started on. Book banning can be countered by motivated, confident, and intelligent kids, SOA's very own Margo Schuetze being one of them. Easily my favorite panel of the day.

SOA Creative Writing Presents WordFest

by Cate Traywick

If you were to stick your head into the Towne Center Barnes and Noble on Saturday, December 3rd, you would hear young writers reading their craft aloud. WordFest, SOA Creative Writing's annual reading, featured stories, poems, scripts, and essays from every grade! For those of you who don't know, WordFest almost always lands on a Saturday, and it's open to the public. Throughout the day, each grade takes an hour to show off what they've been writing in the past semester.

As a Creative Writing major myself, WordFest is a unique time to read my work



Margo speaking on stage at YALLFest.

Cate Traywick



Margo with Angie Thomas (author of *The Hate U Give*).

Cate Traywick



SOA Creative Writers during WordFest.

Cate Traywick

aloud. I treasure the moments spent behind the microphone, as it is the time that I get to share my thoughts and ideas through my art.

Though WordFest presents the opportunity to read work, its true purpose is to listen to the writing of others. I love being an audience to seniors who I can learn from, as well as seeing sixth graders come into their own as writers. There's something very special about the written word being read aloud, and WordFest is one of few opportunities to hear Creative Writing read. Whether it's deeply profound and personal poetry or short stories about characters that are a complete work of fiction, WordFest is an opportunity to listen to a myriad of pieces by talented young writers!

Job Profile: Chick-Fil-A

by Eliana Gross

Applause staff writer **Eliana Gross** spoke with other SOA students and alumni about their high school jobs, and recommends a job at Chick-Fil-A to students looking for work.

Wage: Starts at \$14-17 per hour.

Workplace Culture: Calm night shifts, high diversity and accepting coworkers, quality customers, supporting team.

Skills Required: Conversing with customers, multitasking, cooperating, and working together in groups.

General Dress Code: Uniform with red polo and black pants.

Training Period: About six months.

Benefits: Free food, health, life, vision, and dental insurance.

Where to apply: www.chick-fil-a.com/careers/.



Chick-Fil-A.com

Reflecting on the Nuovo Cinema Italiano Film Festival

by Anna Garziera

Said to promote Italian art, language, and culture, the Nuovo Cinema Italiano Film Festival celebrated its sixteenth anniversary this year, and ran Italian films and documentaries from November 10th to November 13th at the Queen Street Playhouse.

Some of the featured films included *Peso Morto*, *Qui rido io* and *La Donna per me*, starring renowned Italian actors such as Angelo Massaro, and remembering Italian showgirl Raffaella Carrà with a themed evening in her name.

Though hardly an Italian nostalgic, my sister and SOA junior Linda Garziera attended the November 11th showing of the documentary *Ennio*, which portrayed the life of composer Ennio Morricone who, although seemingly obscure, composed the famous whistle in *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*, among other western films. "They characterized his life well," Linda reports on the documentary, wishing she had gone back to the Queen Street Playhouse to see more films. "I liked that they showed the film in Italian. I could understand it without reading the subtitles."



Nuovo Cinema Italiano Film Festival

Sign of the Month: "Happy New Year"

by Ariana Lane

Demonstrated by Karolyn Figueroa,
12th Grade ASL & Deaf Culture



1. To begin, bring both of your hands to your chest with your palms facing you.
2. Move both of your hands back and forth away from your body in a circular movement.
3. For the second part, make your nondominant hand into a scoop shape and hold your dominant hand in front of your chest.
4. Bring your nondominant hand in a scooping motion across your dominant hand, towards your opposite shoulder.
5. Finally, make both of your hands into fist and rotate them around each other. End with one fist resting on top of the other.

With a passion for Italian culture, SOA Fashion Design teacher Ms. Donna Chesborough attended all of the events from November 10th to November 13th, and enjoyed the festival to its fullest extent. “My friend got ‘producer’ level tickets, so we went to the opening night party and movies every day,” says Ms. Chesbrough. “The Italian food served was out-of-this-world delicious, and I found out that “La Pizzeria” in Mt. Pleasant is the place to go. My mom is Italian, so I am very selective when it comes to the cuisine!” Ms. Chesborough reveals. “Unfortunately, just being Italian did not make the movies especially good. I have a new respect for Hollywood!”

In the past few years, there has been a growing interest towards everything Italian. From the romanticization of tourism on Lake Como, to the rising enrollment in Italian classes, to the delightedness at Italian cuisine, the frenzy is hardly slowing down.

This celebration of Italian culture was brought to Charleston this fall with the Nuovo Cinema Italiano Film Festival, and is showing no signs of stopping. Coming up this spring is the Spoleto Festival USA, another exciting event to take place all over Downtown Charleston from May 26th to June 11th next year.

“I’ll definitely check out the Spoleto Festival art exhibition in June,” says SOA senior Visual Artist Abby Short, “I recommend that every SOA Visual Arts major does the same. It’s a great experience.”

Ms. Bednarczyk Travels to Asia With SOA Students in 2024

by Giselle Rattelade

During the summer of 2024, students will have the opportunity to travel to Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. This is an eleven day trip that will include excursions through cities such as Bangkok and Hô Chi Minh City.

Students will experience authentic Asian food, dance, temples, museums, and more. “I am a very adventurous and spirited person,” says Ms. Bednarczyk, who is leading the trip.

“Experiencing the culture, eating the food, meeting the people, and just everything about this trip has me very excited! What I really can’t wait to see is called Angkor Wat in Cambodia, which means “Temple City.”

This trip is for people looking to have an adventure and try new things. It’s also a great opportunity to have a little independence and to experience a whole different part of the world. The trip has about fifteen spots remaining, so make sure to sign up with the QR code found on the posters around school if you are interested.

Ms. Bednarczyk is very enthusiastic about this trip, and is excited to spend it with SOA students: “I just really learn so much when I travel, and I look forward to all of it.”

Film Design Club Creates Their First Ever Film

by Gracie Pennington

SOA’s very own film club is beginning the process of creating their first ever film! The film, titled *The Mendoza Brothers’ Greatest Heist*, is written by junior Creative Writing major TJ Griffin and the club’s writing team. It is a comedic short film revolving around two boys, Luis and Carlos Mendoza, who are mischievous neighborhood swindlers. They have a big plan to make some cash by scamming

neighborhood passersby, and seem to successfully have done so after Presley, a new wealthy girl in the neighborhood, goes along with their scheme. As we follow the brothers living lavishly, we soon realize that Presley has plotted a plan for revenge. The film stars Troy Duren, Kent Mackey, Alecia Jenkins, and Evelyn Sanchez as the four main characters.

Behind the scenes, the crew is working diligently to create the best film they can, and club president Ary Chinn is excited to be a part of this process: “Producing a short film, in my experience, has been a lot of fun, a lot of work, and a lot of improvisations. I have a great team of directors, editors, writers, designers, actors, and cameramen who make it all worth it, and we all have a great chemistry that helps us have an enjoyable experience as we work toward our goals.”

Their work has started to pay off as the film becomes more and more realized. The club has almost finalized the film’s script, and the actors have begun the task of memorizing lines and stepping into the shoes of their characters. Members are also developing their hands-on film skills by finding the right camera angles to be used, as well as storyboarding the scenes. So many types of art go into creating a film, which in a way, makes this club so perfect for SOA.

“That doesn’t mean it’s a walk in the park,” Ary adds, “although we do walk in the park occasionally. There’s a lot of planning, coordination, experimentation, and revising that goes into making sure we are prepared to film.”

Despite the challenges of film production, it’s plain to see the dedication and passion going into this film by the talented crew members. It is truly something that students will not want to miss, and Ary is just as happy to see the finished product: “I am so excited to see this project progress and the creative decisions my team makes on the way.”

Applause Visits Festival of Lights

by Peter O’Malley and Giovanni Cusatis

Applause reporters Peter, Gio, Anna, Beatrice, SOA seniors Nash Doar and Jazmine Vivas Young, and photographer Manny visited the Festival of Lights on Thursday, December 1st. Although Manny had a hard time with the lights, he eventually got over it by eating “s’morchos” (\$7.50 s’more-nachos), while Gio enjoyed a \$2 s’more stick, which had a far better monetary value. Those of us not terrified by LED displays had a great time.

If you are going to the lights, prepare for traffic in and out of the park. If you are with a fun group though, it shouldn’t matter, as long as you’re blasting Mariah Carey in the car. The lights illuminated the county park as Manny had his head against the back of the seat, because they were “too bright for [his] little eyes.” The group admired the luminescence, especially the lights in the lake. Peter, our driver for the night, was a little too mesmerized as he missed the parking lot four times, making us experience the lights more times than planned.

Once we stepped out of the car, we explored James Island County Park’s exciting holiday exhibits, including the marshmallow firepits, train ride, carousel, and playground. The most exciting of the Festival of Lights’ festivities was undoubtedly the train ride. For just \$3 per person, you’re able to sit back and relax while riding through the park at fifteen miles per hour. Manny wasn’t allowed on the train due



Film Design Club president Ary Chinn.

Provided

to his emotional demeanor, so he jogged alongside it, covering his “little” eyes from the LED lights on either side.

After walking through the park, we visited the playground, (much smaller than we remembered it), and observed Manny, who was confused by the dimensions of the slide. He complained, stating that “it was too big for my petite body, and I was scared I would get lost.” We helped him out of the playground, and returned home.

James Island County Park’s Festival of Lights is a must-do for everyone in Charleston. Driving through the lights, you can listen to your favorite holiday playlist, hear Nash’s wondrous singing (if you invite him) of hits such as “Deck the Halls,” “All I Want for Christmas Is You,” and “Frosty the Snowman.” Admission to the park is by car (\$15 online, or \$20 at the gate), so make sure to bring a large vehicle and fit as many people in it as possible. If Manny’s with you, we suggest investing in surfboard racks so you can tie him to the roof.



From left to right: Peter, Beatrice, Anna, Gio, Jazmine, and Nash at the Lights.

Manny Stavrinakis

SOA Holiday Spectacular Sells Out in Two Days

by Anna Garziera

On Tuesday, December 6th, SOA Symphony and Singers, along with members of the Chamber Orchestra, came together at the Gaillard for their annual “A Holiday Spectacular” concert, where they showcased everyone’s favorite holiday tunes, officially marking the beginning of the Christmas season.



Isis Hanna

The urge to go see this year’s Holiday Spectacular came to me suddenly, when I was waiting for Giovanni Cusatis and Nash Doar to come out of the cafeteria after their rehearsal one Tuesday afternoon. With the shorter days, the sun was already down, and a chilly November breeze was enough to steer me towards the cafeteria door.

That Tuesday, November 29th, was the first day of rehearsals for the SOA Symphony, and with only one week to prepare, performers were feeling the date creeping up on them. “I asked my mom when the concert was. She told me it was a week from now, and I was really surprised,” admitted Peter O’Malley, after coming out of rehearsal that same evening. “So now I really have to get my English essay done this week!”

Nonetheless, when I walked through the cafeteria doors, I held my breath. A wall of SOA vocalists were singing, and the Orchestra was playing softly in the background, creating a godly melody. I sat down quietly. Captivated, I pulled out my laptop, opened up the Gaillard Center website and purchased a single ticket in the front row of the auditorium. I was already sure that I was going to love it.

The first half of the concert was pleasant, as familiar holiday tunes were played and sung skillfully, but nothing had prepared the audience for the second half. Starting with more cheery songs and performances, the latter part of the concert captivated the spectators, an effect that was multiplied when the male section of the chorus pulled out red and green reindeer antlers and noses, and sang “Rudolph the Red-Nosed

Reindeer,” without being accompanied by the orchestra.

Other highlights included the cello flip and vocalists parading down the aisles with bells and singing among the audience. Then came the most emotional part of the concert, which conductor Dr. Selby introduced as “the part where you have to pull out the tissues”: the Deaf performance. Six Deaf students started by following the orchestra and choir in “Silent Night” with ASL, then the music stopped, and the whole stage began replicating the sign language in the silent auditorium. Among others, my heart dropped.

The night ended beautifully with the chorus of “Hallelujah” being played as the audience stood, and the applause started flooding the stage before the final notes were played. “That was so good!” exclaimed Beatrice Criscuolo, who was sitting next to me.

Just as any other performance, there are some things that are to be expected, such as the coughing of some, which always seems targeted to the few moments of silence, to the accidental clapping when a piece is not over yet, to the crying of babies, to the flying of cell phones from one balcony to another, to the children who will not stop kicking the seat in front of them. Even though these might seem annoying, they’re just part of the experience. “That’s the best part!” said Giovanni Cusatis, when I pointed out the excessive coughing, “it makes it feel less serious and more like a holiday concert.”

From the grandness of the Gaillard Center, to the skillful playing of SOA musicians, to the clear singing of SOA singers, to the coughing of the audience, the evening kept giving, and the audience left the Gaillard full of joy and Christmas spirit.

Where Are They Now?

by Giovanni Cusatis

Giovanni Cusatis spoke with 2006 SOA graduate Timothy Robinson to see how he turned his major into a career.

Giovanni Cusatis: What college(s) did you attend and what did you study?

Timothy Robinson: For my undergraduate degree, I studied classical trombone at Manhattan School of Music in New York City. I also spent my junior year of college abroad studying classical trombone at the Royal College of Music in London.

GC: What have you been up to since graduating?



Provided

Timothy rockin’ out with his band Blu Eye Extinction while opening for George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic in Central Park for NYC’s Summerstage.

TR: So many things! The journey had been diverse being a freelance musician in NYC. Everything ranging from classical to hip-hop to jazz, and even some bluegrass. It's always changing, so that has been fun.

GC: What projects are you working on now?

TR: Right now, I am playing trombone in the new Broadway show *A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical*. I also am the frontman in a funk rock band called Blu Eye Extinction where I rap, sing, play trombone, and play percussion. We currently tour around the world, opening for George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic.

GC: When did you realize you wanted to become a professional musician?

TR: I probably realized this when I was at SOA! I couldn't really imagine doing anything else; that's why I moved to NYC to study music.

GC: How do you feel SOA contributed to your success?

TR: SOA definitely helped me as an artist; I gained many of the foundations I still use today. I am lucky to have had such supportive teachers and classmates.

GC: Do you have any advice for aspiring artists?

TR: My advice is there is no blueprint to success!! Everyone's path is different. Being in the arts to me is like gardening. All you can really do is plant seeds (connections) and nourish them. Hard work and preservation, plus a little luck. Don't be afraid to fail, the trick is to know how to bounce back. Just be ready when the opportunity presents itself and give it your best!

Where Were They Then?

Giovanni Cusatis spoke with Piano teacher Mr. William Harvey about his life before working at SOA.

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

WH: I grew up in a small town called Beaufort. I loved being on the coast and most of my friends were military brats. I have lots of fond memories of spending time outside enjoying the amazing landscape where I could swim, fish, crab, or look for shark teeth. Later, I learned to sail on little Sunfish boats and how to drive a motorboat. I also loved exploring the military bases with my schoolmates, and we always looked forward to getting to see the Blue Angels at the annual airshow. In high school, I discovered music through the marching band program, where I met some of my closest friends to this day.

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

WH: After high school, I attended the College of Charleston, which felt like a huge city after growing up in a small town. I had a blast. I loved living Downtown and being



Timothy at Carnegie Hall after playing with Jon Batiste for the premiere of his *American Symphony*.

Provided

around so many new people. I immersed myself in the music scene and felt right at home. However, towards my senior year, I decided that I would eventually move to New York City to experience an even greater fishbowl of art and talent. Before I left for New York, I played a lot of gigs and then played music on cruise ships for a couple of years. That was a great way to see the world! I went sky diving in Hawaii, went whale watching in Alaska, and touched the wall of the Panama Canal.

GC: Where did you work before SOA?

WH: Before SOA, I taught private lessons, which eventually led to group lessons, and later subbing. Subbing in New York City was amazing because I got to check out so many different types of schools and music programs. My first full time teaching job was about ten years ago at a Quaker school in Brooklyn, where I taught rock and jazz bands to students with learning disabilities. Next I moved back to Charleston with my wife and started teaching at a charter school here in town where I taught a wide array of classes, including piano and even string orchestra.

GC: What made you want to become a teacher?

WH: I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I started band in high school. The best part was the feeling I had when I walked into the classroom. It was the first class I had ever walked into where it felt like everyone really wanted to be there. It was also the classroom students wanted to spend time in when they wanted a break from other classes. I liked the idea of teaching a subject that motivated kids to wake up in the morning because they had something in school to look forward to.

GC: Do you have any advice for aspiring musicians?

WH: My advice for aspiring musicians is similar to what I used to hear my late Uncle Pat, who was a novelist, say to aspiring writers. He would say great writers need to be great readers who read everything. So I say that great musicians need to keep their ears open and become familiar

with as many different styles of music as possible. I also think young people have a tendency to say what they don't like early on, which closes a lot of doors. Keep your ears open and you might learn something from an unexpected place or culture.

GC: In what ways have you been involved in piano outside of school?

WH: Ironically, even though I teach piano, I do not consider myself to be a pianist. Double bass is my first instrument, and I am



Mr. Harvey (middle) playing with his jazz trio in New York

Provided

fortunate enough to play a lot of gigs with some of the best jazz pianists in Charleston.

Applause Supports Annual SOA/AMHS Concert, *I Want My MTV* in March

by Ariana Lane

Provided

Every year, the students and staff of the Bond-Wilson campus take to the stage to celebrate music and honor classic rock by playing a collection of music throughout different eras. This year's show, "I Want My MTV," is commemorating music from the 1980's, gaining its name from the emergence of MTV in the 1980's and lyrics from "Money for Nothing" by Dire Straits.

The tradition began in 2016 when Dr. Cusatis, SOA *Applause* founder, approached Mr. Grimshaw, Magnet's guitar teacher, and asked



Mr. Harvey with his wife and dog.

if he and his students wanted to help celebrate Bob Dylan's seventy-fifth birthday with a performance called "Busy Being Born." Dr. Cusatis states, "it's always been a 'rockumentary,' featuring a script that traces the history of the music, punctuated by the performances."

This year, the tradition continues, as students prepare to tackle music from the early 80s, choosing from a pool of approximately 100 songs. They plan to perform around thirty-five songs between the three shows. Because they are trying to represent the decade as completely as possible, the setlist includes a variety of artists such as Dolly Parton, Prince, and The Talking Heads. The abundance of songs allows for their first two concerts to have almost entirely different setlists.

The "rockumentary" will feature a variety of grades, majors, and even schools. "I Want My MTV" is not limited to music majors: students of any major are welcomed to join in to celebrate 80's rock and roll. As per tradition, the current members are a rare mix of both Magnet and SOA students. Dr. Cusatis has stated that the tradition has always created a "great feeling of school spirit and unity" for both schools and helped form a bond between them.

But it's not just the students participating. There will also be performances from teachers including Dr. Cusatis, Mr. Grimshaw, Ms. Foster, Mr. Colie, Mr. Phillips, and a few other AMHS faculty members as well.

So far, their rehearsals have been a success, and Dr. Cusatis reports that they made great progress on eight songs during the first two practices. This year, instead of just performing one show, there will be three performances, including one off campus.

If you are interested in seeing this incredible musical collaboration, "I Want My MTV" will be performing on March 2nd (Black Box), May 24th (RMMT), and May 27th (Pour House). All three events will be open to the public, and the first two shows will be free.

If you're interested in performing, participants are still welcome and rehearsals are every Tuesday from 3:45 PM to 5:00 PM, in Mr. Grimshaw's room at AMHS. You can find updates and information about "I Want My MTV" on the *Applause* website, and in future *Applause* issues.

This Month Among the Stars

by Pai Petchsuriya

December 21st: Winter Solstice

This day is the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere, and occurs on the same day that the Southern Hemisphere celebrates the longest day of the year with summer solstice. The Earth's continuously changing distance from the Sun results in the seasons and temperature changes.

December 21st: Mercury at Greatest Elongation East

On this day, Mercury becomes furthest from the Sun. Even at this distance, make sure to wear eye protection when viewing while the Sun is visible.

December 22nd-23rd: Ursid Meteor shower

Following one of the



The Quadrantids Meteor Showers

jpost.com

most spectacular showers of the year, the Ursids are one of the less intense. The event will take place during a new moon, which provides minimal brightness and is great in order to see the most meteors. The shower is associated with the comet 8P/Tuttle and peaks at five meteors hourly.

January 3rd-4th: Quadrantids Meteor Showers

During the night of January 3rd, the shower produces forty meteors per hour at its climax, being above average. It is believed that these meteors come from the extinct comet 2003 EH1. However, the nearly full moon will block out the dimmer meteors.

January 6th: Full Moon

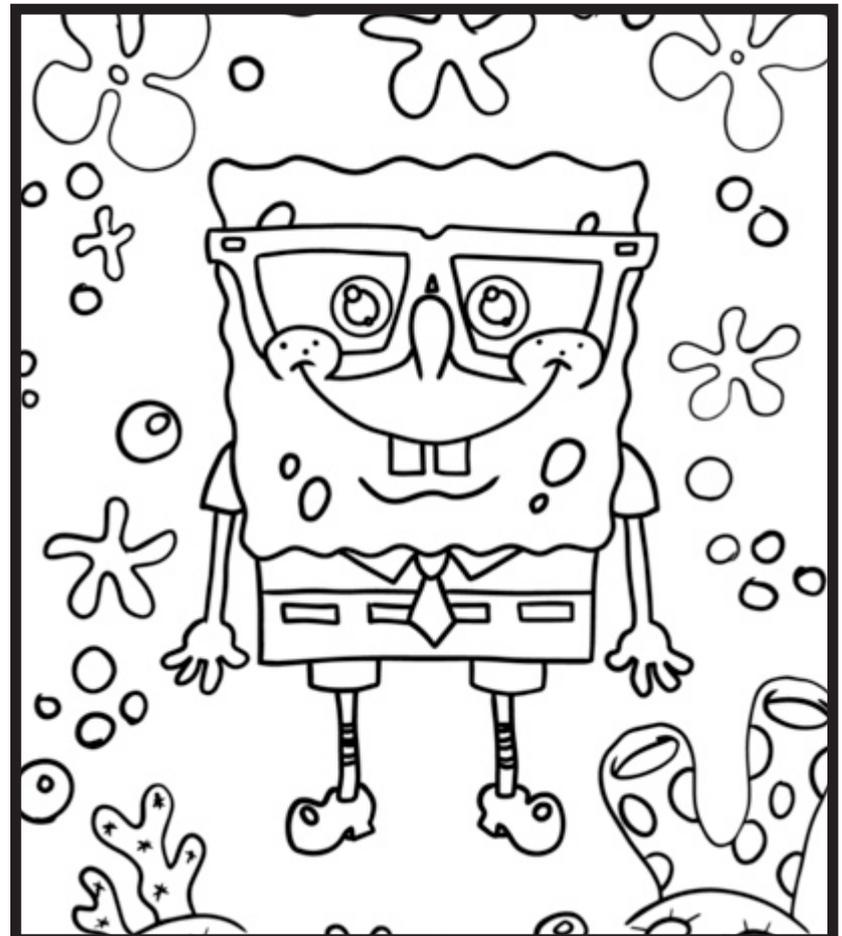
This is the first full moon of 2023. The moon will be fully illuminated by the sun, as it is on the opposite side of Earth. In early Native American culture, it is known as the Wolf Moon. In Celtic culture, it is referred to as the Stay Home Moon and the Quiet Moon.

Happy Holidays from *Applause!*

Color SpongeBob!

by Manny Stavrinakis

To prepare for SOA's upcoming performance of *SpongeBob: The Musical*, color SpongeBob!



SOA Pianist Emerges on Charleston Music Scene

Beatrice Criscuolo reached out to **John Lapolla**, senior pianist, to learn about his years in the Piano department and playing around town.

Beatrice Criscuolo: What first drew you to SOA, and specifically the Piano major?

John Lapolla: I first found out about SOA from some friends in middle school who were planning on trying out. I only really auditioned because of them, but I'm happy I did, I'm grateful for the opportunities I've been given at SOA.

BC: What can you tell us about the Piano major that others may not know?

JL: I feel like Piano is sort of seen as just practicing in our headphones all the time. While we definitely do a lot of that, I feel like we also have a really wide range of collaborations we get to do, whether we're working with other piano majors, drummers, horn players, or even playing in *Phantom*.

BC: How has SOA helped you develop your musical skills over time?

JL: SOA really gave me time to work on music. Getting an hour and a half, or sometimes more, every day to practice gave me time that I might not have otherwise set aside. It also put me in an environment with a bunch of other people who are really driven, not only in their art, but in almost everything else they do, that really inspired me to work harder.

BC: You perform in a jazz trio outside of school. Can you tell us about your recent gigs?

JL: Most recently we got the opportunity to play at YALLfest, we got to play a book reveal event for Chloe Gong and the after-party for staff members. In the next month we'll also be playing a New Year's party out at Middleton and a wedding in January.

BC: How was your experience playing for the U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins? Did that open any doors for further jobs?

JL: It was really cool to get to play for such a big name in poetry, and I'm really grateful for the opportunity to play for him and meet him. Besides actually giving us a reason to put our trio together, that gig led to us performing at YALLfest and a few people coming up to us after the show asking for a contact in case they ever needed live music.

BC: What schools are you applying to, and what is the application process like as a pianist?



The trio rehearses for the Billy Collins Opening Act

Provided



John (left) and his trio talk with Billy Collins

Provided

JL: Right now my list is CofC, Berklee, NYU, Manhattan School of Music, The New School, and CCNY. The application process isn't terribly different as a Pianist, some schools have earlier admissions deadlines or need me to submit pre screening materials for music. The main difference is needing to schedule and do an audition.

BC: In the future, are you looking for a career in music? If so, what is your dream job?

JL: I'm hoping to pursue music as a career. It's not a super secure field which worries me a little, but I'm confident I'll be able to find work. My dream job would be getting to teach music as a college professor and tour during breaks.

SOA Violinists Perform in Studio Recital

by Anna Garziera

SOA Strings majors Giovanni Cusatis, Evan Baker, Nash Doar, Kennedy Mack, and Finn Carmichael performed at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer on Friday, December 9th, in a studio recital with violin teacher Tomas Jakubek.

Giovanni, Evan, and I arrived at the church early, around 4:00 P.M., and after only four attempts, Evan was able to park within the white lines in the church parking lot. There were around fifteen performers, and the music started flying early on within the walls of the church; first, only the now familiar shrieks of the violins which indicated their being tuned, and then hints of movements and whole songs. I already had goosebumps at this point, although this might have been because of the cold breeze running through the doorway, rather than the melodies created by those rehearsing; the SOA seniors among the performers were already giving the audience a first taste of their senior theses.

The recital began at 5:30, and as it always seems to happen, I found myself sitting next to Manny Stavrinakis, as well as his sister and SOA graduate Clara Anne Stavrinakis, Alex Selby, and Jazmine Vivas Young. The performers were ordered roughly in order of ability, with the near-professionals performing last. The first piece to really grab our attention was called "Pepperoni Pizza" and was performed by Isabelle Jakubek, the teacher's daughter, a single-note piece that was accompanied by piano. After a few recreations of "Jingle Bells" and *Harry Potter* themes, Kennedy Mack played the Vivaldi double violin concerto beautifully, increasing the skill level of the recital by a notch.

Around this time, Manny started to draw SpongeBob on the complementary "Scribble Cards for Little Lutherans," and in doing so, started to really enjoy the recital. "That's my bestie, Finn Carmichael," Manny said when Finn walked up to the altar, and played "Sicilienne and Rigaudon" with great mastery. Nash came next, dressed better than I have ever seen him dressed, and played the Bach G Minor violin concerto very cleanly, perfectly, as long as my average ear could tell. After two more performers came Giovanni, who played Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* incredibly well, except for the last note, of which he cringed, and of which Manny looked at me and cringed as well. "They should have put the 'Pepperoni Pizza' girl in the middle of all the good ones," pointed out Manny, to which I agreed; it would have introduced some humor in the recital, which after almost one hour of classical music is



Giovanni Cusatis and Evan Baker with their teacher, Tomas Jakubek.

Amy Baker

arguably needed.

The last performer was Evan. “Best for last,” said Manny with a smile, and he was right. Evan was the best, although every performer seemed to be the best until the next one started playing. To be acknowledged is pianist Pedro Toro, who accompanied almost every performance and complemented the violinists rather than overshadowing them. Another performer to be commended is Vanessa Nguyen, who accompanied Jimmy Kim on the piano in the first performance, and then played a concerto on the violin beautifully towards the end.

As a general trend, SOA students outshone the other performers, both in the complexity of the music played and in how elegantly it was played. It sounds bad to say, but in all sincerity, I didn’t realize SOA violinists were *that* good until last night. I had a similar experience at Peter O’Malley’s unaccompanied cello recital last month at St. Johannes Lutheran Church, which makes me notice two things. First, the incredible talent of SOA musicians is somewhat clouded in performances that use the whole orchestra, and we can sometimes forget the sheer strength of each musician. Second, all good recitals happen at protestant churches, and for that reason I’ll be attending Peter’s second recital of the school year on January 8th at 1:30 P.M. at Unitarian Church in Charleston, and you should too.



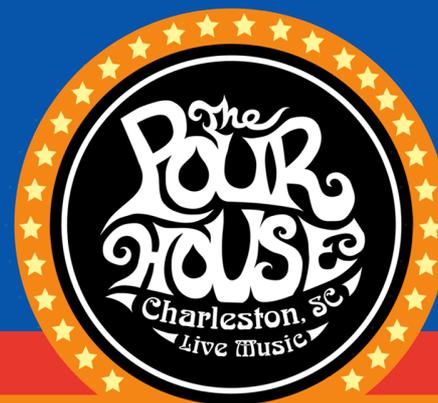
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Nash Doar plays the Bach G Minor violin concerto

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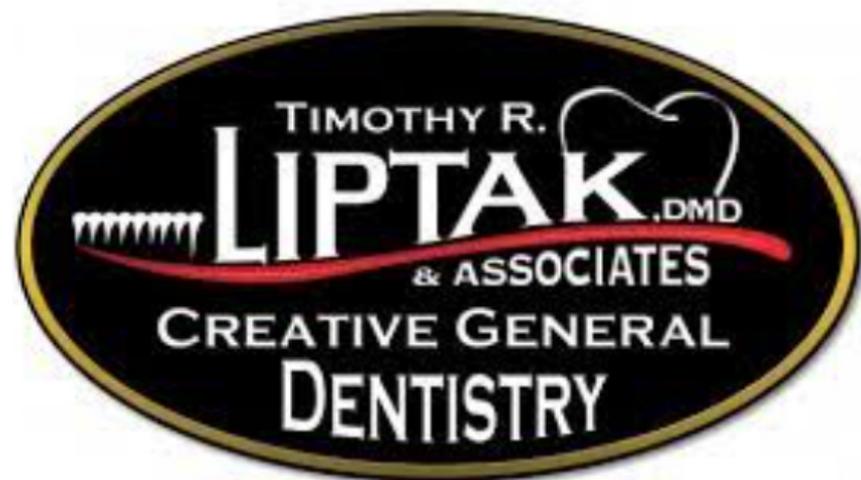
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High School Dance Performs Winter Showcase

Photos by Z’Nyah Nelson

On November 15th, Dance majors performed their Winter Showcase, featuring holiday themed dances and the work that they had been learning, choreographing, and rehearsing during the first semester of the school year. Seventh grade Dance majors performed a dance called “Winter Dreams,” revolving around the use of ribbons and the traditional steps of Chinese Ribbon folk dance.



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SOA Middle School Strings and Vocals Perform Holiday Magic Concert



Student Council Holds Lowcountry Foodbank Fundraiser

by Ariana Lane

On December 14th and 15th, SOA Student Council members held The Winter Food Festival, a fundraiser for the Lowcountry Food Bank.



SOA Band Major Organizes Fundraising Run

by Cate Traywick

School of the Arts seventh grade Band major, Maddy Miller, has single handedly organized a fundraising run for the Lowcountry Orphan Relief. The run itself will take place on January 8th at 2:00 PM at Mount Pleasant Track at City Hall. "We are asking for a monetary donation of at least \$10 to run." During the run, Maddy will also be accepting donations of new and like-new clothing items to give to the organization. Overall, she hopes to raise over \$500. Help her reach her goal!



SOA Seventh Grade Visits Water Missions

by Giovanni Cusatis

On Thursday, December 1st, SOA seventh grade students took a field trip to the Water Missions facility in Charleston. Making the trip on foot, each student carried an empty gallon bucket, and returned with it filled with water to raise awareness for the global water crisis.





LET'S GO TO

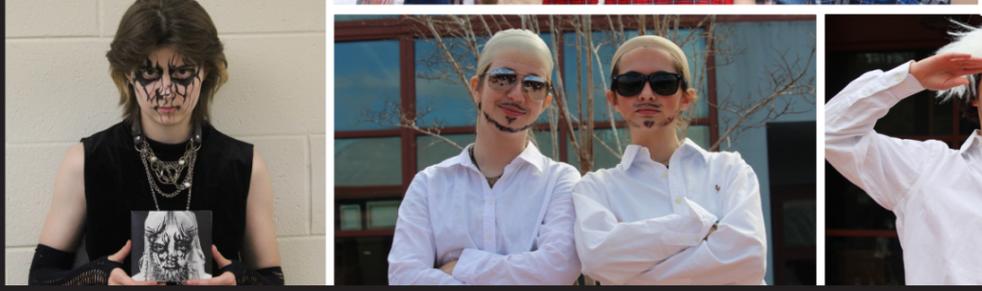
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SOA Spirit Week 2022
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 For more photos, visit soa-applause.com/photo-gallery/.
 Photos by Lauren Holladay





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JONATHON HEYWARD

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Live Q&A with *Applause*
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What did SOA students do over Fall Break?



Zack Kynard, senior Creative Writing major, worked over Fall Break.



Sophomore Vocal major Emma Ladd attended a Friendsgiving with SOA alumnae Marin Sinclair and Hayes Martini and current SOA senior Molly Scholer.



Makenna Grozis, senior Vocal major, had her wisdom teeth removed.



Ellison Holland, senior Fashion major, hosted a Friendsgiving with other SOA students.

Eleventh Grade Dancers Perform Junior Composition Showcase

by Lauren Holladay

On Wednesday, November 30th, junior Dance majors performed their own choreographed pieces for their "Art in Motion" showcase. For their dances, students were allowed to choose an abstract piece of art to study and research, and then choreograph a dance based on the piece. Dancers were responsible for finding their music, costumes, and making lighting changes for their performances.



Sierra Coleman



Jasmine Jones



Max Besta



Leilah Baird



Reagan Villegas



Fallyn Dunmeyer

Horoscopes

by Cate Traywick



Capricorn (December 22 - January 20):



Capricorn! I know you're still loving your summer playlist, but it's time to change the mood. You can't be listening to Harry Styles in the fall and winter months. It just doesn't work, I'm sorry. Switch it up dude: Michael Buble and Mariah Carey all the way!

Aquarius (January 21 - February 18):



You have so much going for you right now Aquarius, a plethora of opportunities! You may be overwhelmed, but don't be thrown off. You're going to have some of the best days of your life soon, as long as you have the courage to pursue them. Grab the chance! Take a risk! Carpe Diem!

Pisces (February 19 - March 20):



Pisces, let's focus more on your intellectual pursuits and less on your Instagram reels, okay? I guess you're realizing now that AP classes are more than just saying you're in an AP class to look smart. That project has been sitting on your checklist for weeks now and it's due today, so make haste, Pisces!

Aries (March 21 - April 19):



It must be hard being so cool and funny and stylish all the time. You've been killing it lately, Aries! From your immaculate handwriting to your overall confidence, there's a lot to admire about you this month. Keep it up!! While you're at it, tell Leo to stop writing their sevens like that. Seriously, it's getting on my nerves.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20):



You keep complaining to me about how difficult the novelties are Taurus, but I promise you they aren't that hard. Maybe you're just bad at sudoku, have you ever thought of that? And the crossword! Was "A large game bird native to North America" really that confusing? Anyways, stop talking to me about it; take it up with the editors.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20):



Stumped about what to get your person for Secret Santa, Gemini? It happens to the best of us; you aren't super close with that one person in your group, but you just had to draw their name. Never fear dear Gemini, I've got tons of basic gift ideas. Novelty holiday fuzzy socks are always a classic, but maybe switch it up a bit and get a candle. Everyone likes a nice candle, right? I guess I don't really like candles. Maybe just ask the internet.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22):



Cancer! I see that you're already planning your New Year's resolutions, and you also are planning not to go through with them. That's fine, but maybe consider following a few of them. It's fine if you get rid of 'learn how to cook' and 'stop procrastinating' and 'do service hours for once,' but definitely stick to 'touch grass' and 'get more rizz.'



Leo (July 23 - August 22):

I know that you're mourning the summer months Leo, but please just buy a pair of pants. Wearing shorts this deep into December is absolutely unacceptable. You aren't cool, you're just cold and you know it. Seriously, you're making me chilly just by looking at the goosebumps on your exposed legs.



Virgo (August 23 - September 22):

Stop flexing your Spotify Wrapped, Virgo. Nobody cares that your top artist is Chill Hip Hop Beats To Study/Relax To, second only to Taylor Swift. If Rent taught me anything, it's that there's 525,600 minutes in a year, and you dear Virgo have listened to music for over 300,000 of those. Take out your AirPods and interact with people once in a while!



Libra (September 23 - October 22):

Your ex isn't the only thing you're missing, Libra. Turn in your assignments babe. Channel that negative energy into productivity, and don't text them... you're just going to get left on delivered. Commit to your schoolwork, Libra (because we all know you can't commit to anything else)!!



Scorpio (October 23 - November 21):

Scorpio, you've been looking a little lost lately so I'm here to set you straight. Yes, 'catawampus' is a real word. No, you aren't walking too fast. Yes, that text you sent last night was a bad idea, but it's too late now. And stop procrastinating your math homework, it's not going to go away.



Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21):

Happy birthday, Sagittarius! It's your season and you need to milk that for all that it's worth. Whether it's finagling your friends out of the last Pringle in the can or getting away with turning in your science homework late, use your birth as an excuse, because dear Sagittarius, you are a gift.



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Vocal, Strings, Band, and Deaf Departments Perform Holiday Spectacular

Photos by Anna Garziera and Isis Hanna

SOA singers and musicians in the Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra, and the Deaf program performed at the Gaillard Center Downtown, kickstarting the holiday season with their "Holiday Spectacular" concert, an annual tradition at SOA. All 1800 seats at the Gaillard were reserved, after only a few days of the tickets being up for sale. The large audience enjoyed a concert that featured classic tunes such as "Rudolph the Rednosed Reindeer" as well as original pieces that were written particularly for the Orchestra, such as "O Nata Lux."



Applause Presents
I Want My MTV: Unplugged
Songs of the Early 80s



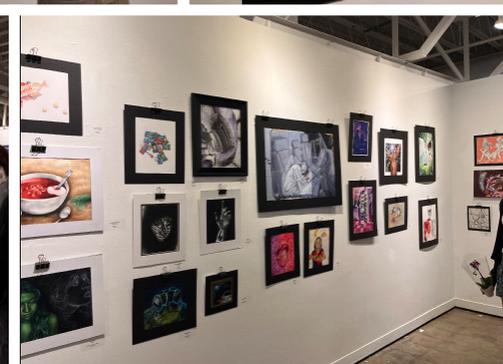
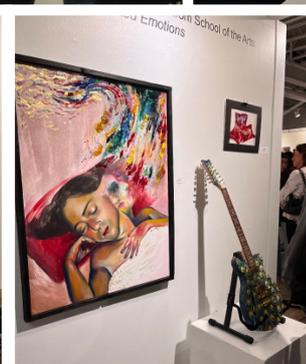
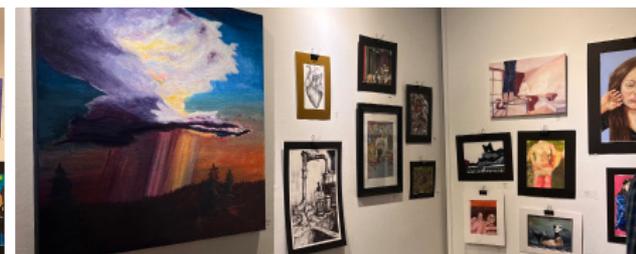
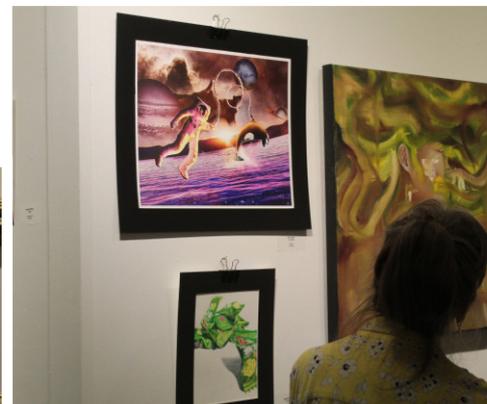
Thursday, March 2, 2023, 6:30 pm
Black Box Theater

SOA Middle and High School Visual Artists Showcase Work in December Art Shows

by Lauren Holladay

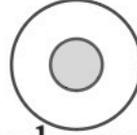
Throughout the first semester, Visual Arts majors worked hard to create incredible art work to be shown to parents, friends, and local art-lovers. The middle school, taught by Mr. Colie, held their art show titled "Art in the Hall" in the Visual Arts hallway, and were able to display their work from the first semester on December 7th.

Only a few days later on December 9th, high school artists held their opening reception for their "Mixed Media, Mixed Emotions" art show at a popular art gallery in Downtown Charleston. This display is still on view for the public, and can be seen until January 21st, 2023, at the Redux Center for Contemporary Art on King Street.





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Holiday Reviews

Classic Christmas Movie Review: *Die Hard 2*

by Anna Garziera

A close second to whether or not the Earth is flat, the ongoing debate about whether *Die Hard 2* (1990) is a Christmas movie has tormented generations since the late eighties, tearing families apart and confusing Americans every year as we ask ourselves: what makes a Christmas movie a Christmas movie? Set on Christmas Eve, *Die Hard 2* (1990) plays on millions of screen every December, and is the perfect Christmas movie for the dads who will not put up with sloppy romance, the moms who are secretly in love with John McClane, and the children who, in the relief of their parents, fall asleep before the violence and cursing really begin.

With a classic, seemingly unoriginal plot, *Die Hard 2* disguises itself among every other action movie out there: New York City policeman John McClane (Bruce Willis) is waiting for his wife Holly's plane to land at Washington Dulles International Airport, when a group of terrorists take over the operating system and threaten to crash the planes that are waiting to land. McClane takes action and saves the lives of hundreds of passengers, and is able to reconcile with his wife Holly by the end of the movie.

The only thing that is more important to me every Christmas than watching *Die Hard 2* (1990) is watching *Die Hard* (1988), its predecessor. From the unapologetically fake-looking snow on the runway, to the humor created by mocking persistent reporter Richard Thornburg, to the quality of the action scenes, the *Die Hard* series never gets old. Just like Ross, Joey, and Chandler in the series *Friends*, you can call me a hardcore *Die Hard* fan: "Joey, we just saw it." "And?" "And it would be cool to see it again! *Die Hard!*"

So, regardless of your feelings for action movies, or Christmas movies, *Die Hard* is a must-see. This year, I will be watching *Die Hard* in a youth group movie night, and then I'll



be watching it again with my friends Beatrice Criscuolo and Giovanni Cusatis, who need to finally be exposed to the masterpiece that is the *Die Hard* series. Lastly I'll be watching *Die Hard* and *Die Hard 2* one more time with my dad on Christmas Eve like we do every year, and like every year, we'll love it and will go to bed thinking of John McClane with a smile on our faces.

Classic Christmas Movie Review: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*

by Isis Hanna

December is officially in full swing and so, it seems, is the holiday season. Trees are being trimmed, Mariah Carey is playing without shame, and best of all, Christmas movie marathons are now an acceptable way to spend your evenings. Now that Thanksgiving is over, we're dusting off all the classics for another month: *Elf*, *A Christmas Story*, and of course, *Christmas Vacation*.

The *National Lampoon's* franchise is, in my opinion, way too cheesy. The jokes fall flat and the plotlines are crazy unrealistic, making most of the movies come off as ridiculous (and not in a good way). Though they're good for a few laughs, it's nothing to write home about. However, somewhere among this sea of mediocrity a timeless holiday masterpiece was born: *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*.

Christmas Vacation follows Clark Griswold on his quest to have the perfect, good old-fashioned family Christmas, and as you would expect, nothing goes as planned. From obnoxious in-laws to several broken windows (not to mention an exploding sewer), the Griswolds are plagued by disaster at every turn. Despite the unrelenting mishaps, the plot of this movie doesn't come off as too unrealistic. It's the kind of outrageous comedy you can laugh at without rolling your eyes. Each character is a perfectly ridiculous and yet relatable family stereotype. Anyone with nightmarish extended-family members can relate to the



perils of having your judgemental father-in-law witnessing your holiday failures or being forced to give up your room to grandparents who just won't take the hint and book a hotel.

Despite all this, the movie does have heartwarming undertones that make you appreciate the ones you (mostly) love during the holidays. Clark Griswold's refusal to give up on his perfect Christmas almost makes you admire him. Where most people would throw in the towel, he perseveres and constantly finds new ways to keep his family in the Christmas spirit, and by the end, you find yourself cheering on his antics.

This movie has become a really big part of my own family's holiday season, and I look forward every year to settling down on the couch and hearing that surprisingly catchy opening song for the first time in a whole year. If you also watch this movie every year, you're awesome. If you don't, I highly suggest you give it a watch (and give your parents a hug; they work hard during the holidays).

Christmas Album Review: *A Christmas Gift for You*

by Riley Borkowski

During this time of the year, you run into two types of people; the Christmas music lover and the Christmas music cynic. The genre of holiday-specific music has such a stigma around it. Through all the constant overplaying of the same Christmas standards, it can be hard to remember that they are not all bad songs. Sadly, the truth about holiday music is that for many, just a few notes of a Christmas song is enough to trigger flashbacks to the headache-inducing fragrance stores filled to the brim with Winter Candy Apple perfume and gingerbread-scented candles during the winter months.

However, even the Christmas music cynics could enjoy *A Christmas Gift for You* from Phil Spector. This album was published in 1963 and features five different bands and artists singing some of the most iconic Christmas classics known to man. To achieve a great Christmas album, it has to pull off the trick of repeating free-flowing joy without becoming sickly, and this album does just that.

"White Christmas," sung by Darlene Love, is a wonderful start to the album.



Her voice is beautiful and the rhythmic instrumentation is excellent. The track is very upbeat with powerful vocals and plenty of Christmas cheer. The glossy L.A. pop is perfect for a snowy December day, or the fifty-degree weather we experience here in Charleston. You can't go wrong with Darlene Love's rendition of this popular holiday hit.

"White Christmas" is then followed up by The Ronettes performance of "Frosty The Snowman." I know, this song can spark repulsion in Christmas music Grinches, but The Ronettes always show up when it comes to Christmas music. Their rendition is full of personality and exciting instrumentals. It is a very catchy song that you'll most likely find to be stuck in your head, even after the start of the new year.

The Crystals did not disappoint. Their entrance to the album with "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" is the musical embodiment of Secret Santa with your friends and following it up with a Christmas cookie bake-off. This song tends to have a bad reputation as a result of malls and restaurants overplaying it, but those recordings are not comparable to The Crystals rendition. Their rendition is full of personality and little original twists, somehow making the already catchy song even more enjoyable with their great harmonies.

If you have listened to Christmas music in any quantity, you know the song "Sleigh Ride." Some love it, some hate it. Whatever your stance on the song is, the main melody is just incredibly catchy, and paired with The Ronettes, it is the perfect song to spark some holiday cheer. As much as I can't stand having a song stuck in my head, I wouldn't be bothered if this one decided to occupy my mind for the weeks following Christmas.

Of course, these are only some of the hits on this album. With the holiday season in full swing, I highly suggest you give this album a listen if you're struggling to find your Christmas spirit.

Reviews

Classic Movie Review: *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*

by Peter O'Malley

Steven Spielberg's 1982 blockbuster *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial* follows Elliott, a young, suburban Los Angeles boy who finds a deserted alien in his backyard. The movie explores themes of innocence, friendship, and youth, and features one of John Williams'

most masterful soundtracks.

I saw *E.T.* for the first time in third grade, and though I thought E.T. (the character) was scary looking, I fell in love with the music. And, as I pointed out in the *Star Wars* review last month, John Williams' score is a hugely important part of the story, bringing the scenes and characters to life. Also, like *Star Wars*, Williams takes themes from the world of classical music and places them within the movie. Most notably is the title theme, originally from the cello melody toward the end of the final movement of Dvořák's "Dumky" piano trio. If you have seen the movie, listen to this. It's awesome!!

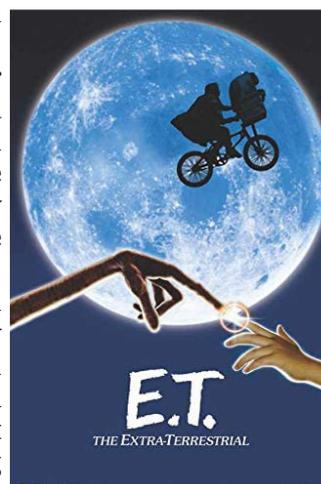
The alien, E.T., only says "Elliott," "E.T.," and "phone home" in the movie, and though he has so few lines, his bond with Elliott brings humanity and personality to the otherwise strange-looking (and scary, to my eight-year-old self) creature. And they actually become one, early on in the film, through some sort of cosmic power E.T. has. When E.T. drinks alcohol at Elliott's house while Elliott is at school, Elliott becomes drunk; when Elliott gets cold, E.T. gets cold; when Elliott is sad, E.T. is sad. It adds fun to some of the scenes, but deep down, this tie draws a parallel between the two characters. They're more similar than we're led to believe. E.T. was deserted by his people and left alone in the woods. Elliott's the reserved middle child with an absent father who doesn't fit in with his brother's friends. As Elliott helped E.T., he found importance.

E.T. is a powerful story that continues to captivate audiences as an iconic gem of the 1980s. It's a favorite of mine, and I strongly encourage you to see it.

Contemporary Movie Review: *The Fabelmans*

by Eliana Gross

The Fabelmans (2022) is the newest movie from Steven Spielberg, and said to be based partially on his own life. The story follows the Fabelmans, a Jewish family, as they move from place to place and grow up, but especially focuses on Sammy Fabelman (Gabriel Labelle) and his journey as both a filmmaker and a Jewish teenager growing up in the mid 1900's.



It illustrates the magic of film making and the passion of an artist. Something to note is how culturally accurate it is to real Jewish families, from sitting *shiva** in mourning to using paper plates for Friday night dinners, to the songs the Fabelmans sing. It's an emotional and quick paced story with great casting by Cindy Tolan and a realistic family dynamic.

Along with Gabriel Labelle, it also features Paul Dano as Sammy's father, Seth Rogan as Benny, Michelle Williams as Sammy's mother, and a short appearance from Bennie the monkey, playing a monkey named Crystal.

The *Fabelmans* was captivating and well received by the public, with critics calling it Spielberg's most intimate film yet. It's rated PG-13 for strong languages, thematic elements, brief violence, and drug use. *The Fabelmans* received a 93% from Rotten Tomatoes, an 8.3/10 on IMDb, and an 84% from Metacritic. I highly recommend this movie while it's still in theaters.

*Shiva: a period of seven days of formal mourning for the dead, beginning immediately after the funeral.

TV Show Review: *The Owl House*, Season Three Premiere

by Gracie Pennington

The Owl House is a show I have been following for quite some time, and is certainly one that follows through on its promises. It is a Disney Channel animated series featuring incredible worldbuilding and extremely relatable characters. It is wildly entertaining, yet is serious and emotionally impactful in all the right moments.

The show is most known for its avid representation, especially of the LGBTQ+ community. It achieves this by seamlessly weaving all different types of characters together in one story without putting any labels onto characters; not shining the limelight on their queerness, but rather the characters themselves. The show does not use the LGBTQ+ characters for any sort of narrative; it just lets





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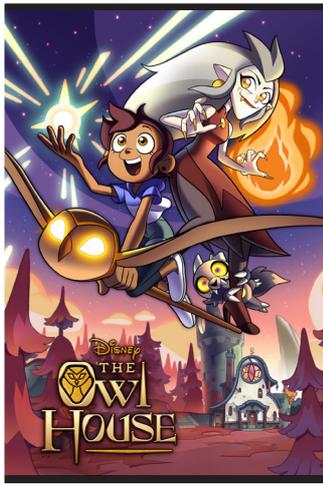
them exist exactly how they would in the real world. This is perhaps what makes this show so popular. The characters are so unapologetically diverse that anybody could watch the show and see somebody they relate to.

The show has three seasons, the third being the final one. Instead of a fully-sized season around twenty-five episodes, the final season consists of three forty-five minute specials. The first one was released October 15th, 2022, while the last two will be released in 2023. Despite the considerably lessened runtime of the season, the show is on track to hold up incredibly well, as shown by the season premiere. Beware, spoilers ahead!

To give a very basic summary of the first two seasons, Luz Noceda is a normal girl in a normal town in the United States, but has always been different, having an interest in fantasy novels and worlds. She finds herself encountering a portal to a magical world called the "Demon Realm," predominantly inhabited by witches and magical creatures. There, she meets newfound friends and becomes a witch's apprentice. This on its own would be a pretty cliché plot, but with *The Owl House*, it is written very uniquely. The magical realm is not a fairytale by any means; it has its fair share of scary creatures, dark magic, and even an increasingly strong dystopian government attempting to wipe out all magic.

Season three continues the ideas from the first two in an even more interesting light. Luz and her friends find themselves in the human realm, and they're trying desperately to get back home. Luz, unlike her friends, is back home with her mother, which brings a very emotional conflict to the mix, giving her reason to stay. The magic and the human world blend together in a perfect way, and the mysteries connecting the two are incredibly well portrayed. I won't say any more of the show, as it truly is best experienced blind, but I will say there are so many more incredible qualities that this show has to offer.

The Owl House ties together its strengths well, with its compelling plot, characters, setting, and inclusivity, and the third season shows much promise to keep these themes going. This animated show is just incredible and delightful, and I recommend it to anybody



who loves a good adventure, some great laughs, and maybe even a few tears.

TV Show Review: *Rings of Power*, Season One, Episode One

by Madison McDonald

The episode opens very similarly to Peter Jackson's rendition of *The Fellowship of The Ring*, with a monologue from Galadriel. A young Galadriel is drifting a paper boat down a river, very similar to the swan boats seen in Lothlórien. This attention to detail made me very hopeful for the episodes to follow. It was such a fun callback to the previous films and books.

The show quickly establishes that Galadriel's brother has been killed fighting against the forces of Sauron, leading adult Galadriel to seek revenge.

Galadriel searches for Sauron through many trials: scaling mountains, and fighting monsters. Unfortunately, she is no closer to finding him, but she knows that he is still somewhere out there. Her soldiers ultimately decide to give up their quest to find and defeat Sauron and force Galadriel to return home.

Even though the Silmarillion never specifies that Galadriel did any fighting, the Second Age, which is represented by the books, is incomplete. This was a really great thing to see for her character as it fleshes her out, without altering or disrespecting what Tolkien had intended. Tolkien himself even advocated for others to carry on the mantle of his writing in some of his letters to C.S Lewis, the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*. This was a great setup for the rest of the show; it provides us with a great story, without altering Tolkien's legendarium. This truly respects the integrity of its origins.

Halfway through the episode, we get our first glimpse of the Hobbits. The ability of Middle Earth has always been a mystery. Tolkien has never directly confirmed how they were able to stay so hidden, rather he provided several

theories about it. One popular theory is that the Hobbits were nomadic, but this show takes that a step further. The Hobbits in *The Rings of Power* are not only nomadic, but they engage in almost guerrilla-style methods of hiding when others near their camps. This made so much sense and interacted well with what had been previously written. The Hobbits keep in line with the idyllic and simple lifestyle that Tolkien intended them to live.

We are eventually introduced to a young Elrond, and I felt so relieved to not see Mr. Smith from *The Matrix* on my screen. That was a casting choice from Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* movies that always bothered me. He was a great actor, just not for that role. The "new" Elrond seems far more elven and was more closely in line with what I imagined when I read the books.

Elrond is introduced in a city known as Lindon, one of the largest elven cities in the second age. The visuals were absolutely stunning. There were allusions to other works of Tolkien carved into statues in a courtyard that was clearly recognizable to those who had read them, but still gorgeous to those who were unaware of the reference. Seeing these made me giddy with excitement.

There is another plot line concerning an elf named Arondir, and a woman, Bronwyn, and it is clear that there is great animosity between men and elves. Bronwyn, however, is an exception to this. It is suggested that they are in a relationship. There have only been a few recorded instances of relationships between men and elves throughout all three ages (famously, Aragorn and Arwen in the Third Age, as well as Beren and Lúthien in the First Age). Arondir's companion seems critical of this pairing and believes it will end tragically, as other such romances have.

This plotline seems wholly new to the world of Tolkien, so I am a bit dubious. Perhaps it will turn into something more familiar; I am willing to give it the benefit of the doubt.

We are moved back to a scene concerning Galadriel, on a ship to Valinor, which is sort of an afterlife for the elves. I will not describe this scene in detail, as it is something you should see for yourself. It was beautiful, everything I had hoped for.

Nearing the end of the episode, there is a great meteor that falls near the Hobbit outpost. In the center, there appears to be a mysterious man, surrounded by fire. Not much was given to us about this man's origins, and even as someone who is very familiar with all of Tolkien's works, I was still perplexed. I had a few ideas, but I wouldn't dare to commit to one with what little information was given. I



enjoyed how they did this because it allows old fans to still be surprised by the show.

Overall I would give this episode a nine out of ten. I loved it, but I cannot get ahead of myself.

Contemporary Book Review: *The Marriage Portrait* (2022)

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Taking inspiration from Robert Browning's poem "My Last Duchess" and Agnolo Bronzino's portrait *Lucrezia de' Medici* (1545-1561), Maggie O'Farrell tells the story of the Duchess Lucrezia di Cosimo de Medici, a young woman in Renaissance Italy who was married to the Duke of Ferrara.

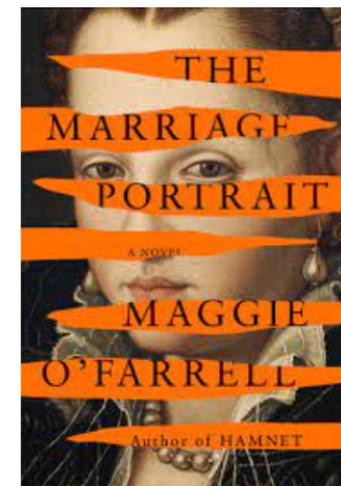
O'Farrell's presents her latest novel, *The Marriage Portrait*, as its own work of art. Each chapter, poetically titled, draws the reader in, almost as if the reader has stepped into the portrait of Lucrezia itself.

The story begins in Florence, with the birth of Lucrezia. As a child, she is ostracized by her many siblings, but finds solace in illustration and dreams of her father's menagerie. However, Lucrezia's comfortable life is stripped away when her older sister, Maria, suddenly dies, leaving her to marry Alfonso, the Duke of Ferrara. Barely thirteen, Lucrezia is forced to prepare for a wedding two years away.

Lucrezia navigates married life with grace, but still falls short of being the wife (and duchess) her husband hopes her to be. Filled with secrets, hostility, and fear, Lucrezia navigates cautiously through her new world, trying to stay safe.

Right as Lucrezia begins to feel as though her life is in danger, Alfonso orders a portrait made of her, ostensibly a marriage portrait. Soon after, Lucrezia and Alfonso travel to his country lodge, and Lucrezia is faced with an impossible situation, as well as a beautiful portrait, and is forced to rely on her wits to survive.

The Marriage Portrait jumps forward and backwards in time, only meeting once the reader has received a comprehensive narrative of the events in Lucrezia's life that provides background on her new and old family that she learns while in her first (and only) year as duchess.



Winter Sports Emerge at SOA and Magnet

by Giovanni Cusatis

At the end of every fall sports season comes the start of winter sports. Recently at SOA, thanks to the merge of sports between the two schools, many SOA students are playing basketball or wrestling for Magnet. SOA athletes on the wrestling team include sophomore Ayden Caffarel and juniors James Herring and Justin Gilliard.

Andrew Russell is a sophomore Strings major who plays junior varsity basketball for Magnet. He has been playing basketball since he was a little kid through various rec and streetball leagues.



Provided

The three SOA students who play for AMHS: Andrew Russell top left. Dylan Sweeney top row #32, Tyler Nelson top row 2nd from right.

The team meets every day after school for practice. "Most of the time, practices consist of a lot of drills and conditioning, but sometimes we get split up into teams and we play full court scrimmage games." Andrew's goals for the season are to get used to the environment of playing on a high school team and to improve his skills so next year he can play varsity. The Raptors are 2-1 to start off the season, and they tied against Hanahan most recently on December 9th.

Nadia Fox is a freshman Band major who is a member of the Academic Magnet Raptors girls basketball team. She started playing in fourth grade for St. Andrew's Parks & Playgrounds and this season, after going to the Magnet pre-season conditioning camp, she joined the team.

Now that games have started, they meet every day during the week when they don't have a game. "Practices can be hard, but they are usually fun." Her goals for the season are to get faster and to improve as a player.

Dylan Sweeney is a sophomore Theater major who also plays on the boys JV team. He says being on a high school team is "really fun and enjoyable." In the team's recent game against Hanahan, Dylan scored 6 points, 8 rebounds, and 5 blocks.



Band major Nadia Fox (left) plays for the Raptors girls basketball team.

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Dancers Host Third Thursday Events

by Lauren Holladay

On the third Thursday of every month, Dance majors look forward to getting to know their peers through bonding during their "Third Thursday" events. These events range from Nacho Bar themed to Halloween and Cookie Decorating, and allow those in the major to get to know each other and celebrate with a special treat each month.



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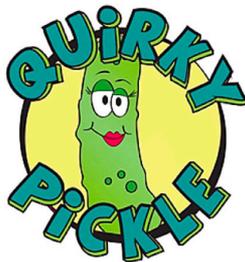
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Piano Trivia
by Gracie Pennington

1. How many keys does a typical piano have?
2. What is the metal frame of the piano called?
3. What was a piano called in its early days?
4. What decade was the electric piano invented?
5. At what age did Beethoven lose his hearing?
6. When was the piano invented?
7. What was the first Japanese manufacturer of pianos?
8. How many pedals does a piano usually have?
9. Is the piano a percussion or strings instrument?
10. Until the 1950's, what animal's tusks were used to make piano keys?

Austin Smith, 11th grade
Vocal major



Provided

5/10

1. Eighty-eight
2. The body
3. The pianoforte
4. 1970s
5. Thirty-seven
6. 1708
7. Caiso
8. Three
9. Percussion
10. Elephants

Carl Macklin, 12th grade
Band major



Provided

7/10

1. Eighty-eight
2. The body
3. Piano forte
4. 1920
5. Twenty-five?
6. 1800s
7. Yamaha
8. Three
9. Percussion
10. Elephant

Answers

1. Eighty-Eight, 2. Harp, 3. Fortepiano or Pianoforte, 4. 1920's, 5. Twenty-five, 6. 1709, 7. Yamaha, 8. Two or three, 9. Both, 10. Elephant

December Playlist

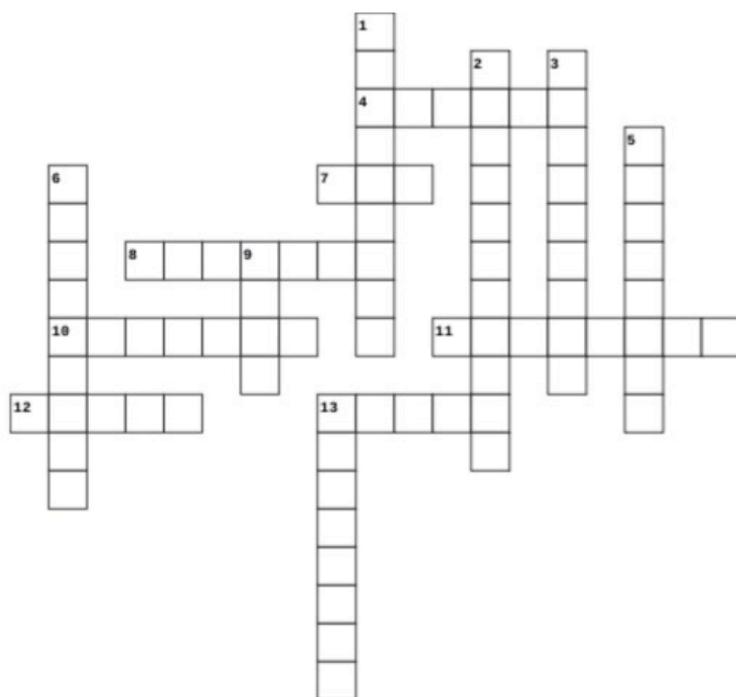
by Beatrice Criscuolo

Dance into Winter Break with these (mostly 2000's) throwback hits.



Holiday Crossword

by Manny Stavrinakis

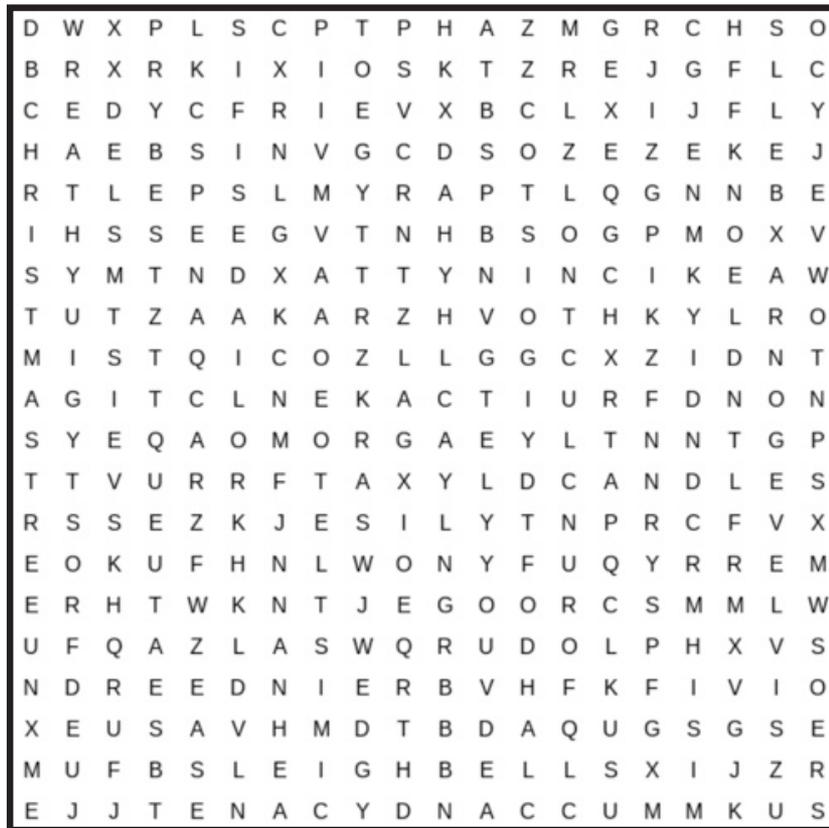


Across

4. A large sled pulled by reindeer to deliver presents to children on Christmas.
7. Magical beings, commonly with pointy ears, that build toys for Santa.
8. A gift placed under the Christmas tree before Christmas day.
10. A day of festivity to celebrate a certain event.
11. A decorative figure hung on Christmas trees.
12. Happy and cheerful.
13. Known as Saint Nicholas or Kris Kringle. Brings children presents the night before Christmas.

Down

1. Often used as a Christmas decoration, and it is tradition to kiss someone under it.
2. Cake made with molasses and flavored with ginger.
3. Holiday held annually on December 25th.
5. A deer with large antlers that help fly Santa's sleigh.
6. The place that is farthest north on the Earth, and where Santa and his elves live.
9. A decoration placed at the top of the Christmas tree.
13. A long sock hung up on Christmas Eve for Santa to fill with presents.



Holiday Word Search

by Manny Stavrinakis

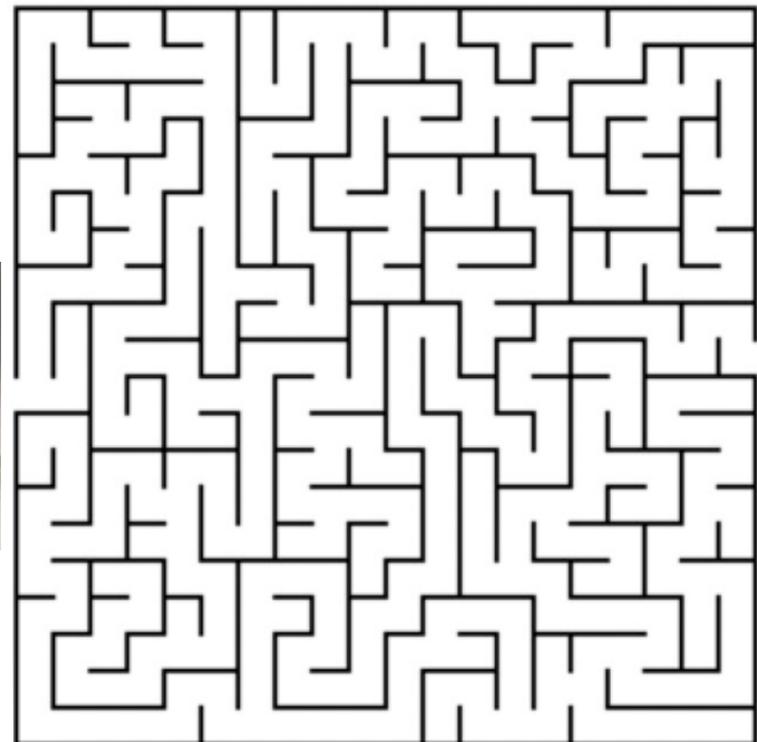
- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| BELLS | NORTH POLE |
| CANDLES | POINSETTIA |
| CANDY CANE | REINDEER |
| CHIMNEY | RUDOLPH |
| CHRISTMAS TREE | SANTA CLAUS |
| EGGNOG | SCROOGE |
| ELVES | SLED |
| FROSTY | SLEIGH |
| FRUITCAKE | SLEIGH BELLS |
| JOLLY | SPIRIT |
| MERRY | STOCKINGS |
| MISTLETOE | WREATH |
| NOEL | |

Help Mr. Harvey find his piano!

by Manny Stavrinakis

SOA Sudoku

by Manny Stavrinakis





“We take all of our spoiled leftovers and throw them into our neighbor’s yard so they have to clean them up.”

John Nelson, 6th grade Theater



“I play ‘Reindeer Games’ with my twenty-four cousins.”

Sarah Thomson, 7th grade Vocal



“We hide a pickle on the Christmas tree and then try to find it.”

William Balderose, 8th grade Visual Arts



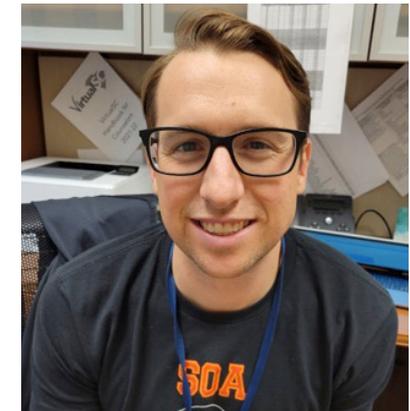
“Every Christmas Eve, my family and I make a TON of cookies.”

Ms. Rumph, High School Science



What’s your most unique holiday tradition?

by Isis Hanna and Cate Traywick



“My family has a HUGE Christmas party at my parents’ house in Philadelphia, and we bring all the pets, so it’s like a zoo in there.”

Mr. Grauer, Guidance Counselor

“In Hungary, we don’t put the tree up until the 24th of December, and on the 5th of December, kids put their shoes outside their windows for Santa Claus to fill with gifts.”

Ms. Hepburn, Digital Art



“I get a Santa piñata and beat it until it gives me presents.”

Eva Higdon, 9th grade Visual Arts



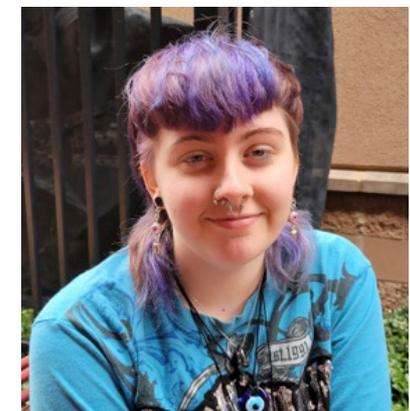
“My family and I eat Chinese food every Christmas Eve.”

Ella Schrecker, 10th grade Dance



“My family and I all get matching PJs on the night before Christmas.”

Sadie Vanderber, 11th grade Dance



“My grandma is British, so we celebrate Boxing Day on the 26th.”

Kingsley Gainey, 12th grade Visual Arts