

# Applause

Volume 24, Number 6 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC January 2023



24.

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## From the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the New Year! The three of us are seniors, so it's pretty daunting to see the year 2023 every day. We're living in the future! The day we graduate and lead our post-SOA lives is approaching quickly, but for now, we're just glad to have made it through the first semester.

The year 2022 brought a lot of excitement to SOA, including many performances and visits by guest artists, and we're looking forward to highlighting everything that 2023 has to offer. This issue, we are pleased to cover the Dance program at SOA, featuring an interview with high school Dance teacher Ms. Tillotson on page 25, photos from Dance's senior thesis on page 10, and more information about their Guest Residency program on page 23.

Jonathon Heyward, 2010 graduate and now internationally renowned conductor, visited SOA on the first day back from Winter Break. You can read our interview with him, held live at the RMMT, on pages 6 through 8, as well as a feature on page 22.

We hope you had a great Winter Break, and best of luck with your second semester!

Your Editors,

*Peter O'Malley* *Lauren Holladay* *Whit*



## SOA Calendar

by Lauren Holladay

**Jan. 23:** Report Cards Distributed This Week

**Jan. 23-24:** Vocal Senior Thesis, RMMT, 5:00 p.m.

**Jan. 30:** Junior Ring Ceremony

**Feb. 1:** Dancing with the Teachers

**Feb. 3:** Early Release Day (Teacher

Workday)

**Feb. 16-19:** *The Spongebob Musical*, RMMT, 6:30-9:00 p.m. (3:00 p.m. matinee on February 19)

**Feb. 17:** Early Release Day (Teacher Workday)

**Feb. 20:** President's Day (Schools Closed, Offices Open)



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# Applause

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

*Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers*

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**Cover by Lauren Holladay**

## In This Issue

### Jonathon Heyward Returns to SOA

by Peter O'Malley

### Dance Department Welcomes Guest Artists

by Ariana Lane

### Seventeen Students Compete in Poetry Out Loud Championship

by Anna Garziera

## Sass Attack: January Weather in Charleston

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.*

I started the year off by diving into the fifty degree ocean. I expected it to be chilly, and it definitely was. But what I didn't expect was for the air to be dramatically warmer than the water. I mean, should January 1st really be warmer than January 10th? As I write this, I am realizing that Charleston weather is entirely too unpredictable. I would like it to be just like the movie *Groundhog Day*, where we know, to the day, how long winter will last (hopefully without getting stuck in a time loop).

With warm weather in December and January, I am way too excited for spring to put on my puffy coat when a cold front decides to make its way to the coast. And I'm always tricked by the taste of spring in the first week of January; I decide I'm done wearing pants-shorts all the way. I make beach plans and put away my coat. And then, suddenly, it comes. The forty-five degree winter weather that should have been here all along. Out comes the coat, and I have to remember that it's winter all over again.

Don't get me wrong, I love winter. I love the cold, sunny days, gingerbread cookies, and ice skating. I just wish winter would commit. It's like winter and summer are in a struggling relationship; they're falling in and out of love every couple days, leaving us with hot and cold days when, really, it should just be one temperature. Spring is a compromise, but one summer and winter can't reach, like who gets to pick the movie on date night. So winter, get your act together and fix that relationship, for all our sakes.

## Opinion: School Wifi

by Eliana Gross

The neverending annoyance of the almost criminal WiFi at this school is something that no one has been able to avoid, teachers and students alike. If it wasn't enough that it doesn't work with personal phones or computers since they decided to “crack down on personal devices,” like this is 1984 or something, the WiFi doesn't even work on Chromebooks given to us by the school itself. If I had a dollar for every website in the Charleston County School District that was blocked or wouldn't load, I'd be rich enough to buy the school new WiFi. It's Orwellian, truly, that there are classrooms here in which I cannot text my dear mother.

It's painful, but if nothing else, everyday when I go home I can appreciate the fact that I don't have to wait twenty minutes to look up the weather. Patience is a virtue, and it's one you'll have to gain quickly if you don't want to lose your sanity here in Charleston County Schools.



Beatrice Criscuolo

Provided

## Opinion: Passion and Discipline

The first day back from winter break, SOA met Jonathon Hewyard, 2010 graduate and now the first African American conductor of a major orchestra in the United States. Hewyard's success is astounding, but he isn't alone: numerous people who once walked the halls of SOA have gone on to win Grammys, lead solo careers, and even perform at the Super Bowl. With a clear drive and enough determination, this success is possible, and you too can achieve it.

Set a goal, and make it happen. It's easy to feel discouraged by the competition, especially in the arts, but even the most successful artists keep pushing, even when things aren't going well. Many of us are applying to colleges, or taking auditions for summer festivals or conservatories, and it's important to realize the inevitability of rejection. It'll suck for a day, but you have to bounce back and look forward with optimism and drive. And when you're on a run of yeses, celebrate the moment, and don't stop.

It's hard to conceptualize just how many other people there are in the country, working toward the same goals as you. And only until you step out of Charleston will you see this. You'll meet people whose portfolios are twice as impressive as yours, with bios filled with big names and achievements. Right now, they may be further along than you are, but they're here to show you that with determination, anything is possible. Make friends with them, and learn from them. Two years down the road, you might surpass them.

We'll all be in the real world soon enough, and right now is the best time to start making your aspirations reality. If you really want to make a name for yourself, go for it. Practice more hours each day, study and refine your technique, and branch out. SOA has lots of resources, and you should use them to your advantage. If a former Band teacher can win a Grammy, you can too. And if a Dance graduate can share the stage at the Super Bowl halftime show with The Weeknd, so can you.



Eliana Gross

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## Applause Editor Peter O'Malley in Conversation with Maestro Jonathon Heyward

The following interview was conducted in front of a live audience of approximately 500 students and former and current faculty members on Wednesday, January 4th, 2023. 2010 SOA graduate **Jonathon Heyward** was in town to guest conduct the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestra.



Jonathon and Peter in conversation on January 4th.

**Peter O'Malley:** We're just coming back from a rehearsal with Jonathon and the SOA Sinfonietta. Did it bring back any memories from when you were in the cello section?

**Jonathon Heyward:** Definitely. Absolutely! The cello section is probably much better than when I was there because you guys sound *amazing*. It's so good, really incredible. But of course, it always brings back memories. Just being in this building and on this stage. I remember helping to officially open this theater. It was just such an exciting time. So yes, floods of memories, for sure.

**PO:** What do you recall from your audition for SOA? Was it nerve-racking, or were you relaxed?

**JH:** Does anyone *ever* feel relaxed in auditions? I was very nervous because, at that point, I had only been playing cello for three months. I could hardly play the instrument. So I got to the audition, and I was barely able to play. And I was waitlisted. I didn't get in immediately. It wasn't until a month before that I found out someone decided not to attend, and I was called and allowed in. That was really the beginning of all of it. And that one person who dropped out happened to be my best friend, Jake Metivier. He decided to go somewhere else for sixth grade, and then he came back in seventh. We met up and we didn't know until high school that he was the reason that I went to this school. He was my best friend, and he was my best man at my wedding in May. So it's an amazing story, but it's true, completely true. *[Applause]*

**PO:** So looking back over the past decade, what aspects of your education at SOA were most important and gave the biggest lift off to your career?

**JH:** I think the biggest thing is, when I started out, I knew that I was an underdog. I knew that I wasn't playing very long, and that to catch up, I had to work really, really hard. I didn't start out like everyone. I started out really late.

I came from a family of people who really loved music for sure, but no one was a musician. What I learned immediately was that if I worked hard, the results could come and people would support me. That was the biggest lesson that I could learn, and it all started here. It really started here.

**PO:** So, shortly before you graduated, on April 16, 2010 --I was in pre-school, so I don't know if I was there--*[Laughter]* **Applause** sponsored the dedication of this theater in honor of Rose Maree Myers, and you conducted the high school orchestra on this stage. What do you remember from that experience?

**JH:** To be able to conduct a full orchestra at that age was just amazing, to be given that opportunity and to be able to dedicate it to such an amazing woman. She was a person who cultivated this whole idea of a school of the arts in Charleston. She was a mover, she was a shaker, she was someone who believed and to be able to be a part of that dedication was really, really, special for sure. *[Applause]*

**PO:** Do you remember what the orchestra played?

**JH:** Yes, Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slave*. Don't look it up. I think it's on YouTube somewhere. Don't do what I do. *[Laughter]*

**PO:** That same year, SOA moved to this campus. It was brand new. What do you recall about the difference in the school's climate when you changed campuses?

**JH:** *[Laughs]* Well, the climate was that we had a river in the middle of our campus, and you guys don't have a river in your campus. I think every one of you should look at a photo. Dr. Cusatis, we should figure this out, we should get photos of the original campus. Before you have the privilege of walking into this place, you should see where it all started. When it rained, it flooded. Didn't it? We had kayaks that would come through the river. We were bad, we shouldn't have done that, but you know, it had soul. The campus had soul. We were all in trailers, we were all in this big old field, basically. It's very special to be in this building, don't get me wrong. It's gorgeous. We came here and we thought, it's great to see the transitions, to see where we could go from where we started. That, again, is due to all the brilliant staff and brilliant teachers and Ms. Myers who really believed in the whole vision of what a Charleston County School of the Arts could be.

**PO:** Lake SOA, right?

**JH:** Lake SOA! Yes! That's it.

**PO:** Since graduating, you've built your career throughout the world: England, France, Germany and from coast to coast in the United States. Was it daunting or exciting to leave home and live in all these diverse cultures and to study abroad?

**JH:** Yes. Well, there was something unique that happened when I was studying in Boston. I had done a conducting competition in Bulgaria, and it was one of, if not the first time I left the States. And what was so beautiful about it was that I realized that we have such a powerful art form that can transcend anything. Any countries or languages. So I wanted to really commit to studying abroad because I suddenly thought that if I don't do it now, I think it might be harder later. And I think that was kind of the point when I was in Boston doing this competition. I wanted to know what it was like to make music outside of this country. And in different places. Because it's an amazing art form to be able to share with different cultures.

**PO:** You foreshadowed your success all the way back in 2010 in *Applause*. Answering the prompt which we ask all graduating seniors, "What do you see yourself doing in ten years?" you wrote that you'd "like to become a music director of a major symphony orchestra and to make concerts a fun and enjoyable experience for both the musicians onstage and the audience below." You also said you wanted "to make the concert setting more welcoming and homey." You've clearly achieved the first part of this, becoming music director for Baltimore, but do you still have the same goals of creating accessibility and homeyness for orchestra concerts? As the music director of an established orchestra do, you think you'll now be able to achieve those goals?

**JH:** I think I saw what I feel so passionate about now, earlier on in my career, because I was here at the School of the Arts. The amount of diversity among the students that we had, coming together for the unity of arts and music and breaking down so many barriers- we had so many different students from different cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, races, creeds, all coming- as you all are today- all coming together, and I really *felt* that, so much, this idea that we could break barriers with the various art disciplines that we had. So it's really the essence of this school that gave me that vision. And as I go on now becoming the music director of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, yes, that's *exactly* what I believe in. Particularly now, with COVID, as artists, we all have to think differently now. We have to think about making sure that we connect to the community that we serve. That's primarily what we do. So, yes, making it homey, making it something that is accessible for everyone, and making people realize that they *can* enjoy this art form. It's absolutely for everyone.

**PO:** For the next season, do you already have an idea how you're going to achieve this goal?

**JH:** Yes, I hit the ground running with this job. We are still working on minor plans, but the exciting part is that my whole team, from the CEO to the head of artistic planning, we're all on board with this idea of "music for all." And we are thinking about what that means and what that looks like for Baltimore. Where do we go? Should we go to the University of Maryland? Should we play concerts outside? How long should the concerts be? What should we program? I'm so proud that the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra has these amazing fusion projects. We combined Beyonce and Beethoven in the same concert, for example. I mean, an amazing fusion idea, really clever, drawing a completely different crowd from your Masterworks. But it gets people in the hall, and they're realizing that what they listen to daily, can relate to these fantastic classical music composers.

**PO:** I think that's what the world needs. I think it's changing culturally.



Heyward conducts the Sinfonietta

**So, do you have a composer, when you're performing, that you feel you connect with most?**

**JH:** There happened to be a composer that I was working with this morning, Shostakovich. For me, Shostakovich has always been very, very, fascinating. His life, his story, how he also used music as an outlet, during such a struggling time in Soviet Russia. It speaks to me, as most Russian music does. But, yes, it's very interesting that if you trace Shostakovich's life, you'll see that his symphonies are autobiographical. They're totally about his life in that moment. So to one day do all of his symphonies is a goal.

**PO:** Starting out your career, was there someone whose recordings

**you'd listen to or whose concerts you'd attend? Was there a conductor that inspired you?**

**JH:** Yes. There are three that come to mind. The person who really inspired me the most was David Stahl, who was, of course, the director of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra. Just being able to watch what he did, what he was doing, how he rehearsed. It was just an amazing thing to see at such an early stage in my life. As far as a living conductor, someone I want to get closer to is Sir Simon Rattle, he's someone who is just an extraordinary musician, and who clearly loves what he's doing. He's been doing it for ages, and he still has this amazing spirit. And someone who has passed is the very famous Austrian conductor Carlos Kleiber, just an *amazing* sense of being all about the music. All these conductors are focused entirely on making really good music so it connects to the audience, and that's where I try to draw my inspiration.

**PO:** When you are about to conduct a concert, do you have a pre-concert ritual, or do you have a favorite dinner beforehand? *[Laughter]*

**JH:** Nothing spicy. *[Laughter]* It's funny. It has just been getting really busy, and I think sometimes we forget that as musicians, we work just as hard and have to have the same physical discipline as Olympic athletes. We really do. And it's often really difficult. And so I decided, because things were just going crazy, to tap into getting a performance coach. So I have a coach who helps me with my stamina and basically preps me for exactly these moments, regarding what I should be doing before performances. She's been working with me a lot, and we talk about the "Golden Hour" before a performance. The first part of the Golden Hour is to take a twenty-minute nap in the dressing room. So no one disturbs me, and I do a power nap, essentially. The next twenty minutes is just lightly remembering the places where I don't want to completely mess up, and then the next twenty is relaxing and feeling my feet, feeling grounded, and getting dressed and ready to go on stage.

**PO:** And you didn't have this coach at SOA? *[Laughter]*

**JH:** No. Not yet! *[Laughter]*

**PO:** I've always found it really interesting when a conductor doesn't use the score or have a podium in front of them. What do you see as the advantage of this? Do you ever feel pressured to conduct a score from memory?

**JH:** I don't necessarily feel pressured. I do it when the moment feels right. I never push myself with it, because, ideally, I should be able to do it from memory, most of it. Whether I have a score or not, because of how much I studied. Why you do it is not necessarily to show off or anything. It's just to connect more with the musicians, so that you can be right there with them. If you're looking constantly down at something, it can distract you from what you're trying to achieve. So, if you're there and in the moment, I think that there's true magic that can happen when it's just you and the musicians and you're making music. But a lot of studying before has to happen, because you can't miss the details. You can't do it just to do it. You have to conduct the details; you have to show the details. So I don't conduct without a score unless I really have every single detail in my mind so I can serve the music, because that's all we're doing at the end of the day.

**PO:** You were talking about Shostakovich earlier, and how much you can connect to his works. Are there any scores that you feel so familiar with that you've found each time you were able to get to know them better?

**JH:** It's funny, I am still opening the scores for the first time to a lot of the repertoire that I'm conducting. I have so much to learn, and I'm only now getting back to pieces that I've conducted maybe once before, and that's nice because it's like, "Aah, I remember how this went. Last time we did it, it went this way, so I want to try it this way now." And so it's only now that that's starting to happen. A few of the Beethoven symphonies I've conducted several times. But I'm still learning most of the music just from the beginning, which is daunting sometimes.

**PO:** In March you gave the world premiere for Xavier Foley's double bass concerto with him and the Atlanta Symphony. This was a brand-

Applause

**new work, so how did you approach it, and did you work with Foley up to this premiere?**

**JH:** Yes, we talked a lot. It was an amazing thing, being able to work with a living composer. You can speak to them about what they want and what they're trying to say. And Xavier is an incredible bass player. He was here, wasn't he?

**PO:** He was.

**JH:** Yeah, I thought so. He's an incredible bass player, and he's just kind of figuring out his compositional style. I was asking him a lot of questions, and even to the very last moment of the dress rehearsal we were changing things. And that's the beauty, to be able to be flexible, and change things and adapt a new work. And now we're going to do it in Baltimore, and it'll sound different again, later on in May.

“Nothing is impossible without a bit of hard work and setting your dreams and goals.”

**PO:** World premieres are exciting.

**JH:** They are. They can be. They can be scary, but they can be exciting as well. I have one story about that. I was doing a world premiere of an opera by an Italian composer, and we didn't get the last act of the opera until the dress rehearsal. And I had to go to Rome to pry it out of his hands and go back to the dress rehearsal. And so, yes, world premieres can be exciting, but they can also be very stressful. [Laughs]

**PO:** Tomorrow you're conducting the Charleston Symphony. You sat in on their rehearsals as a kid and watched David Stahl, who studied under Leonard Bernstein. What was that like, and how does it feel coming back to the CSO so much later and with so much more musical knowledge? Are there any aspects of the program that you're most excited about?

**JH:** It's great to come back. I basically know everyone in the orchestra. So it's so nice to see familiar faces. There was one point where one of the violinists came up to me, and she said, "I just can't get over the fact that you were fourteen, and now you're telling me what to do." Sorry. She meant it in a very lovely way. But it's amazing to be able to be there and make music with familiar faces. I travel around the world a lot and I don't know *anyone* sometimes, so to be able to see familiar faces is great. And my favorite aspect of tomorrow will be Tchaikovsky 6, because it's my first time doing it.

**PO:** Congratulations. Based on your pursuit, and attainment of your dream, what advice do you have for the SOA students in the audience today?

**JH:** Nothing is impossible without a bit of hard work and setting your dreams and goals. Like you pointed out, I *knew* this was what I wanted to do, and I also knew why I wanted to do it. It had nothing to do with wanting to be the center of attention, because if that's the case, don't do it. You have to really love what you do, and you have to believe that what you do as an artist is to serve the community, and to serve the people listening and watching. I was just so overwhelmed by that. I don't say that lightly. I was so overwhelmed by the power of what we do as a classical music art form, to be able to create a sound that is bigger than one person. It's incredible. So set those goals now, dream now, think way, way in the future. Because when you set it, you always have this aim, this dangling carrot at the end of it, and you'll be surprised. The dreams can come true, definitely in a supportive environment like the School of the Arts. Just keep dreaming. Keep dreaming. [Applause] Any questions from the audience?

**Student:** If you ever made a mistake, where was it, and what was it?

**JH:** I've made plenty of mistakes. I think I've made too many to find a specific place where I've made a mistake, but this is a really good question because you all have to know that you *will* make mistakes, because every human does. And it's not about making mistakes, and when we make a mistake, it feels like the world is going to cave in on us. But the reality is that you just have to keep going no matter what, because you are all human and you are doing a beautiful human thing, which is making art. Some of the greatest artists have made some of the greatest art from making mistakes, so remember that. Whenever you make mistakes, it's just a part of the journey. It has nothing to do with your ability as an artist. It's just a part of the journey. Good question.

**Student:** What is your favorite place you've ever performed?

**JH:** So my favorite place I've ever performed at was, and still is, and I'm so



Heyward and the Charleston Symphony and youth orchestra, which includes 7th grader Annabella Cusatis (far left) and Sophomore Kate Selby (far lower right) on January 5th.

happy to go back a lot, is the Concertgebouw concert hall in Amsterdam. It's one of my favorite concert halls. If you've never seen it, look it up. It's one of the most beautiful concert halls, and it has some of the best acoustics.

**Student:** I've seen what conductors do, but how do you *know* what to do? [Laughter]

**JH:** I'm still trying to figure that out. How do I know what to do? This is a good question because as a conductor you are a leader, and you are just trying to figure out how to get the pieces all together. I said this today in the Masterclass early on. A lot of what I do is listening. Seventy percent of what I do has to be listening and thirty percent has to be the other bit, conducting. Listening is crucial to being able to change and adapt, and to make sure everything comes together.

**Student:** Have any of your recordings been in movies?

**JH:** In movies... not yet. Stay tuned. [Laughter]

**Student:** Have you ever performed at Carnegie Hall?

**JH:** Not yet. But I'm practicing because apparently that's what you have to do to get to Carnegie Hall. [Laughter]

**PO:** Well thank you so much for having this conversation, Jonathon. It's great to see you again.

**JH:** It's amazing to be back. Great to see you again, Peter.

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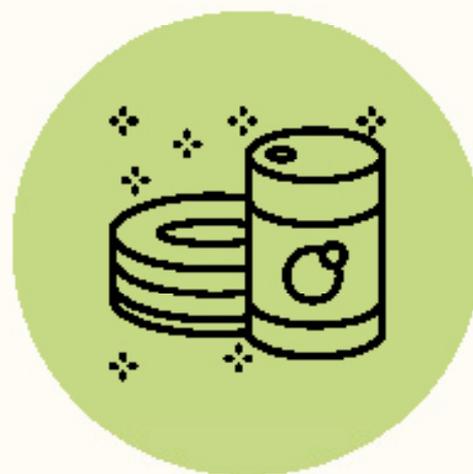
**JANUARY 18TH - 27TH, 2023**

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### Questions?

Contact Lauren Holladay at  
hollau2783@ccsdschools.com with any  
questions

### DROP OFF LOCATION

Dr. Cusatis' Room, Room 1115

## Dance Senior Thesis: “Change the World Through Dance”

On December 7th, 2022, twelfth grade Dance majors performed their Senior Thesis pieces in the RMMT at their concert “Change the World Through Dance.” The students were tasked with choreographing, designing, and rehearsing their own dances, and were each additionally featured in two dances by their peers. Assigned to address an important societal issue in their pieces, dancers focused on choreographing pieces around many important topics, including climate change, divorced families, and abusive relationships.



## Theater Senior Thesis: “Metamorphosis”

From January 11th to January 13th, SOA Theater Senior Theses were performed by students in the RMMT. The students wrote a play of their own, and were each required to perform in multiple of their classmates' pieces as well. The three nights were each composed of different theses, with an average of seven shows per night.



### Jonathon Heyward at the Symphony

On Thursday January 5th and Saturday January 7th, Jonathon Heyward led the Charleston Symphony for a thrilling performance, featuring works by Florence Price, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky.



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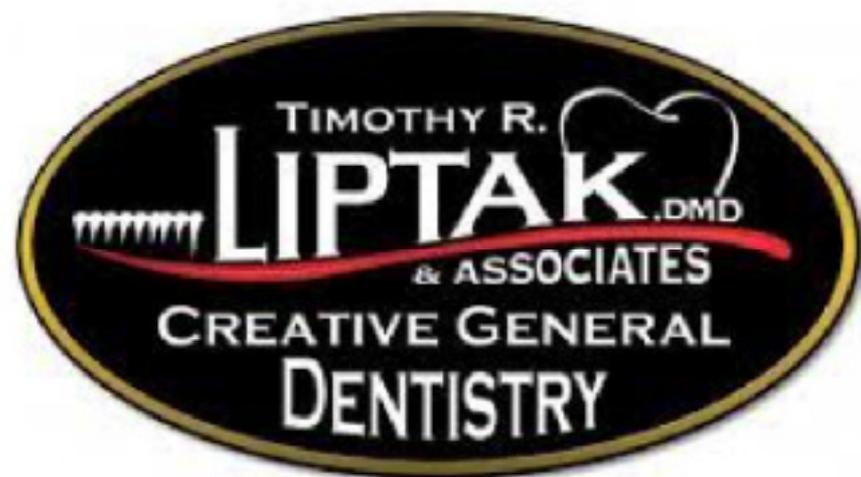
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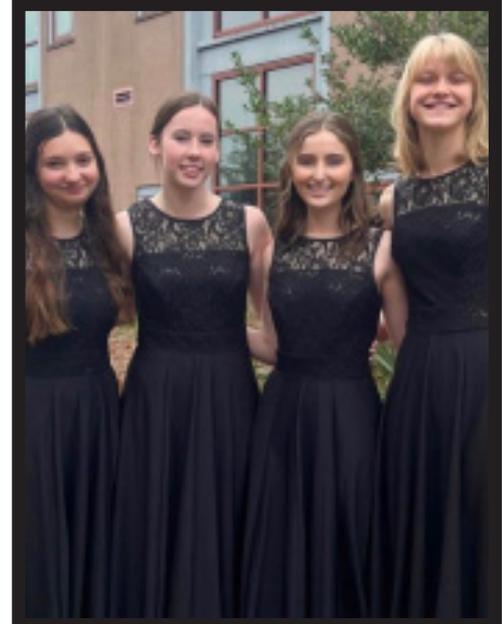
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## SOA Vocalists Chosen for National Honor Choir

In the Fall of 2022, roughly 4,000 students across the US auditioned for the American Choral Directors Association National Honor Choir. 400 students were chosen, and nineteen are SOA students. Those selected are Ella Duffy, Lauren Bas, Norah Bernstein, Britni Johnsen, Kai Boone, Jack Daniels, Matthew Gould, Gregory Johnson, Jack Mears, Emma Norton, Nicko Palihan, Caleb Parrish, Jones Partin, Milo Robbins, Sam Sasson, Keller Tumminia, Mery Traxler, Nathan Wright, and Ernie Frazier. The vocalists will perform in February in Cincinnati, Ohio.



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## SOA Athletes Continue to Thrive on Magnet Teams

by Giovanni Cusatis

As we enter the new year, winter athletes are in the middle of their respective sports seasons. SOA has many athletes who continue to shine on Academic Magnet teams.

The Magnet wrestling team has five SOA wrestlers: James Herring, Nick Severance, Justin Gilliard, Ayden Caffarel, and Ben Fancher. "It has been a great experience being on the team. At first, I was wondering how Magnet kids would take SOA wrestlers being on their team, but they didn't mind at all," Nick Severance says. The team has placed well, despite having to forfeit many matches due to a lack of wrestlers in that weight class. Most of the wrestlers didn't have any background in the sport prior to this year. Sophomore Strings major Ayden Caffarel says, "I have seen big improvement in my form and technique through the first month of the season."

Wrestling isn't the only winter sport that SOA students are competing in. Andrew Russell, Tyler Nelson, and Dylan Sweeney are a part of the JV Boys Basketball team and Nadia Fox and Maddison Logan are on the JV Girls Basketball team. Both teams are having solid seasons, and the boys team is worth noting, as they are 7-3 so far. Andrew Russell says that his favorite part of the season so far was their game against Oceanside: "It was a big challenge going

against them, and I think we learned a lot." Both teams next games are against Bishop England on January 20th.



Justin Gilliard tackles his opponent

Giovanni Cusatis



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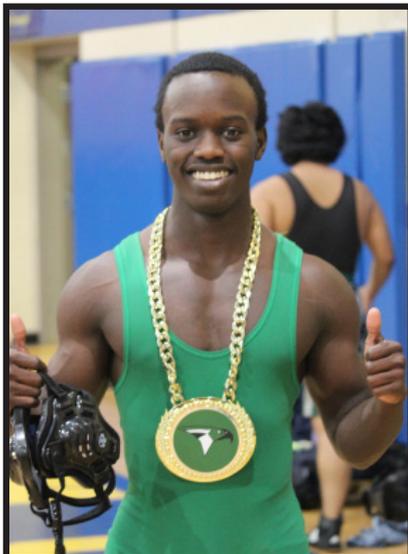
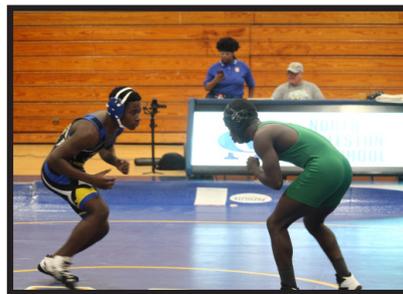
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## SOA Students Compete on AMHS Wrestling Team

by Giovanni Cusatis

Justin Gilliard, Ayden Caffarel, Ben Fancher, James Herring, and Nick Severance wrestled against North Charleston High School and St. John's High School on December 14th, 2022.



## This Month Among the Stars

by Yatawee Petchsuriya

### January 17th: NGC 2451 Best Observed

Located in the Puppis constellation, NGC 2451 is an open cluster, a type of star cluster of a few thousand stars originating from one molecular cloud. These clusters are formed in spiral and irregular galaxies and are loosely concentrated with a diameter of ten light years. With NGC 2451 being well placed, it creates an optimal view for the naked eye or binoculars.



NGC 2451

Sky and Telescope

### January 20th: Supermoon

A Supermoon describes a full moon that is close to its perigee, the closest point it gets towards the Earth during its eclipse around the planet. Supermoons appear slightly brighter and closer in the sky without optical instruments.

### January 22nd: Venus Retrograde Ends

The Venus retrograde from December 19th, 2021 has meant that the planet's motion appeared to move backwards from the Earth's perspective. The illusion is caused by Earth's motion as it orbits the Sun. Normally, major planets are seen to move in a counterclockwise direction around the Sun.



The planet Venus

Refinery29

### January 22nd: Conjunction of Venus and Saturn

Venus and Saturn, at this time of the year, will pass the point in which they are nearest to each other and will appear close in the sky.

### January 30th: Mercury Greatest Western Elongation

An elongation describes the angular distance between a planet and the Sun within the sky's dome. At this time of year, Mercury will appear furthest away from the Sun.

### January 30th: Conjunction of Moon and Mars

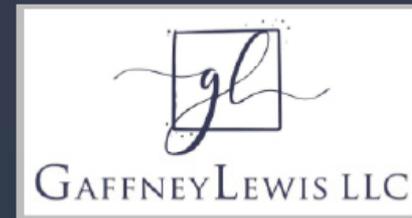
During this night sky, Mars can be seen to be at its closest to the moon with the naked eye. However, the pair of celestial bodies will be too far apart to both be viewed in a telescope.



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## Sign of the Month: “Welcome 2023!”

by Ariana Lane

Demonstrated by Alfonso White  
12th grade ASL & Deaf Culture



1. To begin, hold one hand out in front of yourself, with your palm facing upwards.
2. Bring your hand down to your chest in a scooping motion while keeping the position of your hand.
3. For the second part of the sign, bring your hand back up in front of you and use your thumb and index finger to make an L shape. Keep all other fingers resting in a fist.
4. Pinch together your index finger and thumb.
5. Lift up your middle, index, and thumb while keeping your other two fingers down.
6. To finish the sign, drop your middle finger towards your palm.



**"The Bookmobile"**  
by Tulah Cramer, 11th grade



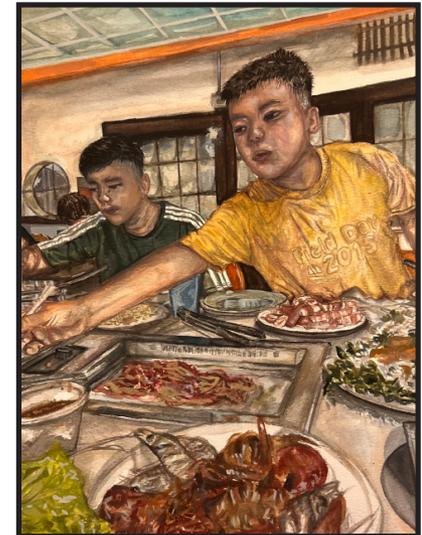
**"Inner Monstera"**  
by Rori Gregory, 12th grade



**"Peacock 12 String"**  
by Lucy Cromwell, 11th grade



**"Untitled"**  
by Violet McNamara, 7th grade



**"Untitled"**  
by Susan Dong, 8th grade



**"Portrait of Mom"**  
by Abby Short, 12th grade



**"Untitled"**  
by Giselle Gonzalez, 8th grade



**"Untitled"**  
by Fenya Connor, 7th grade



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## Applause Visits *The Post and Courier* and Ashley Lanes

by Anna Garziera

On Thursday, December 15th, the *Applause* staff took a class trip to *The Post and Courier* to learn about the process by which our beloved school paper is printed every month.

Our misfortunes started early that rainy and boggy Thursday morning, when Editor Lauren Holladay's car was booted within five minutes of parking it in an apparently abandoned lot. Right next to her car was Peter O'Malley, who was a witness to the booting but did nothing to stop it. Everyone arrived within ten minutes of the time our tour was scheduled, except for Manny Stavrinakis, who was lost in a parking lot, alone, afraid, and unable to find *The Post and Courier* offices. After just four phone calls, he found his way to the rest of the group.

The trip took a decisive turn for the better when we entered the lobby, where the smell of ink and paper was pungent (to put it lightly) and reminded me of Milano Centrale Railway Station back in Italy. Our tour guide, Jason Price, who's been working with us for years on printing the paper, explained that *The Post and Courier* was going to relocate to Leeds Avenue in just a few weeks, and that this was going to be his last tour.

As we meandered through the empty corridors, the marble tiles echoed our footsteps. Every door was marked with either "yes" or "no" written on a post-it note; the temptation was too much for Manny, as he opened a door marked with "no" too loudly, and was met with some disapproval from our tour guide.

The first attraction was the printing of the negatives, the blueprint that is used in the printing of *Applause*, and all other newspapers. Peter O'Malley was especially excited about the editor's letter plate, which he plans to hang in his bedroom. The earnest learning experience quickly went to pieces however, when it was discovered that the aluminum plates made a cool sound when bent back and forth. "This is all we need for 'I Want my MTV,'" exclaimed Peter.

The *Applause* staff was bewildered by the plate printing machine, and shocked at the size of the rolls of paper used for printing. "They're like trees," said Manny Stavrinakis, who couldn't wait to see our paper get printed; we had been looking forward to this moment for weeks, but nothing could have prepared us for this. A monster of a blue machine was supervised by two men, and within seconds, the first copy of the December issue of *Applause* was before our eyes. Our guide explained, "they're doing twelve to fifteen thousand papers an hour, and you're doing 1500 [copies], so it won't take long. Somebody, do the math." When the papers rolled out, the *Applause* staff was even met with some compliments. "You have a way better looking paper than all the other schools," said Jason.

As our tour was coming to an end, we wanted to take a piece of *The Post and Courier* back home with us. "Can we buy this?" Dr. Cusatis asked, pointing to a glass cabinet which was up for auction. Jason promised that he would find out and tell us the date and time of the auction.

After a group picture in the rain and a final goodbye, we headed to Ashley Lanes, the part of the trip that we were all waiting for.

The *Applause* bowling tournament began with some coffee that Peter O'Malley and I stole from the leaguers (we thought it was free for everyone there), and an impressive "turkey" (three strikes in a row), by Manny Stavrinakis. The



The *Applause* staff, inspired after their visit to P&C

Applause

same could not be said for Beatrice Criscuolo, who flunked so many bowls that it was almost impressive. She collected a total of sixteen points in the first game. Giovanni Cusatis tried to be humble, but passed himself off as gifted before the game even began, and unfortunately did not live up to our expectations. He was beaten by two rookies, Peter O'Malley and myself, in each of the two games.

While the first game was somewhat serious, the second displayed the *Applause* staff's true colors, with Manny putting on a show for us with his "basketball shot," his "spin shot," and his "under-the-legs shot," all of which resulted in loud thuds and nasty looks from the supervisors. The game wrapped up with Dr. Cusatis showing us who's boss, as he took first place with an impressive 117 points.

On this note, our trip came to an end. *The Post and Courier* visit has been a staple for *Applause* for years, and given how much fun it was, it will continue to be for generations of *Applause* staff to come. For more photos, visit page 35.

## Senior Cellist Wows Many With Impressive Recital

by Giovanni Cusatis

Four days after conducting an interview with SOA Alumni and cellist Jonathon Heyward, *Applause* Editor-in-Chief Peter O'Malley hosted his second cello recital of the school year on January 8th at the Charleston Unitarian Church. This recital was played with talented pianist Yuantong Bai, a doctoral student at the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

His November crowd was a little underwhelming due to the unfortunate timing of a tropical storm, but luckily, this recital took place on a beautiful Sunday afternoon downtown. The church was filled with friends, family, and even people out roaming King Street for Second Sunday who stopped by to listen. Whoever you were and however you got there didn't matter, because as soon as the first note was played, you could tell it was going to be good.

Similarly to his previous recital in November, he played three amazing pieces of the cello repertoire. He started the recital with Beethoven's A Major Sonata for Cello and Piano, a three movement work that features both instruments' ranges of expressivity and technicality. The Beethoven was impressive all the way through, and despite its length, it was always exciting.

Next, Peter played two songs from Mahler's *Songs of a Wayfarer*. Both were beautiful tunes that went great with the acoustics of the church. The piece is normally played with a vocal soloist and full symphony, but the piano and cello version was written very well.

The finale to Peter's recital was one of the most famous pieces of solo cello rep, Elgar's Cello Concerto. The Elgar is a four movement journey of the cello as it uses the instrument's full range. The concerto starts with a famous adagio, which features a theme seen throughout the whole piece. It was clear that this piece was well under Peter's fingers; before the piece started, he stood up and announced, "I won't be needing this," as he moved his music stand to the side. The fourth movement, which happens to be his senior thesis piece, is a recap of the whole concerto. As Peter hit the last note, the crowd erupted into a standing ovation, to which he stood and bowed multiple times alongside Ms. Bai.

Peter O'Malley's senior cello recital was another showing of the talent that SOA students possess. If you're not so much a fan of classical music, look out for a possible cello recital in late-May that will feature Peter and other SOA musicians playing The Beatles and jazz.



The duo moves the audience with Elgar Concerto.

Provided



Kayla Herrman, 12th grade Visual Artist, visited her family in Idaho and played Top Golf.



Peter O'Malley, 12th grade Strings major, visited Vermont and saw a tractor at a gas station.



12th grade Vocal major Makenna Grozis went to the Riverbanks Zoo.



12th grade Fashion majors Lilian Thomas (left) and Natalie Glaser (right) went ice skating.



Claude the Pigeon and the Lunch Brothers performed at the Pour House. Top (left to right): Sam Harris and Justin Gilliard. Bottom (left to right): Audra Elm, Lila Elm, Amelia Counts, Bryce Waldron-Noren, Skyler Waddell, and Brett Hunter.

# What did SOA do over Winter Break?



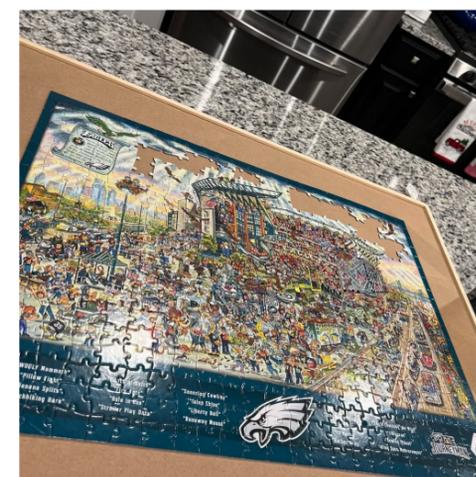
12th grade Visual Arts majors Margeaux Burkhardt and Ariana Lane went to Rockefeller Center in NYC.



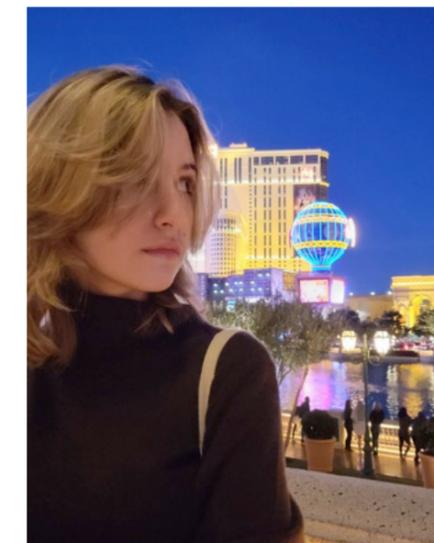
12th grade Fashion major Georgia Stewart visited Stuart, Florida.



12th grade Visual Artist Evelyn Bueschgen went kayaking on the Edisto River with her dad.



High school Dance teacher Ms. Tillotson completed three 1000 piece puzzles.



Isis Hanna, 10th grade Creative Writing major, visited Las Vegas.

## “The Night Before Christmas”: Chamber Music Charleston’s Classical Kids’ Concert

by Anna Garziera

On Monday, December 19th, SOA String majors **Peter O’Malley** and **Riley Borkowski**, along with Chamber Music Charleston musicians **Ben Weiss** (viola), **Jenny Weiss** (violin), and **Regina Helcher Yost** (flute), came together for two showings of Chamber Music Charleston’s Classical Kids’ Concert “The Night Before Christmas.” Coincidentally, SOA seniors **Giovanni Cusatis** and **Evan Baker** worked as videographers during the show. **Anna Garziera** reports on their performance.

When SOA senior Ellison Holland invited me to attend the 1:00 p.m. performance with her and the two kids she was babysitting, Diego and Dahlia Torres, I did not hesitate to say yes. We had previously been advertised this performance just once, when Peter O’Malley performed with his friends Giovanni Cusatis, Evan Baker, and Alex Lim on King St. during December’s Second Sunday, put together by Chamber Music Charleston.

Immediately, the concert had a lighthearted feel to it: each musical instrument was introduced, described briefly, and then played. Diego, who was sitting next to me, was full of questions. “What are bones?” He asked, referring to the percussionist’s clacking wood sticks, “Are they bones that you tear out of your body?”

With some unanswered questions, the concert continued. Something I found myself unprepared for, the audience was asked to clap and shake their jingle bell in certain parts of the music. “That was so off-cue,” whispered Diego in my ear after seeing me attempt a clap. “And I couldn’t even hear the cello neigh.”

What followed were some holiday favorites, most notably, the appearance of Elsa from popular animated movie Frozen, played by the talented Laura Ball, who got the crowd roaring. After “Let it Go” and “Snowman at Christmas,” I just barely made out some “encores” from deep within the crowd. Finally, Elsa wished us all well, and left.

“Will you pressure me into having a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year?” cried Diego, who at this point was just being smart, but from the grin stamped on his face, was still enjoying the concert.

For kids like Diego and Dahlia, “Frosty the Snowman” was truly the highlight of the concert: fillers such as “like a lightbulb,” “like tag,” and “like Pinocchio” flew from their seats, more often than not at the wrong parts, and when Sandra Nikolajevs (CMC President, who ran the show) closed out the concert and wished that her crowd have a Merry Christmas, Diego replied, too loudly, “I’ll try!”

All in all, it was clear to me that the audience had enjoyed the show; the claps projected across the auditorium, and the jingles of childrens’ bells could hardly be contained throughout the forty-five minutes.

“Can we have hot chocolate now?” asked Dahlia, looking up. Just as with Diego and Dahlia, CMC’s Classical Kids’ Concert made every child who attended merry, and filled them with Christmas spirit in a way that no other concert could have.

With just one more Classical Kids’ Concert to go, CMC is getting ready to perform “Harlem’s Little Blackbird” on Saturday, March 4th, at 11:00 a.m. CMC’s very own Mr. Peter (O’Malley) is anxious to perform again: “Hopefully next time we will hire better videographers!”



Peter and Riley share the stage with the CMC professionals.

Robbin Knight Photography

## Jonathon Heyward Comes Home

by Peter O’Malley

Jonathon Heyward, internationally renowned conductor and 2010 SOA graduate, made his triumphant return home in early January, where he conducted masterworks of Florence Price, Beethoven, and Tchaikovsky with the Charleston Symphony and visited SOA for a rehearsal and live interview in the Rose Maree Myers Theater. In the dozen years since his graduation from SOA, he’s conducted major orchestras including the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Symphony, Seattle Symphony, to name only a few. He is currently Chief Conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie in Germany, and was appointed last year as Music Director of the Baltimore Symphony. After his visit to SOA, the school was filled with inspiration and excitement for the future.



Applause

Heyward expresses the importance of uniform articulation to the Sinfonietta.

On January 4th, the first day back from winter break, Maestro Heyward visited the school. At 9:00, he arrived in Dr. Selby’s orchestra room to coach the Sinfonietta on Shostakovich’s *Chamber Symphony*, an orchestration of his eighth string quartet by Rudolf Barshai. The small orchestra was focused intently on the music, and I felt it from within the ensemble. Even when he dropped his coffee on his yellow Converse, the group remained focused on the music. Heyward had several ideas, but one overarching theme was that communication is the key to a cohesive group: “Playing is thirty percent, and listening is seventy percent. This is what makes the best orchestras work.” This helped us tremendously in the third movement, where the concertmaster and principal second violin are playing an eerie, unsettling accompaniment to an expressive cello solo. Heyward pointed out that the two violinists were thinking of it in three, while I was thinking in one. As soon as he told us this, the three parts fit together, and it made sense. His coaching was eye-opening to the orchestra, and the level jumped up by more than a few notches for our February Holst/Shostakovich/Montgomery concert with Francisco Fullana and national competition in March.

Just after the Shostakovich, Heyward came to the RMMT for a forty-five minute interview and Q&A, which you can find on pages 6-8. Backstage, I was able to catch up with him briefly, talk about our coaching, and run through the questions. We made a lot of jokes in the interview, and I think that went a long way. The audience didn’t seem to know what to expect (one of my friends asked why I was in a suit before I walked on stage), but I was pleased to hear afterward from other students and teachers that it was inspiring. “I quoted him for the rest of the day when talking with students about goal setting as we begin a new year!” Ms. Horschel, 7th grade English teacher, commented on the *Applause* Instagram. It’s one thing to read articles about his success, but it’s so much more special to see him come to your school and speak about how that was where it all started.

The day after his interview, and on Saturday, January 7th, Heyward conducted the Charleston Symphony for a thrilling performance of Tchaikovsky’s “Pathétique” Symphony, Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, and Florence Price’s *Dances in the Canebrakes*, which the youth orchestra played side-by-side with the CSO. Maestro Heyward illustrated the music through the emotive nature of his conducting, and soloist Vadim Gluzman sang through the forty-five minute Beethoven. Gluzman played Alfred Schnittke’s cadenzas, which quoted violin concertos by Brahms, Bartók, and Shostakovich, amongst others. It contrasted the Beethoven completely, bringing in ideas from late-twentieth century contemporary writing, which I loved. It was so shocking and inventive, and

it made the rest of the Beethoven somehow more exciting than it would have been without. The Tchaikovsky was especially exciting, bringing the audience almost one hundred years into the future, and enlarging the orchestra's winds and brass sections. It was so fun to see my colleagues on stage for *Canebrakes*, and, having never heard the work before, I really enjoyed its cello lines and indistinguishably American sound. The concert was a huge success, with a loud standing ovation and enthusiastic audience.

Jonathon Heyward is proof that any one of us can achieve success in our passions. He predicted this success in 2010, in *Applause*: "My huge overall dream is to become a Music Director of a major symphony orchestra and give back to the community." His visit back to Charleston was inspiring and enlightening. This is only the start of his career, and it'll be exciting to see what he'll do in the future. If you'd like to read his interview, flip to page 6.

## SOA Dance Begins 2023 Guest Residency Program

by Ariana Lane

Every year, SOA brings in seven professional dancers, choreographers and master teachers from the dance community for the Guest Residency Program. The choreography they learn from the residences will be displayed at an end-of-the-year dance performance on May 6th at 3:30pm. The dancers this year include Cici Kelley, Crystal Wellman, Sinclair Jamison, Brianna Campbell, Georgia Schrubbe, Jessica Lighthart, and Jordan Benton, all accomplished professionals in the dance industry, and some SOA graduates.



SOA senior Dance majors with guest dancer Cici Kelley.

Cici Kelley has worked in a multitude of industries, from film to sports entertainment. Kelley has performed with artists such as Beyonce, LL Cool J, Jennifer Lopez, and Outkast on stage and in music videos. In addition to her already extensive background, she also has performed in theater performances such as *The Wilson Pickett Project* and *The Satin Dolls: A Duke Ellington Review*, and Je'Caryous Johnson's *BAPS Live: The Musical*. She has also made a name for herself in the world of choreography. She has worked on choreography on projects such as Fugees' European tour, Musiq Soulchild's *Stir the Senses* tour, and Toni Braxton's 2010 tour. She has been selected as a choreographer by several directors for movies, such as *Last Vegas* and *BOLDEN*.

Crystal Wellman grew up in North Carolina where she began her dance training at the School of Gaston Dance Theatre and later earned her BFA from East Carolina University. Her career has taken her to work with the Montgomery Ballet, Oklahoma City Ballet, Charleston Ballet Theatre, Charleston Dance Project, The Moving Poets of Charlotte, and Palmetto City Ballet. She is also the founding director of the Unbound Ballet Project. Wellman has choreographed her own professional ballets for Oklahoma City Ballet, Charleston Dance Project, and set contemporary pieces for YAGP.

Sinclair Jamison is a dancer and drummer from Charleston, SC. Sinclair has performed yearly in renowned events such as the Moja Arts Festival, Piccolo Spoleto, the Florida African Dance Festival, and the North Charleston Arts Festival. Jamison has learned traditional African dances from his time in Wona Womalan, a Charleston dance ensemble, as well as in the Florida African Dance Festival, where he was able to study under world-renowned artists. He is currently one of the head dance choreographers with Deninufay African Drum and Dance Co.

Charleston County School of the Arts graduate, Brianna Campbell,

has trained with masters in NYC, LA, and Miami. Brianna has toured and performed with Intrigue Dance Convention, Force Dance Tour, and Royal Caribbean Cruise Line. Following her passion for contemporary and hip hop, Brianna has her own production company, Zenki Productions LLC, and is the current director of Miami's contemporary company STYX The Company.

Georgia Schrubbe discovered her passion for dance at a young age in her hometown of Fairhope Alabama. Schrubbe has made notable accomplishments, such as studying at the Ballet Nacional de Cuba's Catedra de Danza in Havana, attending the Paris International Salsa Congress, and training at congresses and festivals nationally. She began teaching Salsa in 2013 as an apprentice and started her own company, Holy City Salsa Dance Studio, in 2014.

Jessica Lighthart trained with Boca Ballet Theatre in Florida, where she has performed in productions such as *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Lighthart graduated from the College of Charleston and is now the owner and Artistic Director of Ballet Academy of Charleston. Lighthart completed the Bolshoi Ballet Academy Teacher Certification Program in New York City, and has now been teaching ballet for over twenty years

After attending Charleston County School of the Arts, Jordan Benton graduated from College of Charleston, double majoring in Dance and Theatre, with lighting concentration. Benton began her career performing with Moranz Entertainment and is now entering her fourth season with the company. She has recently performed with Annex Dance Company, Charleston Dance Project, Dance Matters, and Dance Lab's "The Club." She's also worked as a headline for Charleston's first Juneteenth festival, the Assistant Lighting Designer for the Salt Lake City Acting Company, and recently finished her run of the "American Jukebox" at the Charleston Music Hall.

At an arts-focused school like SOA, learning from other artists is an important aspect of students' time on campus. SOA is excited to welcome these talented and accomplished dance professionals, and Dance majors are looking forward to working with them all.

## SOA Students Compete in Poetry Out Loud

by Anna Garziera

On Monday, January 9th, seventeen SOA students gathered in the Media Center after school to recite poetry. Students were asked to memorize two poems and perform in front of a panel of judges, who assessed their performances to determine who would move up to the state competition of Poetry Out Loud.

The judging panel consisted of Ms. Orchard, Ms. Honeycutt, Mr. Morelli, and Ms. Bednarzyk, all of whom were excited for the competition. Mr. Martin, who came to see his students perform, was happy to take up the presenter role. Twenty years running at SOA, Poetry Out Loud has seen four SOA students in the national competition so far. With much talent about to be divulged, SOA senior Alex Park, was on the edge of his seat. "I knew my friends were reciting, so I wanted to be here to support them," he explained.



Brianna Campbell



Jessica Lighthart



Cici Kelley



Junior Linda Garziera recites her poetry for the panel.

To open the evening, SOA junior Skyler Waddell was called up by Dr. Cusatis: “Have you got a song in you?” Without hesitation, he got up to the front, and sang, “Society” by Eddie Vedder, welcomed with a roar from the crowd.

The audience was hungry to hear some poetry, and the students eager to share it. The competition started off strong, with senior Devon Brunson reciting “Israfel,” by Edgar Allan Poe. Hats off to Devon for going first.

One of my personal favorites was a lighthearted recitation of “A Small Moment” by Cornelius Eady, performed by sophomore Sam Owens, which loosened the audience, even making Mr. Martin chuckle.

An emotional recitation by Victoria Hickerson of “A Thank You Note,” by Michael Ryan, was one among many which brought a tear to our eyes. I had listened to Jessie Johnson’s performance of “If They Should Come For Us” by Fatimah Asghar several times before, but this was her best yet. Henry Hipp’s recitation of “The Mortician in San Francisco” by Randall Mann was just plain good; it seemed to me that these performers were ready to fight for that spot in the state competition.

With every recitation, I thought it couldn’t get any better. This is, until Meredith Hungerford’s “Dirge Without Music” by Edna St. Vincent Millay, and then again, after “Strange!” by John Frederick Nims, recited with such passion by Alecia Jenkins.

After every recitation, the judges reviewed their notes attentively, eyebrows ruffled, and passed papers along for Dr. Cusatis to tally. The tension was only broken when Ms. Orchard loudly sharpened her pencil with the electric sharpener available. She was ready to hear some more.

The second round went slower, with the audience still respectful, but thinner. Some among us had heard enough. After a nice break from poetry in the intermission, the crowd already missed Skyler and his guitar.

With Emani McNeal’s recitation of “Keeping Things Whole” by Mark Strand, Abbey Morea’s “Blind Curse” by Simon J. Ortiz, and Anna Grace Leshner’s “Angrily Standing Outside in the Wind” by Brenda Hillman, the competitors kept giving.

To be expected in any poetry competition, some lines were forgotten, some nouns mixed up, some verbs confused, followed by disappointed frowns from when the performers were too hard on themselves.

When only I thought the competition was cooling off, sophomore Liv Dwehirst and freshman Alecia Jenkins gave excellent performances back to

back; the underclassmen were not to be underestimated.

Too soon, the last performance was over, and the results were calculated. The criteria for evaluation was physical presence, voice and articulation, dramatic appropriateness, evidence of understanding, and overall performance, in addition to accuracy. Henry Hipp was awarded third place, Jessie Johnson, second, and Meredith Hunderford, first. To be commended is also Merrik Moriarty, who came fourth, but was only a few points away from third place.

Regardless of placements, the first round of the Poetry Out Loud competition was a great experience for all parties involved. SOA will be cheering Meredith on in the state competition in Columbia on March 4th.

## Former SOA Student Speaks on the Importance of Art and Other Life Lessons

by Anna Garziera

On Thursday, January 12th, SOA high school and middle school students gathered in the Media Center to hear the story of SOA middle school Band alumnus Michael Evans, now a writer and creator. Michael began his creative career by publishing books online, and moved on to become a content creator, live streamer, and writer, all before the age of nineteen. Being part of the SOA Middle School Band inspired Michael to pursue his creativity early on in his adolescence, as he continued to write even after transferring to Wando High School.



Evans inspires SOA students.

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“A lot of people in the real world will tell you that being an artist is a bad idea. I’m here to tell you that they’re lying.”

Ten Life Lessons from Michael Evans:

1. It’s hard to feel good enough.
2. Take risks, but de-risk your life.

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3. Trust makes the world go round.
4. Things take longer than you think.
5. Creativity is magic, focus is everything.
6. Life is a multi-player game.
7. Numbers are not everything.
8. The best stories make us uncomfortable.
9. Everything is art.
10. The most important story is the one you tell yourself.

## Where Are They Now?

by Lauren Holladay

*Lauren Holladay spoke with Class of 2017 Vocal major Natalie Sinclair to learn about her life after SOA.*

### Lauren Holladay: What are you majoring in at Clemson University? How did you decide on that major?

**Natalie Sinclair:** I am currently getting my master's degree in Food, Nutrition, and Culinary Sciences and am planning to graduate this August. I finished my BS in Food Science and Human Nutrition in 2021 and decided to stick around for a few more years. During my senior year at SOA, I wrote a paper in Dr. Cusatis' class about food inequality in low-income areas. I started watching a lot of food documentaries as part of my research and got hooked on the complexities of food science.

### LH: You are head of production at Clemson's ice cream shop, '55 Exchange. How did you come into this position, and what does it entail?

**NS:** The food science department runs Clemson's ice cream shop, which offers students the hands-on experience of running a business from product development to consumer. I began working in the ice cream shop during undergrad and was offered production directorship during my senior year. Through my position, I create new ice cream flavors, manage food safety and quality control, and lead a team of students to make ice cream twice a week. It's been the most rewarding role, and yes, I do eat ice cream all the time.

### LH: Has singing and performing been part of your life since SOA? If



Natalie Sinclair

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### so, how?

**NS:** Yes! I am currently in a classic rock band with fellow SOA alumnus Ethan Lopez (Class of 2017). We reconnected during our time at Clemson and now play around town with a few other Clemson folk. It's different from most of the music I sang at SOA, which has been a fun challenge. Other than that, I just incessantly sing around the house and am thankful for my very tolerating roommate!

### LH: Do you have a favorite memory from your time at SOA?

**NS:** In my junior year, I traveled with Madame Bednarczyk to France with a small group of French 4 students. We each had a host family and were required to speak French all week, which I'm absolutely certain is the only reason I can still speak mediocre French. It was the first time I felt incredibly challenged academically and also showed me a part of the world I wasn't familiar with. The trip also encouraged me to study abroad later in college, which I'm very fortunate for.

### LH: What are your post-college plans or goals?

**NS:** I am hoping to work in product development for a food company after graduation. My dream job would be on Ben and Jerry's innovation team creating new ice cream flavors. Other goals include growing to an even six feet and becoming the best pickleballer in our league (consisting solely of retirees).

### LH: Do you feel that SOA prepared you for life in college and afterwards? How?

**NS:** Having a rigorous academic program in combination with the arts provided excellent preparation for college and adult life in general. Learning how to balance everything while staying at a high personal standard has especially helped me in my role now, balancing both a business and graduate school.

### LH: What advice would you give future Vocal majors or graduates from SOA?

**NS:** Make room for art in your life, especially if you're planning on doing something different after graduation. I definitely miss being around artistically-minded people and have to make more of a conscious effort to have art present. Finding music clubs in college or just spending time at your local small concert venue are great ways to keep in touch with your artistic side!

## Where Were They Then?

by Giovanni Cusatis

*Giovanni Cusatis caught up with high school Dance teacher Ms. Kristin Tillotson to see what her life was like before SOA.*

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

**Kristin Tillotson:** I was born in Huntington, New York, a town on Long Island. Growing up, I always had a love for dance. I started dancing at age four at a studio called Huntington School of Music and Dance. Ms. Anne was my first teacher. Her husband, who taught drumming classes in the basement, owned the studio. Since I grew up living next door to the studio, this was my second home. My fondest memories growing up were spending time with my sister and Ms. Anne's grandchildren. They became my best friends at the time, and we all were inseparable. When we were not in school or in dance class, we stayed in the studio just moving around and choreographing to whatever 80s or 90s pop song was on the radio. I enjoyed performing and just being in the studio.

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

**KT:** I went to a performing arts high school in New York. The school was similar to SOA in that I was able to dance for half of my day and the morning half



Natalie as Chip in SOA's past performance of *Beauty and the Beast*.

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was dedicated to academics. Like SOA, I had classes in ballet, modern, cultural dance, dance history, and composition. This prepared me greatly to get into college. I attended undergraduate school at University of the Arts, in the city of brotherly love (Philadelphia, PA... GO EAGLES!). I was a dance education major and took classes in almost every style of dance. Since UARTS is more of a conservatory, I spent almost twelve to fifteen hours a day dancing between classes and rehearsals. We didn't have traditional academic classes in college. After undergraduate school, I attended Drexel University to get my Masters in Dance/Movement Therapy. Since dance for me was a therapy in itself by taking my stress and anxiety away, I figured I would like to help others through movement as it has greatly helped me. I studied courses in movement, Laban Movement Analysis, Psychopathology and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, social and cultural foundations in counseling, and human psychological development, to name a few. This prepared me to work with all different types of populations, such as ADHD/ODD, Down's Syndrome, PTSD, medical conditions, older adults with cognitive disorders, Dual Diagnosed individuals, and those with mental health concerns. After graduate school, I published my thesis and was able to secure a career in Dance Movement Therapy, as well as continued teaching at a dance studio.



**Ms. Tillotson posing for a Christmas photo during her childhood.**

Provided

**GC: Where did you work before SOA?**

**KT:** I have always taught at dance studios, since being of working age. In addition to the studio job during my time at Drexel University, I had two internships that turned into work once I graduated. I worked at Philadelphia's Children Crisis Treatment Center (a day program to help preschool and early elementary children who have experienced child abuse, neglect, traumatic events, and other challenges to early childhood development), as well as at a Dual Diagnosed program called COHMAR (a psychiatric rehab day program for adults who have a mental and substance abuse diagnosis). At both these places, I had a caseload of people who had individual therapy, as well as group movement therapy sessions. Once I moved to South Carolina, I started working at SOA in 2014 as the seventh grade Dance teacher (ninety minutes every day), and split my other time at Liberty Hill School and Daniel Jenkins Alternative School. Once one of the high school dance teachers moved to Greenville, I moved into the high school Dance teacher position, and have been here ever since.

**GC: What made you want to become a teacher?**

**KT:** I would say a few of my previous dance teachers. Ms. Anne, my first dance teacher, Ms. Janice at my dance studio and performing arts high school, and numerous professors at UARTS. They each have been role models for me in various ways. Not only being taught technique, but life long lessons as well, I was always challenged and pushed beyond my limits growing up. I enjoyed seeing students express themselves through dance and become creative artists.

**GC: What has been your favorite part of working at SOA?**

**KT:** The atmosphere and students. It reminds me of when I went to school. I love seeing my students do what they love and grow as both dancers and young adults. The bond that I make with my students is one of a kind since I teach them from ninth to twelfth grade. I enjoy watching their creativity and personalities show in their self-choreographed pieces.

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

**KT:** I have been part of the South Carolina Dance Association for a few years. I was able to serve as president in 2018 and sat on the board for a few years after. Being part of SCDA, we were able to promote and strengthen dance

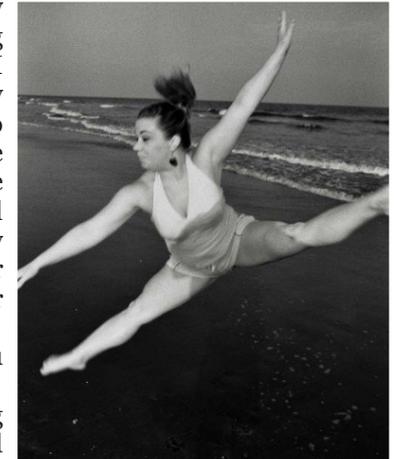
programs and increase participation and artistic excellence in dance facilities throughout the state of South Carolina. I continue my professional development by attending dance educator conferences with NDEO (National Dance Educator Organization), as well as SCDA and CLI Studios.

**GC: Do you have any advice for aspiring artists?**

**KT:** NETWORK NETWORK NETWORK! I was able to work with dance professionals in Philadelphia, as well as make life lasting connections with my professors and classmates. The arts world is rather small, and you will find that someone knows someone. Make a positive and professional impression with everyone you meet, work with, and take classes from. Someone is always watching, whether it's the way you arrive on time at an audition or class, the way you enter the classroom, or the way you behave and perform in class. By making these connections in the dance world, I have been able to bring some of my very successful friends and professors here to SOA to teach our students. I was also able to introduce students to prospective college dance professors and deans at the National High School Dance Festival, in which they could possibly receive college and summer dance program scholarships. So do your best work and make those connections!

**GC: Are there any other things you would like to add?**

**KT:** I have been boxing and studying Muay Thai since 2014. I am a die hard Philadelphia Eagles fan, (I have not missed (watching) a game since 2010). I have run two half marathons, so I figure that adds up and I can say I ran a marathon. I have two dogs, Brutus (a Boston terrier) and Pita (a pitbull mix who is also my emotional support dog). I have a younger sister who lives in Virginia with my brother-in-law and my niece, Faith, who is a senior in high school. I went skydiving in 2018, and I love jigsaw puzzles; over Winter Break, I completed a 1,000 piece puzzle in five hours. Fighter jet planes are my obsession, and my favorite movie is *Top Gun*; I lost track of how many times I have seen the original *Top Gun*, but I saw *Top Gun: Maverick* in the theaters sixteen times!



**Ms. Tillotson dancing at the beach.**

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## Horoscopes

by Cate Traywick



**Capricorn (December 22nd - January 20th):** I hate

to say it Capricorn, but that cliché Facebook mom expression might be helpful here: new year, new you!! Stop rewatching *Arrested Development* for the fifth time and go outside! Trees are amazing! Fresh air is wonderful! Go for a hike! Camp in the woods! Sit in the grass in your backyard if you must, just get off of your couch!

**Aquarius (January 21st - February 18th):** You watched

Disney channel as a kid, and it shows. Your sass is getting out of control, Aquarius! I'm fully convinced that if you watched *Dinosaur Train* and *Word Girl* growing up then you would be a twenty-five percent better person, but instead, your impressionable young mind consumed *Jessie* and *Victorious*. Maybe it isn't too late; pull up PBS Kids right now!

**Pisces (February 19th - March 20th):** Pisces! Your moon is

rising! The planets are unaligned! Mercury is in retrograde or whatever! I don't know anything about astrology. But what I do know is that you are going to have several increasingly awkward encounters with that person in the coming weeks. Maybe just avoid them? Don't take it too hard, sweet Pisces, we've all been there.

**Aries (March 21st - April 19th):** We beefing right now, Aries.

You're the kind of person who eats spoonfuls of straight guacamole. The kind of person who wears shoes on the bed. The kind of person whose favorite *Star Wars* movie is *The Phantom Menace*. You're the worst. Fix it.

**Taurus (April 20th - May 20th):** You know what's fun,

Taurus? Going down a WikiHow rabbit hole, getting third-rate advice for things that you didn't even know you needed advice on. Want to shower using only a lemon? WikiHow. Itching to object to a wedding? WikiHow. Oh, and Taurus? If you ever need to calculate pi by throwing frozen hot dogs, WikiHow has you covered!

**Gemini (May 21st - June 20th):** I have to say Gemini, you're

everyone's most interesting friend. You've always got something going on! I've seen you at nine of the last ten social events that I've been to, and one of them was out of the state!? You're crazy, Gemini, and everyone should love you for it, so tell Pisces to stop hating.

**Cancer (June 21st - July 22nd):** Cancer! All I've got for you

is to focus on decisively moving through 2023. Choose wisely, but make that decision already! Notably in your *Monopoly* playing piece selection. You're always a different piece, and it's driving me insane. You were the cannon last time, the thimble the time before that, and now you're playing as the battleship? What is wrong with you? Pick a piece, Cancer! Just don't pick the top hat; that one's mine.

**Leo (July 23rd - August 22nd):** Leo!! You just won't shut

up about the new Barbie movie coming out this summer, will you? And honestly, as a fellow Leo, I understand. How could you not shut up about it? Any movie with Margot Robbie is your favorite, and I can respect that. Go watch the trailer again, Leo, it's a masterpiece in its own right.

**Virgo (August 23rd - September 22nd):** There's a reason

why everyone thinks that you're a younger sibling, Virgo. Somehow you get away with everything?? I swear you turned in your homework weeks late multiple times last quarter and still received full credit. And everyone thinks you're perfect, but we both know you learned everything from me. But don't worry about it Virgo, I still like you twice the amount that I like my younger sister.

**Libra (September 23rd - October 22nd):** Libra. We need

to talk. I know that you really liked *Phantom of the Opera*. We all really liked *Phantom of the Opera*, but must you sing it under your breath all the time? We can all hear it, and you aren't as good as you think you are. Seriously, you're like the seventh grade Vocal majors on my bus! Just put in your AirPods and sit there. Please. But I guess I shouldn't be complaining; you could be singing *Spongebob*.

**Scorpio (October 23rd - November 21st):** Being around

people who aren't as clever as you is maddening, isn't it Scorpio? You would certainly know. From your witty remarks to your compelling stories, you have been absolutely carrying your friend group lately. Hopefully your friends will catch up soon. But maybe they won't, and you'll perpetually be the most interesting person in the room.

**Sagittarius (November 22nd - December 21st):**

Sagittarius. Enough is enough. The red flags are everywhere. Wears shorts every day? Red flag. Exclusively drinks energy drinks? Red flag. Doesn't know their moms phone number? Red flag. If I have to sit down with you one more time and tell you why they aren't worth it, then I'm going to lose my mind. Get well soon, babe.



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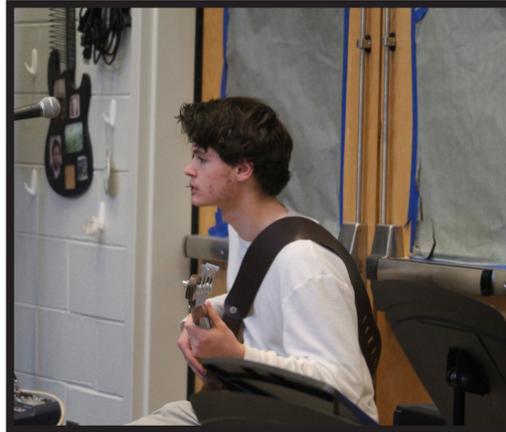


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## SOA and Magnet Students Collaborate for "I Want My MTV"

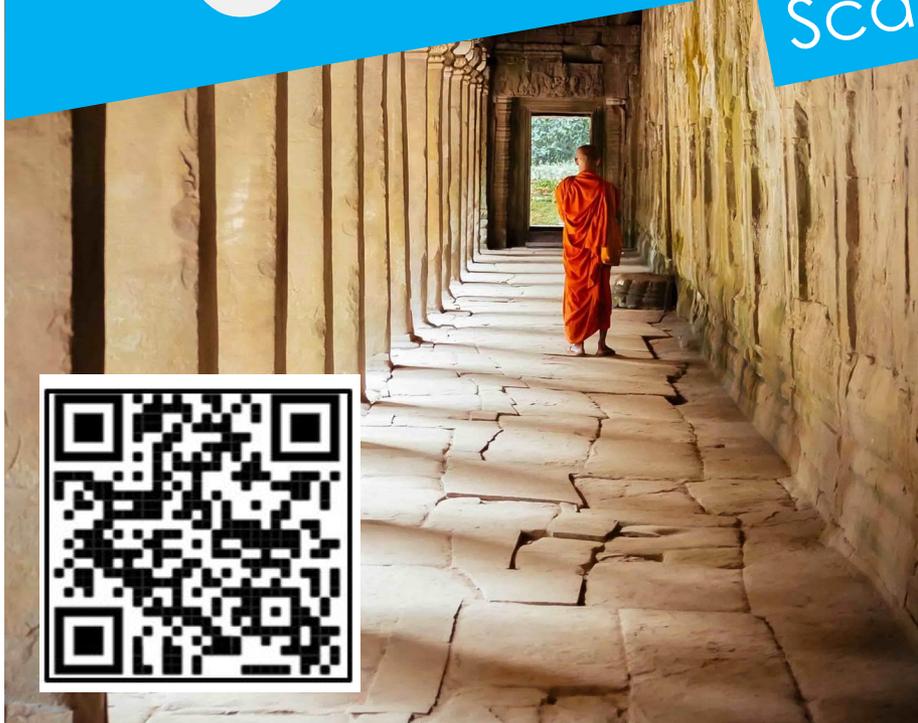
by Anna Garziera

On Tuesday, January 10th, students from SOA and Academic Magnet had their first rehearsal of the new year for "I Want My MTV: Unplugged," *Applause's* annual joint-SOA/AMHS concert, which will take place Thursday, March 2nd in the Black Box.





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## Classic Movie Review: *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*

by Peter O'Malley

*Revenge of the Sith* is the finale to the *Star Wars* prequel trilogy, closing the story of the Clone Wars and Anakin Skywalker's fall from Jedi Knight to feared Sith Lord, Darth Vader. It features vast armies of clone troopers, Wookie battles, galactic politics, and allusions to Episode IV, *A New Hope*. So much happens in this film's 140-minute runtime, and it's so exciting.

The *Star Wars* prequels were met with mixed reviews when they were each released, but in the past two decades, they've gained a sort of cult following. Particularly in our generation, Episodes I, II, and III seem to be extremely popular. The internet loves them, and whenever a prequel Lego set comes out, it sells out within minutes. The dialogue is really bad, the CGI was a little too daring for 1999, 2002, and 2005, but the terrible dialogue and battle droids seem to be what the prequels are so loved for nowadays. And the music is phenomenal. Despite these poorly achieved elements, the charm of the *Star Wars* saga holds still, and the reason these movies are celebrated is clear.

*Star Wars* made for an excellent childhood: *The Clone Wars* was airing on Cartoon Network, *Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga* had just come out, and some of the coolest Lego sets were being released. I still remember the huge Clone Turbo Tank I was gifted for Christmas in 2009, totally in awe of the Cad Bane minifigure and all the Jedi Knights it came with. I haven't seen *Revenge of the Sith* since I was in elementary school, and recently having watched this summer's Obi-Wan Kenobi show on Disney+, I was drawn to watching some of the *Star Wars* movies for the first time in a number of years. Watching *Revenge of the Sith* brought back so many memories, but it also made me realize how little I actually took in from any of these films when I was so young. It was fascinating to witness Chancellor Palpatine's grooming of Anakin Skywalker to become his next Sith apprentice, and Palpatine's political feats which resulted in the establishment of the Galactic Empire. Even more fascinating was how sad it was. As a kid, I thought Anakin wanted to become Darth Vader because of how cool the suit was. But, turns out, he joined the Sith only to save his wife from death. And what's worse, she still died! And at the end of the film, the entire Jedi Order was executed by the soldiers they had fought alongside for years. So it's a really, really depressing way to



end the Prequel trilogy, but it makes the succeeding film, *A New Hope*, so much more interesting.

You really should watch either the Original Trilogy, or the first two episodes of the Prequels before watching this movie. But once you've done that and gathered enough of an open mind surrounding the clunky dialogue and the crappy CGI, you'll really enjoy *Revenge of the Sith*. It's an emotional and satisfying conclusion to the Prequel Trilogy, and it's great for a movie night.

## Contemporary Movie Review: *Pinocchio*

by Eliana Gross

Directed by Guillermo del Toro and in production for a whopping fifteen years, the most recent *Pinocchio* stop-motion adaptation takes on a slightly darker style of storytelling than its most famous predecessor by Disney. It is set during the rise of Mussolini, and in this story, *Pinocchio* (Gregory Mann) is brought to life with a wish from Master Geppetto (David Bradley) and is given a cricket (Ewan McGregor) who will guide him into becoming a good person. Conflict arises when he is sent off to school, but gets distracted by Count Volpe (Christoph Waltz) and his monkey, who want him to come perform with them for their circus.

Without giving too much away, *Pinocchio* learns that when he dies, he will always come back. In an interview with Jimmy Fallon, del Toro says the only character that doesn't behave like a puppet, is the puppet. "He's a very free thinker," he states. Throughout the story, *Pinocchio* asks questions and makes fun of Mussolini in a way that no one else does. He also moves in a way that is more alive than any of the human characters.

*Pinocchio* is a great movie that will make you laugh at parts and cry at others. If you like stop motion or just need a good movie recommendation, give it a shot. *Pinocchio* got a 4.5/5 on Google, 97% on Rotten Tomatoes, and a 7.7/10 on IMDb, but I'd give it a 9/10.

## Contemporary Movie Review: *Avatar: The Way Of Water*

by Z'Nyah Nelson

*Avatar: The Way Of The Water* (2022) is the newest movie from James Cameron, a sequel to the first *Avatar*. The story follows Jake Sully, chief

of the Omaticaya clan who raises a family with Neytiri. The movie focuses on Jake's family and how Colonel Miles Quaritch is after Jake for his betrayal in the first movie.

James Cameron illustrates the magic of the Na'vi's culture and how their world works. Something to note is how Jake is now a full Na'vi, but his kids are only half. It's an eventful and thoroughly paced story with great casting. Jake Sully is played by Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana plays Neytiri, daughter of the previous clan chief and Jake's mate, and Sigourney Weaver plays Kiri Sully, the daughter of Dr. Grace Augustine's Na'vi avatar who was adopted by Jake and Neytiri. Later on in the movie, Jake Sully and his family seek help from the Metkayina clan, once a familiar threat, to finish what was previously started.

*Avatar: the Way of the Water* was captivating and well received by the public. As many people said, "it had my jaw on the floor the whole time." It's rated PG-13 by the MPAA for intense epic battle sequences and warfare, sensuality, language and some smoking. It has a 4.4 rating, so I highly recommend seeing this movie while it's still in theaters.

## Contemporary Movie Review: *The Menu*

by Cate Traywick

Of the films released this year, culinary culture satire *The Menu* is undoubtedly among the strangest. It follows pretentious foodie, Tyler (Nicholas Hoult), and his last-minute date, skeptical and headstrong Margot (the superb Anya Taylor-Joy), and their encounter at the renowned (and vastly mysterious) fine dining establishment, Hawthorn.

At the restaurant, they are greeted by an unsettling force of sous chefs and a merciless hostess, Elsa (Hong Chau, who delivers another excellent performance in *The Whale* (2022)), led by the eclectic and progressively creepy Chef Slowik (Ralph Fiennes). Tyler and Margot dine among a truly zany cast of characters, ranging from a secretive husband to a snooty magazine reporter.

As the night progresses and courses on "the menu" are served, Margot gets increasingly suspicious of the true intentions of Slowik and his team. The first half of the film unfolds in a suspenseful



manner, and, as the audience, we know that something is amiss but can't quite put our finger on it. But once the ball gets rolling (dinner is served), the film provides never-ending twists that continue to engage and shock the viewer as the movie progresses.

Although *The Menu* is first and foremost a satire, full of gore, swears, and humor, Anya Taylor-Joy's character lends to it a surprising layer of depth. The film's end offers a commentary on how one's love can evolve into destructive obsession, providing a deeper meaning to the satirical film.

*The Menu* is by no means an Oscar nominee, but it is certainly one to check out and definitely one of my favorites of 2022. And as I have seen so many people post on Letterboxd, Ralph Fiennes served and Anya Taylor-Joy ate.

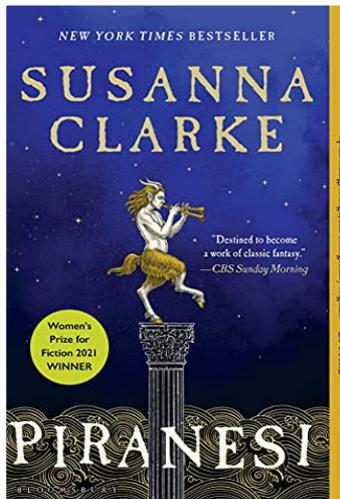


## Contemporary Book Review: *Piranesi*

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Usually, the books you read on vacation are fluffy; a romance or mystery lasts the week, read lounging on a chaise. However, *Piranesi*, (read by yours truly on a train, on an airplane, AND in a car), was not the typical vacation book. As short as it is, reading it took much more effort than I wanted to exert on vacation.

*Piranesi* follows the journey of a young man, named Piranesi, through a strange world. Without knowing how he got there, he built a home for himself, and began to chronicle his experiences through the maze of rooms that make up his residence. The novel consists of his personal journal, and is written in first person, following Piranesi's thoughts. As the novel progresses, we find out more and more about Piranesi's past, and the unusual circumstances that led him to live in The Halls, aptly named. The Upper Halls, filled with bones, birds, and statues, are described vividly by Clarke, and make up the strange world Piranesi calls home. His one companion, known by Piransi



as "The Other," begins as a friend, but slowly turns into an enemy as Piranesi tries to pursue his past.

Though *Piranesi* is Clarke's second novel, the previous being *Johnathan Strange and Mr. Norrell*, it presents itself as an experiment. The mix of genres between realism and fiction, (or sci-fi and fantasy), is incongruous, leaving the reader confused and overstimulated. While reading, it seems as though Piranesi is a fantastical creature, not even human, though minute details reveal the opposite. Though suspense was woven into the story purposefully, it muddles the narrative, creating a maze not unlike The Halls where Piranesi and The Other live. Diving into *Piranesi* is a commitment, one full of confusing narratives and beautiful, yet unnecessary, segues.

## Contemporary Show Review: *Someway*

by Yatawee Petchsuriya and Madison McDonald

### Madison's Take:

Recently, Subway invested in a relatively unknown marketing endeavor targeted toward Korean audiences: *Someway*, a Subway k-drama. This drama is quite possibly one of the worst marketing decisions I've seen a company make since the *KFC Lifetime* movie, *Recipe for Seduction*.

Unsurprisingly, the plot was horrific, but it did manage to put a smile on my face after I began to understand the satirical nature of the show.

On its face, *Someway* pushes some... interesting ideals, such as aggressively flirting with a minimum wage employee every day for months, losing weight by eating vegetarian Subway sandwiches every day for months, and daydreaming about your Subway worker ex boyfriend, for months. Tale as old as time.

The show almost entirely takes place in a Subway restaurant that is far too clean to be an actual restaurant. The product placement is extremely overwhelming; the manner in which it is forced into the plot is horrifying, making the show entirely incoherent. But hey, what should I expect from a low budget TV show made by a sandwich shop?

The absurdity of the show is taken a step further when the characters have intense breakdowns over subs. Yes, that's right, subs. I don't know about you, but I have never felt that strongly about a sandwich.

This is a great watch if you aren't expecting any high brow television, have several hours of your life to waste, and are willing to be relentlessly



marketed to. It is incredibly funny as something not to be taken seriously. So go ahead, waste your life watching this interesting specimen of modern television on YouTube.

### Yatawee's Take:

As if Subway hasn't had enough of constant product placement though their sponsorships of k-dramas, the show has been created to basically revolve around the product. Despite the plot being as bad as meatballs on flatbread, the acting and effort put into the drama was surprisingly impressive and I can't help but wonder what other fast food k-dramas can come into fruition. Brands have been rampantly appearing in k-dramas along with the trend of Korean products in America, and while I do find blatant advertising a bit off putting and distracting from the scene, the Subway in *Someway's* plot is the focus and the reason I found out about it. The concept of romance and drama over fast food, which was way different from any Subway experience I had, drew a fine line between funny and absolutely cringe-worthy. Overall, it was an intriguing watch.

## Contemporary Album Review: *American Football, LP 3*

by Gracie Pennington

This past Sunday, I found myself browsing the vinyls at the local music store. I wasn't expecting to find what I was looking for, as it is a new and fairly popular LP, but sure enough, right in the A section, I found it: American Football's third LP.

Every month or so I find a new band to listen to, and this month, it was American Football. The founding members are Mike Kinsella, Steve Holmes, and Steve Lamos; Nate Kinsella joined much later, in 2014. Their self-titled debut album in 1999 went mostly unnoticed, and shortly after they disappeared into obscurity. It was only a few years later in the 2000's that they experienced a surge of popularity, making them the pioneers of 21st century math rock, a subgenre of rock that utilizes complex time signatures and rhythms. This resurgence helped the band reform, and in 2016, they released their second (also self-titled) studio album, which led to more music in the following years.

Out of the three studio albums that they have released, *LP3* (surprise, also self-titled) is my absolute favorite, which is why I was ecstatic to find a vinyl record of it. Released in 2019, it features eight songs and has a runtime of forty-seven



minutes. The songs are all above four minutes, the longest being almost eight minutes, but you'll come to find that the long song times don't feel long enough because of the beautiful instrumentals.

My favorite song on the album also happens to be the longest: "Doom in Full Bloom." The song follows a very interesting meter - for most of the track, it has a measure of 5/4, followed by a measure of 6/4, followed by 5/4, and so on. It pulls this meter quite well; the rhythm flows nicely and is very breathable. Nate Kinsella does a wonderful job on the drums here by placing polyrhythms nicely in the measures, giving the track a sense of direction and adding to the pensive mood. The song is quite repetitive, but this isn't to its detriment; it has enough variation to make it interesting. The lead guitarist plays in a melancholic manner that invokes feelings of nostalgia. To tie it all together, the lyrics are simple yet incredibly poetic, which is a common theme in the band's discography. All of these elements make a beautiful song. It feels like the feeling you get during a quiet starlit drive home at the end of the day.

The rest of the songs continue this sort of theme, yet, some are more upbeat. They all utilize polyrhythms that make math rock so special, giving a unique kind of character to the album. "Uncomfortably Numb" is another star on the album, starring Paramore's Hayley Williams; she and Mike Kinsella do a fantastic job here. The album also features artists such as Elizabeth Powell and Rachel Goswell, in the songs "Every Wave to Rise" and "I Can't Feel You."

Whether you are completely new to math rock or a die-hard enthusiast, American Football's third LP has something for all indie rock fans. It is very musically unique, and is consistent within itself. I'd recommend this album to anyone who needs a calming album to listen to on a car ride, or perhaps during a nap. This album combines all of the wonderful qualities of the band's past music, yet adds many new musical ideas. It is truly the definitive American Football experience.

## Classic Album Review: *Brothers in Arms*

by Riley Borkowski

With "I Want My MTV" approaching, there is no better time to review *Brothers In Arms* by The Dire Straits. This fifth album is said to be the band's breakthrough album, as it opened the world to this British rock and roll group.

*Brothers In Arms* was unstoppable from the moment of its release. It sat at the top of the charts for weeks, not only in the UK, but in the US as well, and remains one of the best-selling albums of all time with over thirty-million copies sold. This album brought jazz-rock from their previous album *Love Over Gold*, but what kept the record selling was Mark Knopfler's sense of pop songcraft.

The album opens with "So Far Away," a

gentle song that finds Mark Knopfler lamenting a lifestyle that keeps him separated from a loved one. The basic idea was about becoming exhausted trying to make love work over long distances. It moves at a nice, sedate pace, and it has an iconic Knopfler guitar solo in it.

Kicking off with a synth introduction paired with the iconic vocals of Sting, "Money For Nothing" takes the second and most iconic slot of the album. Co-written by Sting, the song was a pure pop attempt that paid off big time, and it quickly became the group's most successful single. Their innovative music video was one of the first to feature computer-generated animation, featuring some of the most memorable displays of 80's neon. Reaching never-seen-before success with the music video, this song still dominates charts for 80's themed rock and roll. Opening with the iconic line "I want my MTV," the lyrics are the "average person" looking at the MTV singers and not understanding what they are seeing. The whole song underlines just how much this new thing overpowered the poor.

The third track is a keyboard-heavy celebration of being a busker. "Walk of Life" is an upbeat song filled with joy and happiness. This was the song my dad preferred all the time, and while I was talking to him about this album, he told me that he still associates it with the 80s.

"Your Latest Trick" was the final single on the album. It is a nice saxophone based piece, and it sounds a little melancholy. If you're listening to the CD version, you'll hear Randy Brecker play a trumpet intro, however the vinyl version is missing it. Originally, the tempo was faster and jazzier, but their manager recommended they slow it down to the stately bossa nova that was released.

Overall, this is a great album with a wide variety of musical styles. The iconic music videos and lines from these songs continue to leave their mark today. It embodies the 80s, and even though it has been decades, these songs still live fresh in people's hearts.

## Video Game Review: *Valorant* Map, "Lotus"

by Madison McDonald

*Valorant*, by Riot Games, is a 5v5 FPS featuring a broad range of playable "agents" and vibrant maps to explore. Although we have recently seen a change to the agent roster with the character Harbor, before the 6.0 update, no new maps had been introduced to the game since the addition of Pearl in June of 2022. On January 10th, 2023,

Riot Games finally updated the cycle, releasing the new map "Lotus" that has since much praise from players.

Staged in India, this map is excellently designed, featuring dramatic views of the Indian shoreline, gardens, and a beautifully constructed temple that is based on ones from ancient times. Lotus incorporates beloved mechanics from previous maps and has even introduced two of its own.

It has three "spike" planting sites, much like the map Haven (April 2020), switch-activated sliding doors like the map Ascent (June 2020), and a climbing rope similar to the one in Breeze (April 2021). Lotus has added two mechanics that will greatly alter gameplay because they are entirely unlike anything *Valorant* has seen before.

The first of these mechanics is a breakable wall. This wall breaks when shot at, allowing players to have angles on those who are in another portion of the map. This will bring about new strategies, as there are advantages and disadvantages to breaking the wall. While it may allow you to see opposing players, it will leave you open to returning fire. The wall will also make quickly traversing the map a lot easier when used as a shortcut. Unfortunately, the wall will make a noise when you break it, alerting enemies to your position.

The second mechanic is a rotating door. When the button is pressed, the door will spin, pushing players and utility to the other side. This door can open up temporary angles, or allow you to quickly use a utility while avoiding being shot at. The rotating door also opens up a shortcut, but much like the breakable wall, you will have to sacrifice stealth for speed.

With this map and recent changes to the *Valorant* meta, some agents will outperform others on Lotus. With the Episode Six update and the recent nerfs on Chamber, Killjoy has rocketed to the top of the tier list on any map due to her ability to both defend and attack with her intel-gaining abilities, incredibly versatile grenades, and incredibly aggressive ultimate. Killjoy is unrivaled when it comes to defending small spaces and holding down close-together sites. Lotus is a very compact map that allows Killjoy to get the best use out of her abilities.

Viper is another incredibly useful agent on Lotus. While she tends to be very difficult to use on other maps, Lotus allows her to easily capture and control sites. Due to the number of entrances into sites on Lotus, Viper's smokes, poison wall, and ultimate allow her to cut all of these angles off at once, taking control of the site with ease.

Jett is by far the best duelist for Lotus. Jett can take advantage of the high vantage points that





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are dispersed throughout Lotus, helping her open up new angles to get some easy kills. Due to how compact Lotus is, Jett's dash is incredibly effective, as she can get in and out of fire very quickly.

Fade is able to dominate Lotus with her recon and blinding abilities. Lotus has some very small sites, smaller than any the game has previously seen. Fade's ultimate can cover entire sites, decaying enemy health, and impairing their vision and hearing. Even her "nightmares" can cover sites by themselves, which puts defenders at a huge disadvantage.

Lotus is an incredibly exciting map. Though these may be the best agents for the map, any agent can be played well here, as that is the genius of the map's design.

### Applause Staff Visits The Post and Courier and Ashley Laney



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## SOA Students Recite Poetry for Poetry Out Loud



**New Year Trivia**

by Gracie Pennington

1. What is 2023's lunar new year?
2. Who hosted "Dick Clark's Rockin' Eve" to ring in the new year this year?
3. How many LED lights are on the time's square ball (nearest thousandth)?
4. What does the New Year's song title "Auld Lang Syne" translate to?
5. What do people in the Southern U.S. eat on New Year's for good luck?
6. What is the most commonly used calendar in the world?
7. In what year did the ball first drop in Times Square?
8. In 1863, what famous proclamation was put into effect by former U.S. president Abraham Lincoln?
9. What symbol is most commonly associated with the new year?
10. What American city drops a giant chocolate kiss on New Year's?

**January Playlist**

by Beatrice Criscuolo

Look back on 2022 with some of the best songs from the past year.

**Carl Macklin, 12th grade  
Band major**

Gracie Pennington

**2/10**

1. January 29th
2. Dick Clark
3. 6,000
4. "Old long since"
5. Pot roast
6. Postmark
7. 1870
8. The Emancipation Proclamation
9. Fireworks
10. Hershey park?

**Aurora Drye, 12th grade  
Vocal major**

Provided

**4/10**

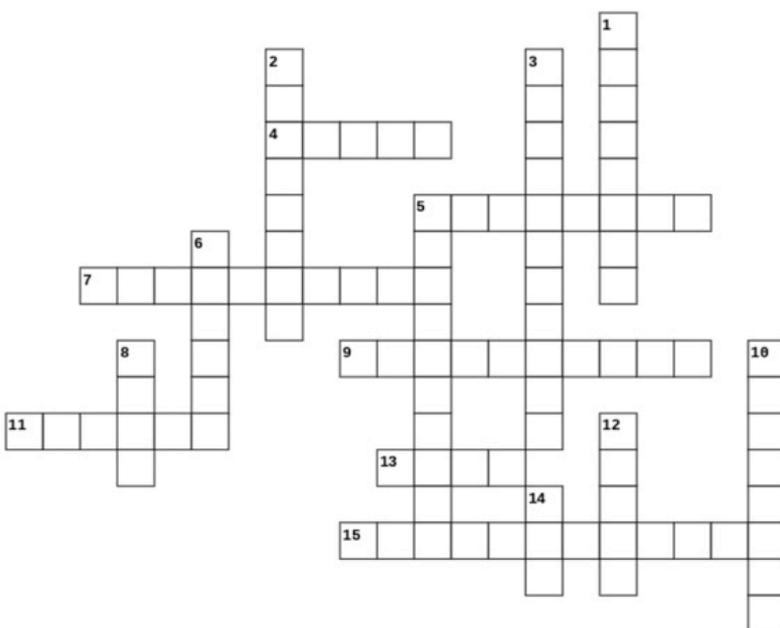
1. Rabbit
2. Dick Clark?
3. 473,000
4. Old long since (for old time's sake)
5. Collards, peas, and other stuff
6. The Gregorian calendar
7. 1990
8. The Emancipation Proclamation
9. Champagne?
10. Hershey, Pennsylvania

**Answers**

1. Year of the Rabbit, 2. Ryan Seacrest, 3. 32,256, 4. "Times Gone By," 5. Black eyed peas or Hoppin' John, 6. Gregorian calendar, 7. 1907, 8. Emancipation Proclamation, 9. The New Year's baby, 10. Hershey, Pennsylvania

**Dance Crossword**

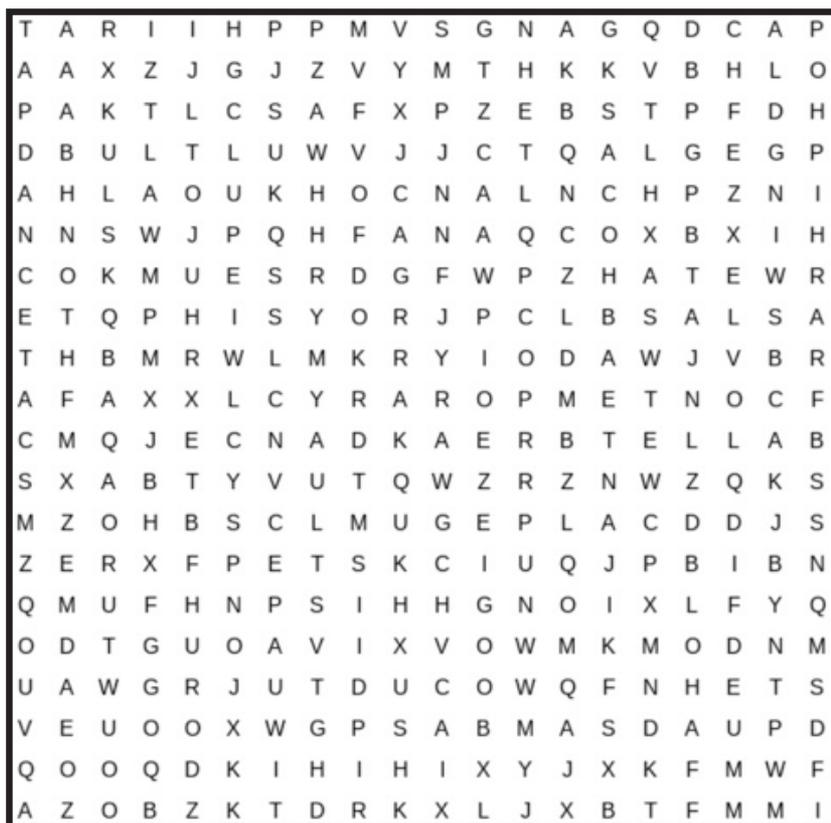
by Manny Stavrinakis

**Across**

4. A dance where you replicate movements of artificial intelligence.
5. A TikTok dance popularized in 2020 by Charli D'amelio.
7. A dance created during the 20's where the heels and toes alternate positions in a swivel motion.
9. A hip-hop dance made viral in 2015 by rapper Silentó.
11. A hip-hop dance that evolved from Pop Smoke's "Woo Walk," where you perform a series of hops and drops from foot to foot.
13. A dance created in 1979 where you spell out a certain four letters using your arms and hands.
15. A dance named after a song made by K-pop artist PSY, where you imitate riding a horse.

**Down**

1. An effortless backwards glide across the floor created by Michael Jackson.
2. A dance that originated from a popular Michael Jackson song where you pretend to be a zombie.
3. An internet meme that went viral in early 2013 where you dance wildly to a song with the same name as the dance.
5. A dance popularized in the 90's where you run in place along to the song, "My Boo."
6. Originally created by LSU football player Allen Davis, this dance is now being performed by athletes and celebrities all around the world.
8. A dance where you flop around on your belly and imitate a certain insect.
10. A popular latin dance that was created in the 90's where you alternate putting your hands on your head, shoulder, and hips.
12. A dance made popular by the Backpack Kid, in which you replicate an oral hygiene method.
14. A dance move created by rap group Migos, where you tilt your head into your elbow.



# Dance Word Search

by Manny Stavrinakis

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| Ballet       | Salsa      |
| Disco        | Breakdance |
| Tango        | Bellydance |
| Contemporary | Waltz      |
| Tapdance     | Samba      |
| Hiphop       | Quickstep  |
| Jazz         | Polka      |
| Swing        | Boogie     |

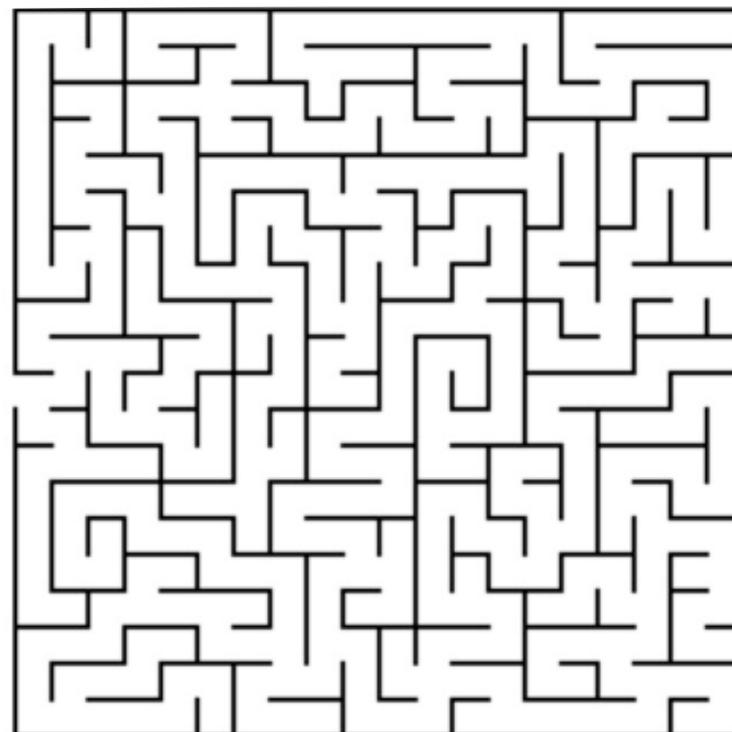
# SOA Sudoku

by Manny Stavrinakis



# Help Ms. Tillotson find her pointe shoes!

by Manny Stavrinakis





“To go to Greece.”

Lainey League, 6th grade Dance



“Eat at Taco Bell.”

Savannah Oliver, 7th grade Vocal



“To sleep.”

Braeden Brightharp, 8th grade Band



“To run the Hilton Head marathon!”

Ms. Johnson, High School Math



“Parasailing, except I can’t swim.”

Ms. Page-Dawson, Middle School Counselor

## What’s at the top of your bucket list?

by Isis Hanna and Cate Traywick



“An Alaskan cruise.”

Mr. Morelli, High School English



“For Claude The Pigeon to go on tour!”

Audra Elm, 9th grade Visual Arts



“To publish my own graphic memoir.”

Natalie Blakeslee, 10th grade Strings



“To live in a French speaking country.”

Merrick Moriarty, 11th grade Creative Writing



“Own a cat.”

Evy Massey, 12th grade Band