



THE LOOKING GLASS

LAURALTON HALL'S ARTS & LITERATURE MAGAZINE

2024 EDITION

*Cover Illustration by
Ava Sasaki '26*

Throughout this edition of The Looking Glass, you'll see work inspired by Walt Whitman's 1860 poem "I Hear America Singing." The people and occupations have been updated, but the celebratory spirit remains.

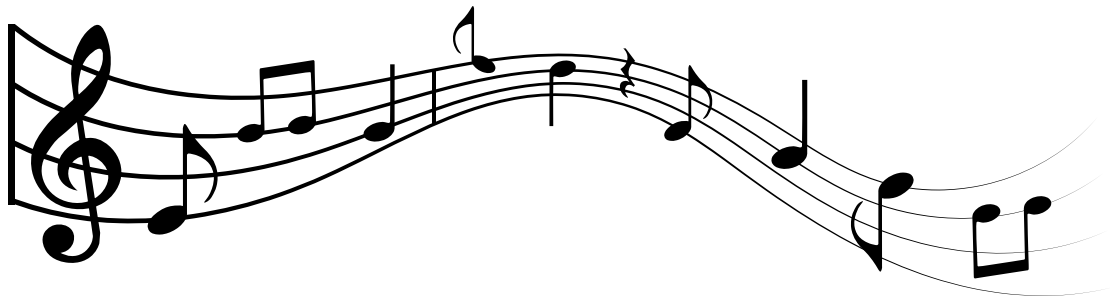
I Hear America Singing

I hear Luralton singing, Mrs. Benson as she sings hers, as she records and posts on Instagram for everyone to love and see, everyone and none other.

I hear Luralton singing, Mrs. Coyne as she sings hers, as she says hello to everyone, the biggest smiling face of Luralton, and see Luralton loves her.

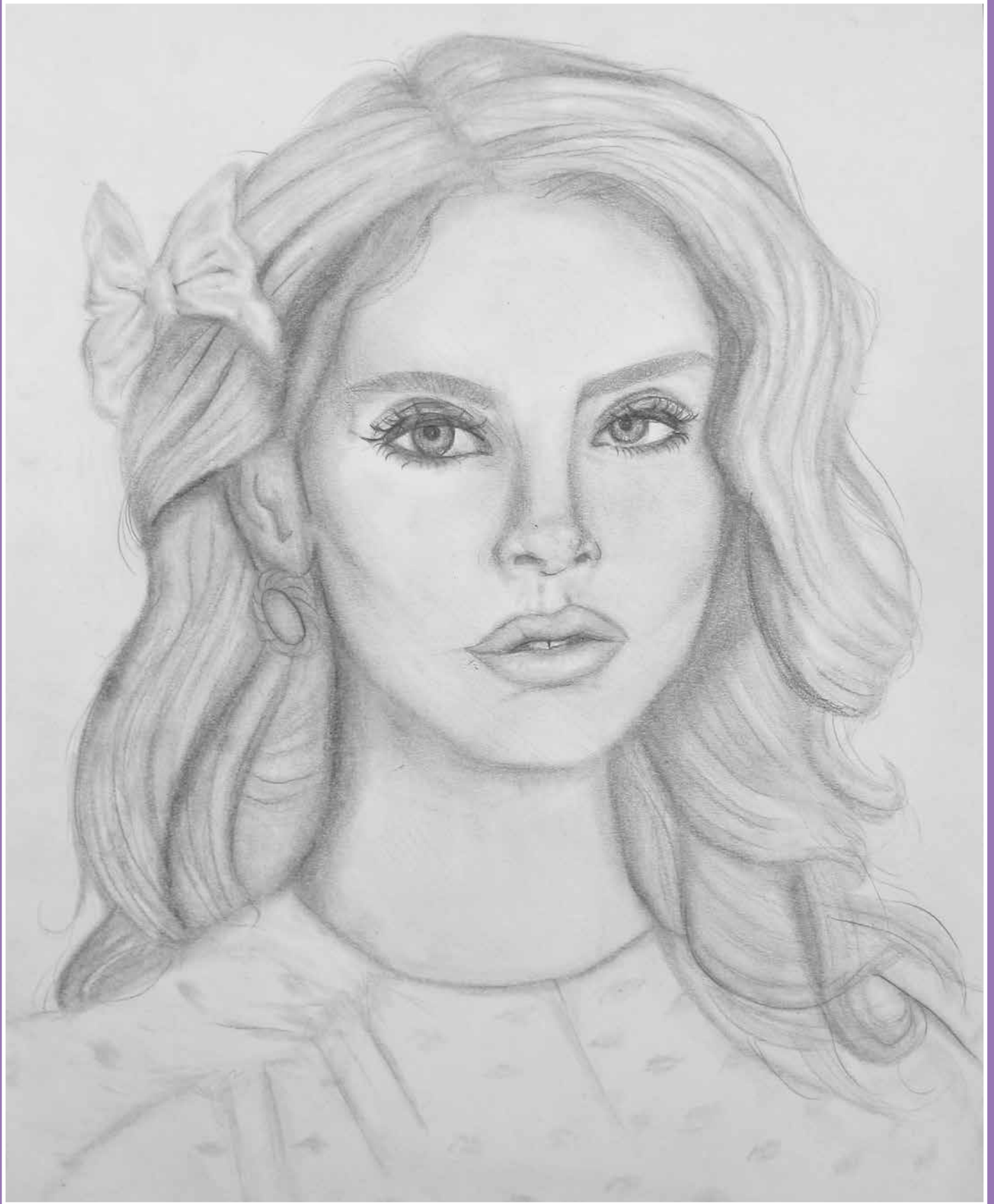
I hear Luralton singing, Mrs. DaCosta as she sings hers, as she teaches everyone God's good news and lets everyone absorb everything God has for them.

~ Maddie Wolfe '25

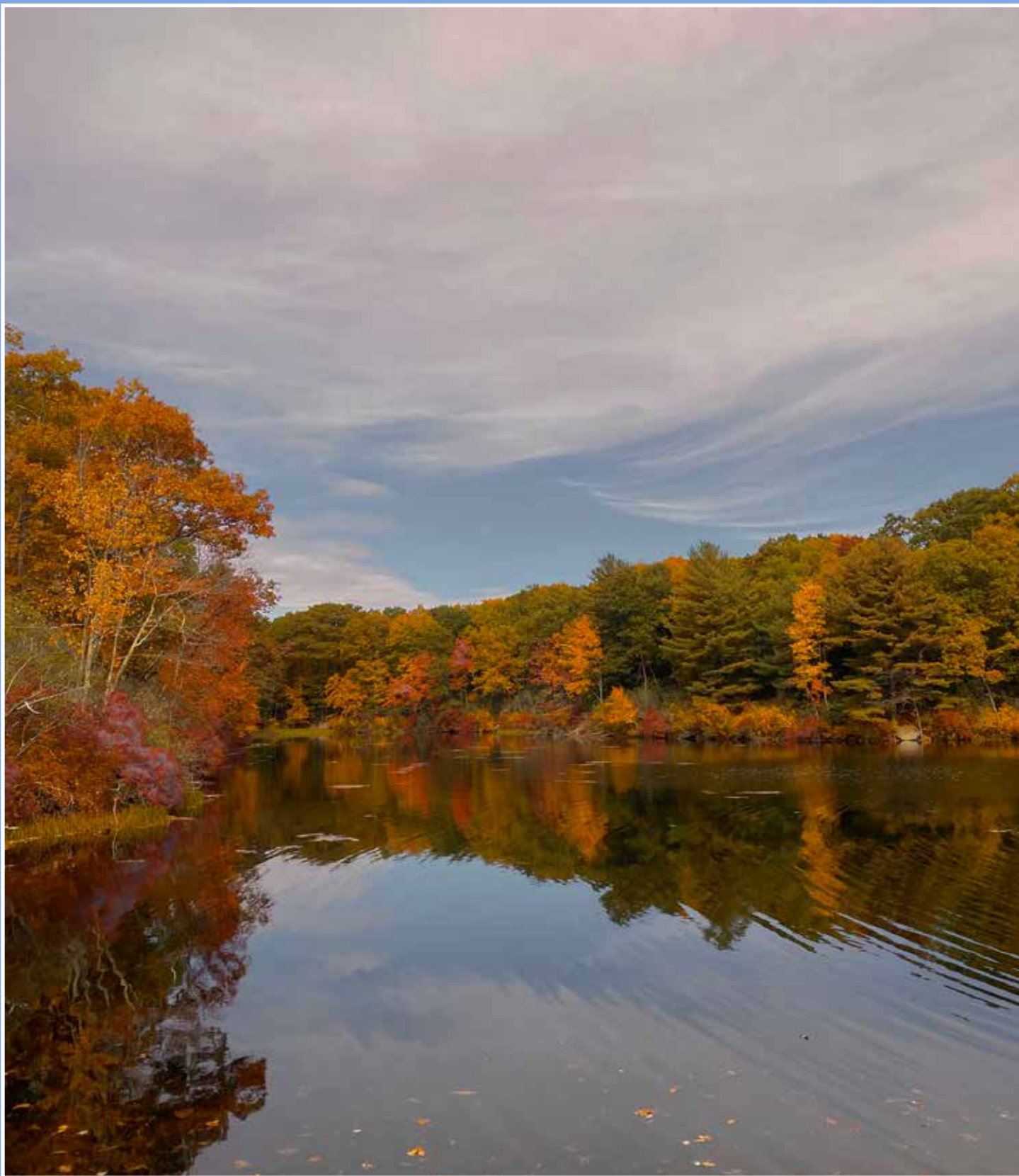


I hear America singing, the varied songs I hear,
The President singing what belongs to him in his office,
the Vice President singing in the Oval Office
The lawyers singing as they read their files, the paralegal singing as she gathers information, The officers' song, the firefighters on their way in the morning, or at noon or at sundown, The delicious singing of the athletes, or of the soccer player at practice, or of the basketball star dribbling and shooting. Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night, silence

~ JoMari Ferreras '25



Portrait of Lana Del Rey
Pencil Drawing
by Tanner Lovegrove '27



*Photography by
Maya Williams '24*

I Hear America Singing

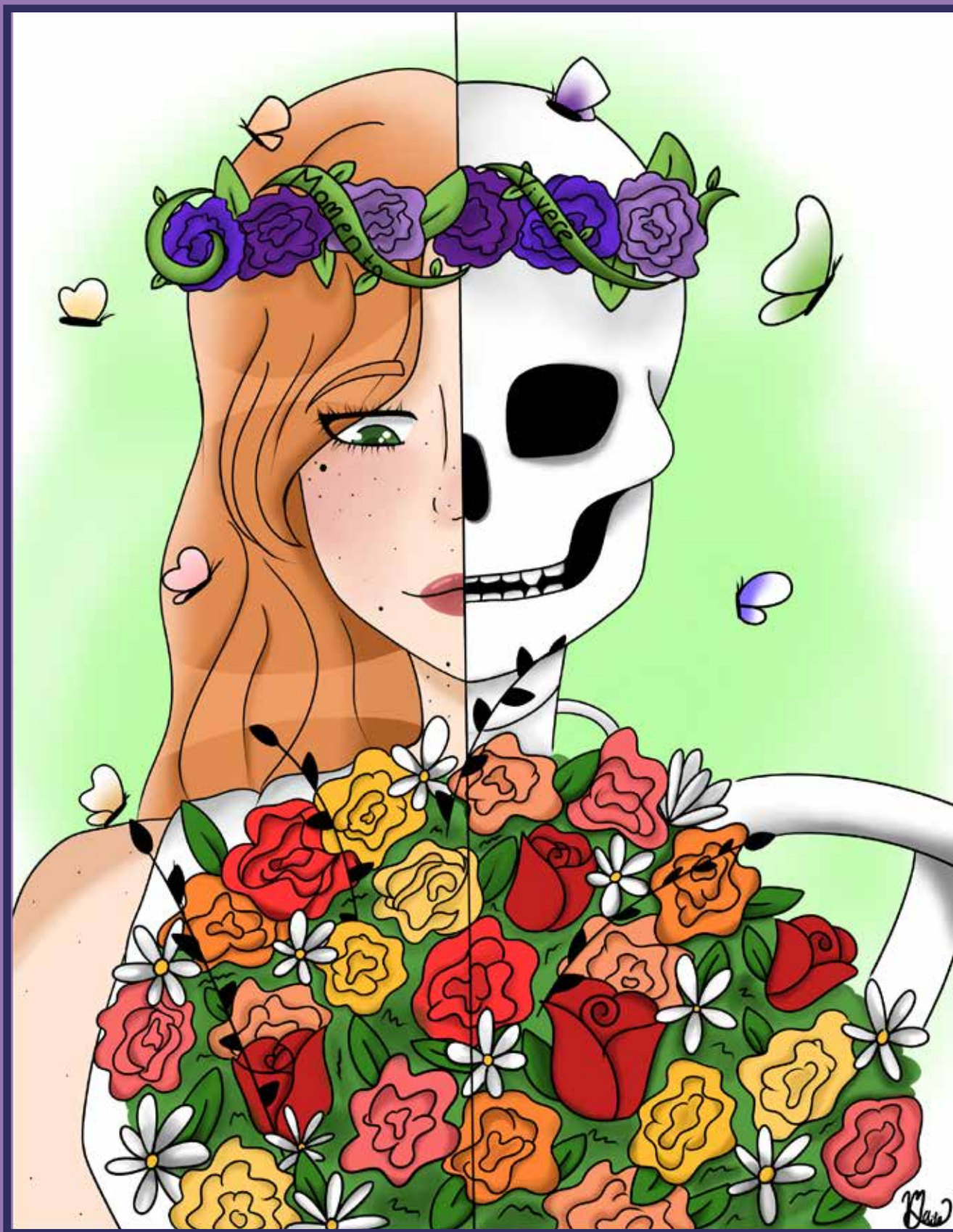
I hear America singing, the varied songs I hear,
Those of software developers, each one coding with joy and skill,
The accountant singing as she balances the books,
The nurse singing as she tends to her patients,
The soothing hum of the therapist, or the fitness trainer's motivational chant,
Each singing what belongs to them and to none else

~ Lane Pinto '25



I hear America singing as the geometry teacher sings hers, teaching students
about right triangles, grading papers, and creating lesson plans.
The physician assistant sings hers as she prescribes medicine and aids her patients to full
health with skills like none other. The song of the pilot pleases my ears as he flies pas-
sengers from one place to another and soon relaxes on his well-deserved layover.

~Nora Grillo '25



"Memento Vivere (Remember to Live)"
Digital Illustration by Melita Maurati '25



*Digital Artwork by
Isabelle Taglia '26*

Family Fabric

Throughout my childhood, the women in my family have always been creators. They have quilted, knitted, and baked for family members, friends, and strangers. Whether it was my great-grandmother's quilts, my grandmother's sweaters or my mother's cookies, there was always a feeling of warmth and care woven into the works. I watched them as they pricked their fingers, miscounted stitches, burned their hands, and continued to work, all for the sake of gift-making. The struggle of fabrication was their way of calming their minds, their break from the hardships of life, and their way of loving people. Their creations and their tenacity sparked curiosity in me and inspired me to design my world in the way I desired, while filling me with the purpose of fabrication for others. It taught me the importance of finding what makes me happy and not losing hope when I encounter obstacles in my path. I am myself because my female forefathers empowered me to create as I see fit.

~ Grace Kulaga '24



*Illustration by
Ava Sasaki '26*



Colored pencil by
Maria Banka '25



Afraid of Americans
Digital Illustration by
Megan Vella '25

The Time I Finally Proved Myself

by Nora Burrell '26

“For as long as I can remember, for every tournament, I’ve always braided my hair back into a bun, tied my laces, and strapped up my headgear. This time feels different though. I am extra nervous- to the point I feel sick to my stomach. I walk into the building, anxious and trying to slow my negative thoughts and gain some confidence in myself. “It’s alright! I got this!” Inside, I am immediately bombarded by hundreds of people in the stands cheering for their son or daughter. My stomach feels like a tornado twisting all my nervous feelings up, preparing to explode. This is a tournament both my older cousins wrestled in and the pressure is on. My heart is racing and my chest is getting heavier. “Oh no, I can’t do this, I’m not ready.” I look at my mom, and she instantly reads the look on my face, gives me a hug and calmly states “You got this; show them how tough you are.”

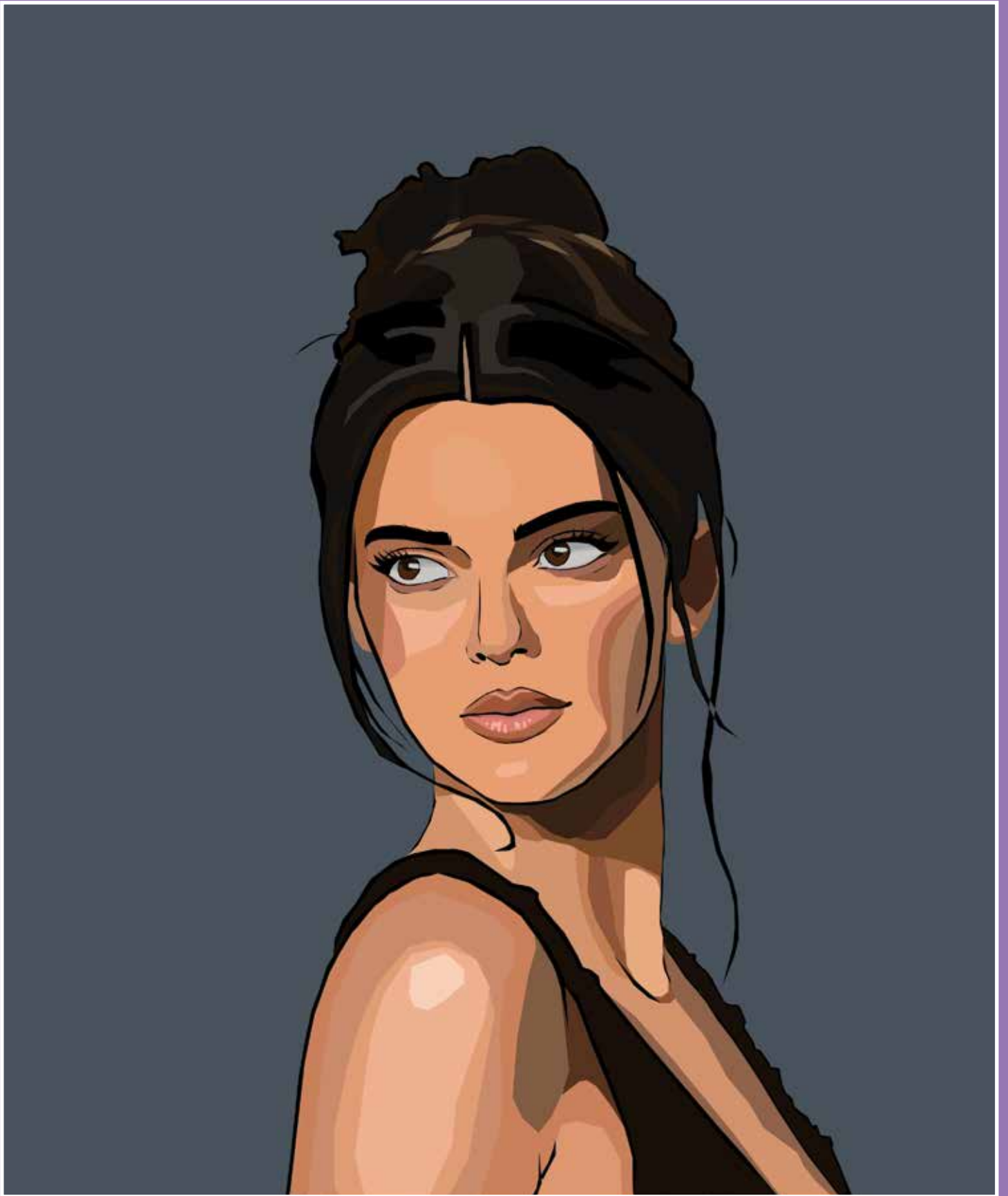
I roll my shoulders back and walk into the gym. The hundreds of wrestlers and thousands of family members had made me feel so little and intimidated, but now it is my turn- my first match of the day. “Number 375, you’re up next,” called the ref. My coach leans in and says, “Listen, Nora, you got this; there’s no bigger threat than yourself- just imagine you’re wrestling your brothers-you got this kid.” I look over at my friends watching from the sidelines. I take a breath and the whistle blows. I go in for a hook; I slide and grab his feet. He falls to the ground, and I hold him down for three seconds. “One, Two, Three-Pin!” the ref yells. I can’t believe it- I just won. I stand up with a smile on my face that stretches from one ear to the other. My friends scream my name and jump up and down. I run over to them, and they surround me with hugs. Only three more rounds to go. The next thing I know, it’s the second match of the day, then the third, and finally the fourth. I pin in every match. I feel invincible-I feel empowered. It is like I just won the lottery. I am a champion, first place in Girls States in my age group. This is the day I finally prove myself.



*Illustration by
Ava Sasaki '26*



*Paper Sculpture
by Sophia Moreno '27*



*Digital Artwork by
Audrey Voges '25*

I Hear America Singing

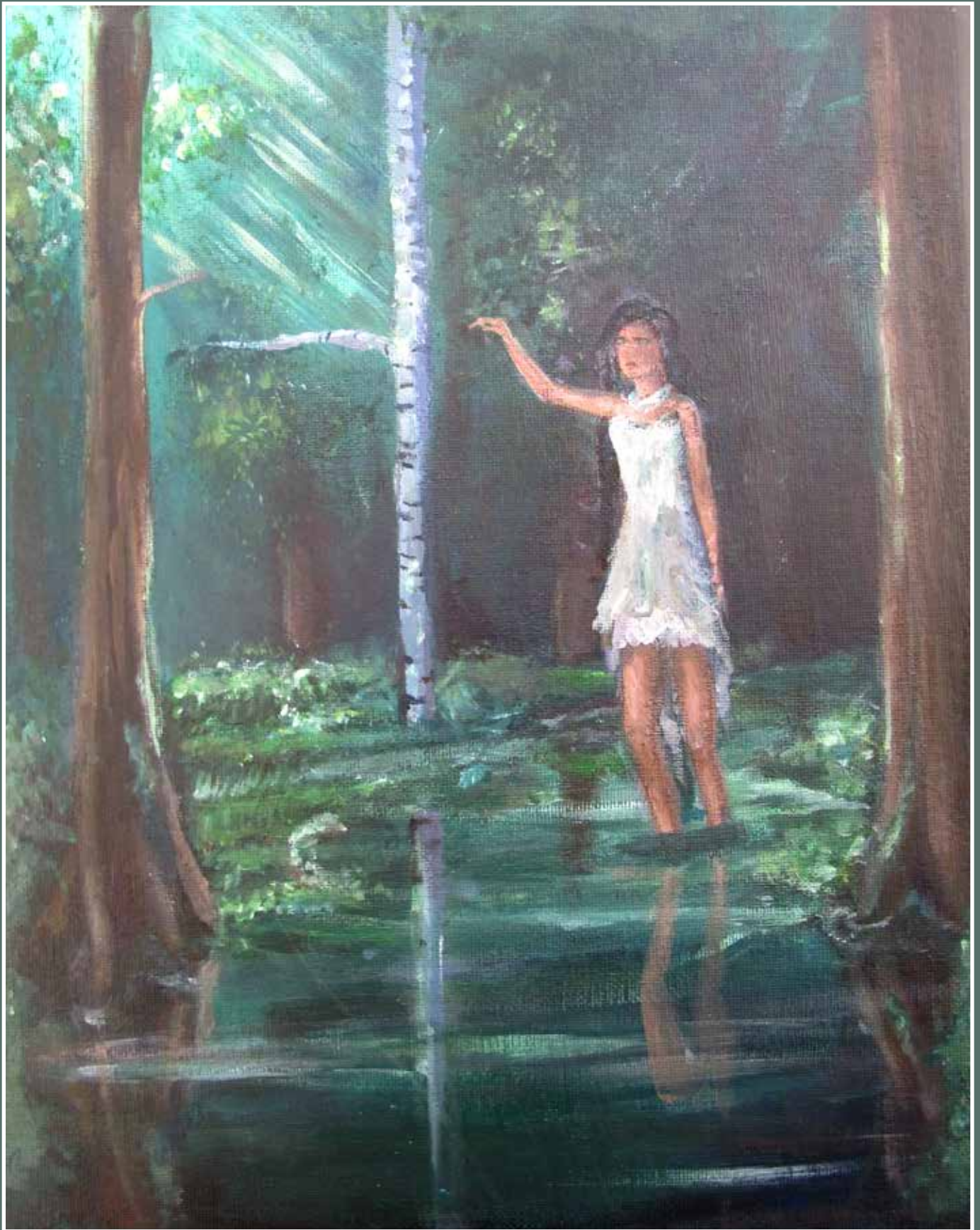
I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of photographers, each one singing along with the flash and click of their cameras,
The event planners sing as they sketch the layout of a party,
The plumber sings when he discovers a client's wedding band in a drain,
or a hairball in the shower,
The garbage man singing along with the rustling of plastic bags and the thud of them being
thrown in the back,
The bus driver sings as he sits in the front, the passengers in the back signing
as they go over a bump,
The surgeon's song as he waltzes into the operating room, the nurses on their way to assist,
with medical instruments in hand clashing,
The comforting song of the role model, or older sister as she squeezes you in embrace,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

~ *Paige Patrignelli '25*





Susan Bottino - In Loving Memory
Acrylic on Canvas
by Ava Bottino '25



Acrylic on Canvas by
Ava Sasaki '26

Feeling the Beat Beneath My Feet

by Addison Harry '26

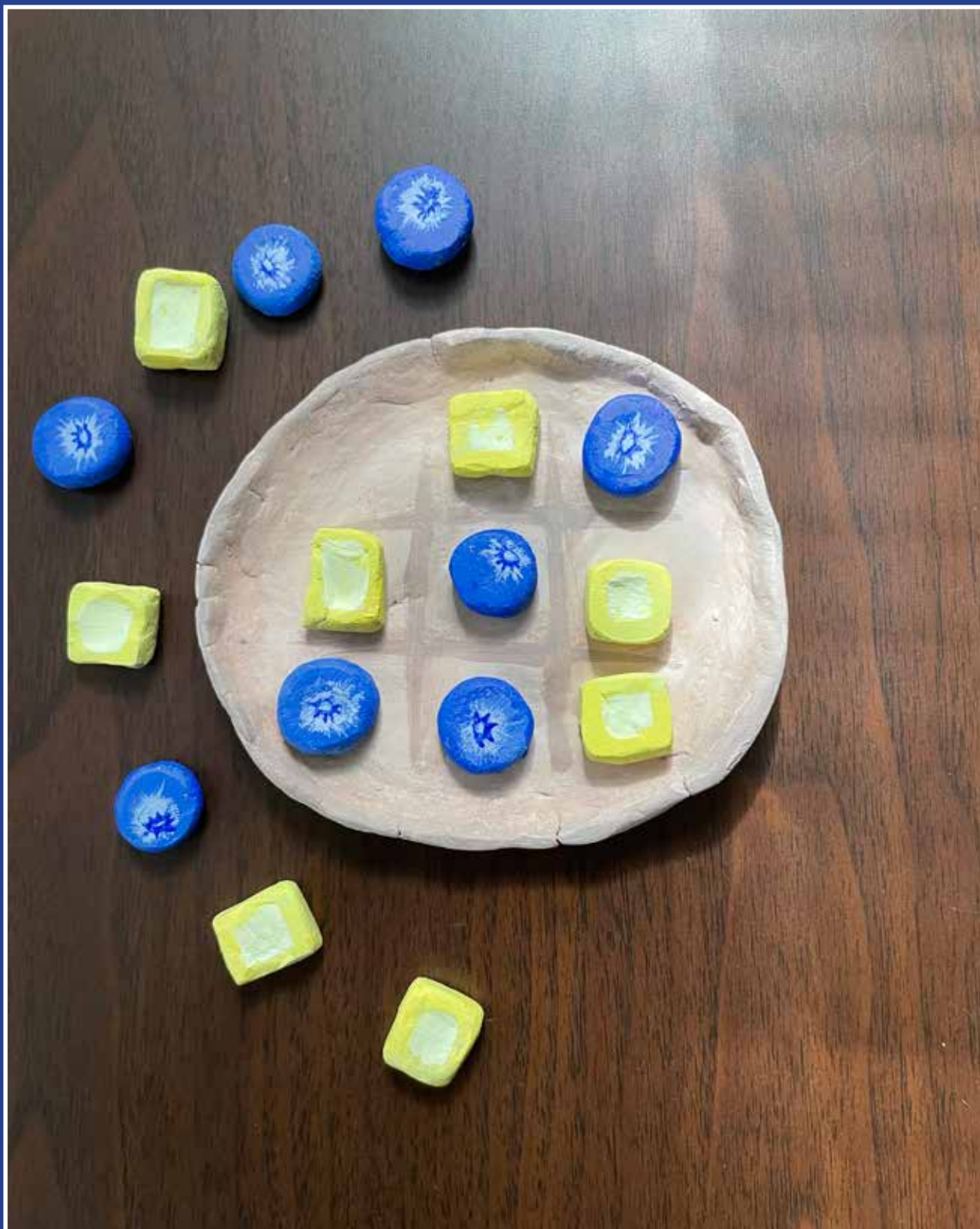
It is my first solo dance competition. I have butterflies in my stomach as I run my lyrical dance routine in my head. I do not have the security blanket of other dancers in front of, behind, or beside me. My teammates' best advice is, "Don't be nervous and have fun." The announcer says, "Please welcome to the stage, entry number 137." I walk gracefully across the vast, wooden stage to my starting position. The bright, powerful stage lights illuminate my maroon, sequin lace halter leotard. It is my time to shine, bright like a diamond. The beat of the music runs through my veins, and steadily takes control of my body. The choreography flows out of me like a waterfall. My feet are paint brushes, and the stage is my canvas. The intricate dance movements and emotional facial expressions allow me to illustrate my story. In three minutes, my routine is over. I sigh in relief, walk off the stage feeling confident in my performance. Backstage, my mom waits to give me a big bear hug. Her teary blue eyes say it all. I know it does not matter if I place; what matters is that I gave it my all, which is enough for us both. At the awards ceremony, the judge announces her pick for the dance performance that was heart-touching, creative, and flawless...it is my number, 137. My solo won the judge's choice award for the most breathtaking and charismatic performance. I guess you could say I took a "leap of faith."



*Acrylics by
Allison Herrera-Silva '27*



Still Life in Pencil
by Jenny Wu '24



*Clay Sculpture
by Kennedy Jennings '27*



Digital Artwork by
Melita Maurati '25

Senior Sighs

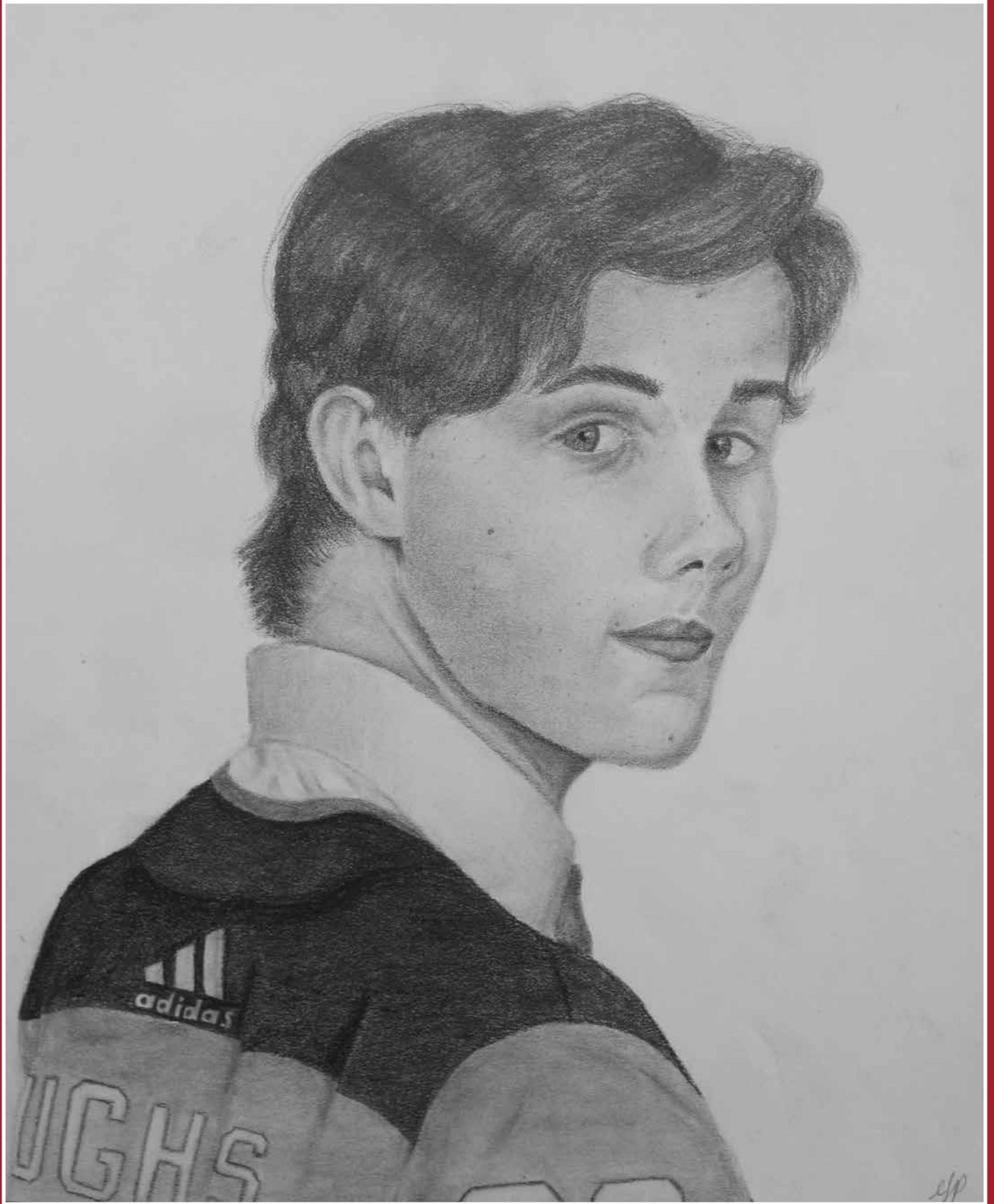
The idea - one I long for and dread, at its launch,
I imagine something beautiful because it's new, but it isn't beautiful, it's just blue.
The journey - terrible and treacherous, but worth the destination.
I jaunt and jump, reaching for the supposed stars, but maybe instead I go for Mars.
The year - full of triumph or melancholy,
I hope to yearn for both, but know that's not the truth.
The fear - justified and relatable fills my brain
I prepare for the potential pain, understanding that sometimes it rains.
The classes - a rush for results
I call for a fresh frame - new thoughts.
The peers - a mixed bag full of the hopefuls and the dejected
I pray to be counted among the former, and I know I can give into this little folly.
The books - never ending with their austere themes and severe scenes.
I long for a lull, and I am met with Steinbeck.
The equations - longer than ever fill my notebook, with pretty little pictures that
make me scream "nope"
I can see the hope, but can't quite feel it, as I view those around me.
The days - quick and dragging, full of ennui,
I care for only few scant hours, when I can effectively escape from the sound of
suspense...

~ Grace Kulaga '24

*Background painting by
Maya Williams '24*



*Photography by
Lila Jaber '25*



Portrait of Jack Hughes
Pencil Drawing
by Ella Fosse-Previs '27

I Hear America Singing

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of the software developer, Mastering the algorithm, allotting advancements,
Coding with finesse, their keyboards ringing.
I hear America singing, the social media guru's beat,
Creating posts that capture attention,
Causing trends to spread like wildfires,
Sparking engagement, setting the internet ablaze.
I hear America singing, the environmentalist's anthem,
Advocating for an Earth in need,
Saving the planet and all its creatures,
Searching for successful sustainability.
I hear America singing, the makeup artist's melody,
Blending shades across a unique type of canvas,
Transforming faces, and crafting confidence,
Bringing forth radiance, in the softest light.

~ Steph Albert '25





"Pomegranates"
Acrylic on Canvas
by Ava Bottino '25

I Hear America Singing

I hear America singing, the hairstylist as she sings hers, as she makes platinum blondes
and her clippers clip.

I hear DMV agent singing, the agent as he sings his, as he passes or fails new drivers
and hands tickets to the world.

I hear the lunch ladies singing, the lunch lady as she sings hers,
as she makes cookies and gives our warm meals.

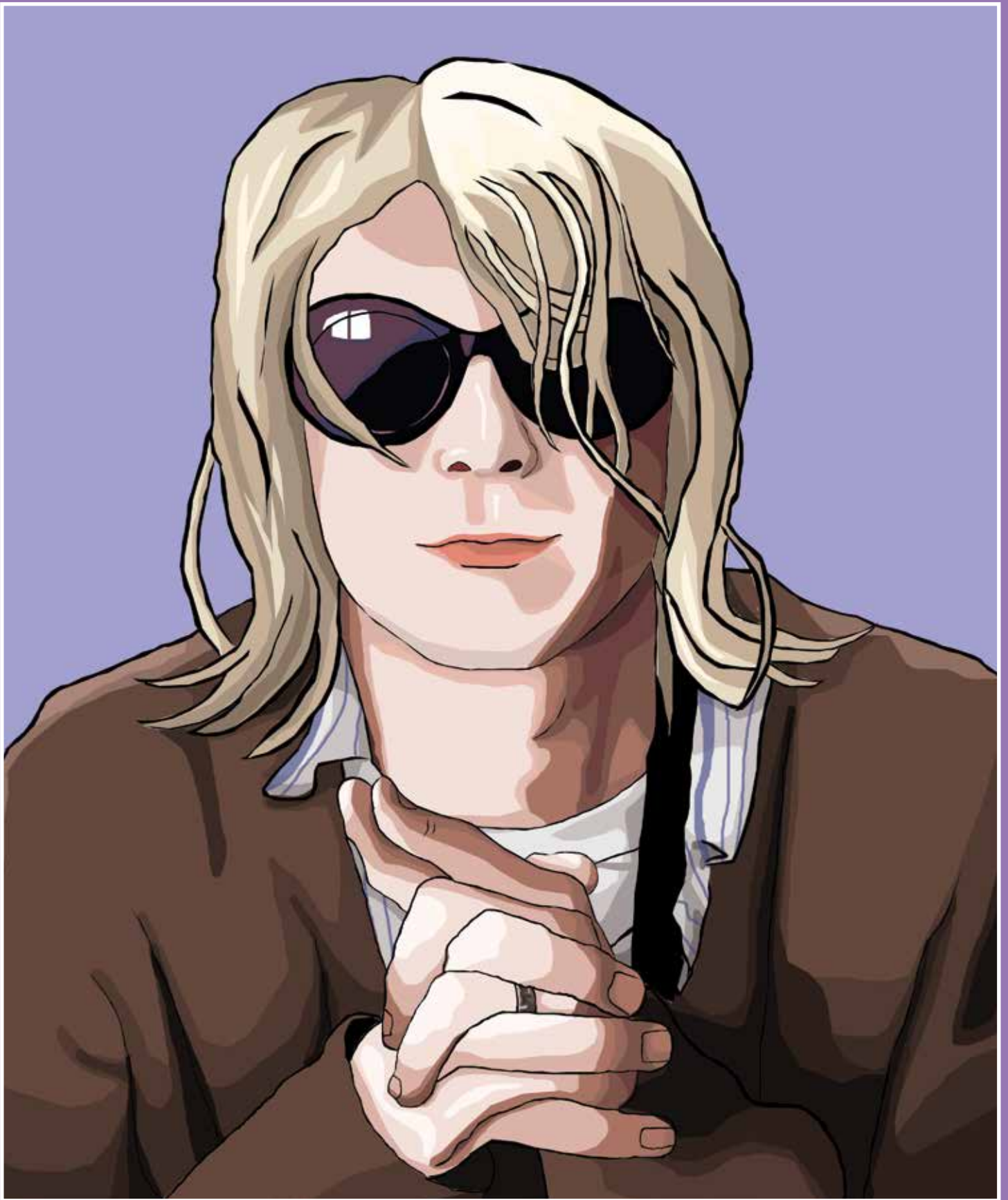
~Grace Wetmore '25



*Illustration by
Ava Sasaki '26*

I hear America singing, the hard workers songs I hear,
The plumber singing as he clears the water pipes, the mechanic singing
as he fixes the Ford truck,
The professional marathon runners' chanting as they cross the finish line, or the singing
race car drivers as they finish they last lap, or the young babysitter
as she puts the kids to bed,
Each 21st century worker sings what belongs to them and to none else.

~ Kylie Graham '25



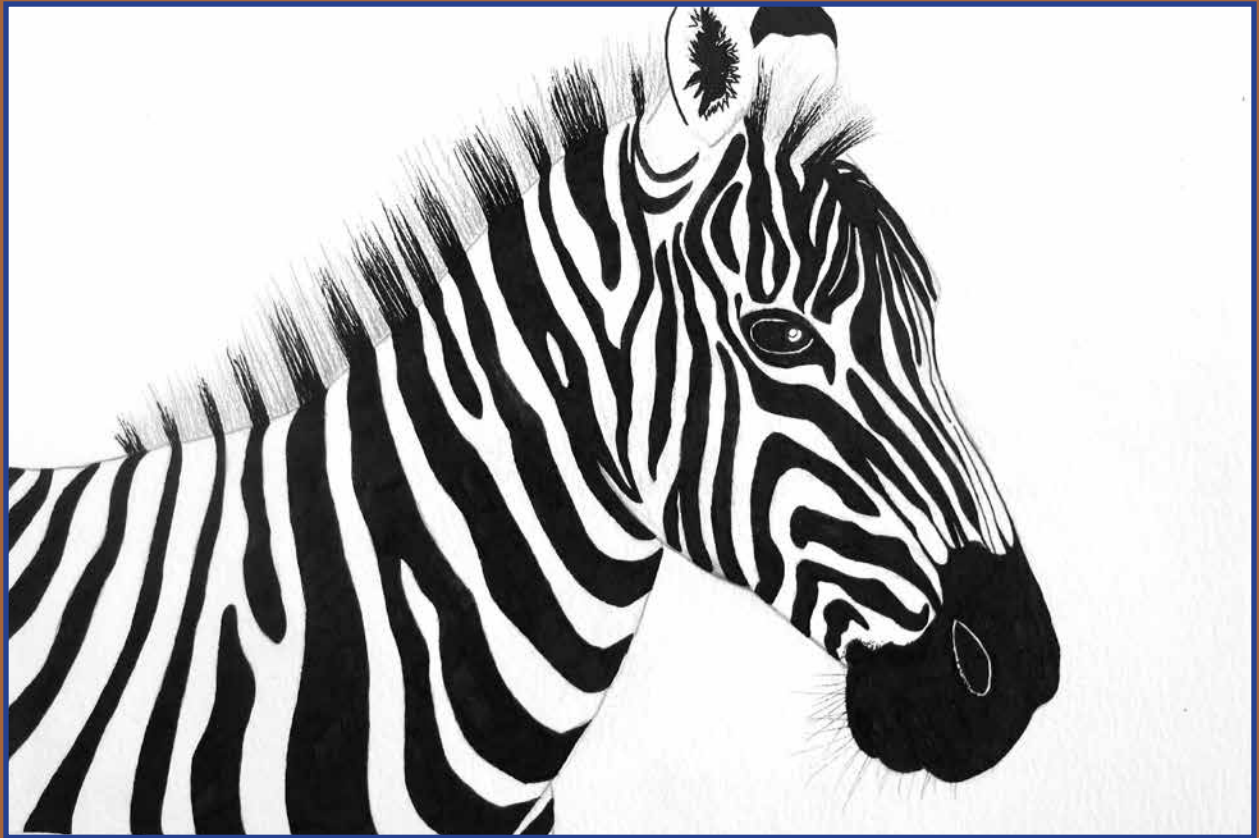
*Digital Artwork by
Megan Vella '25*

The Right Audition For Center Stage

by Layla Braxton '25

I remember very vividly bawling my eyes out on the way home because I bombed my audition. I was upset with myself and extremely disappointed. I thought that I had wasted my time on perfecting notes, that I had no capability to be successful, no chance of making it big, and should just choose another passion. I had wanted to be perfect, but there is no right image of perfect. Everyone's definition of perfect is different.

Something in me wanted to be more than just some sob story. I truly loved the arts, and I wouldn't let a bad audition ruin my relationship with theater, wasn't going to let one setback sabotage my relationship with the stage. The voices of all the great stage stars say that "hard work pays off" and it's true. I can't undo the bad auditions, but I can start a new sheet of music and compose my own ending. So when I heard that auditions for the new musical were coming, I quickly picked out a monologue and a song. I recited the monologue for months until it became muscle memory and flowed effortlessly from my lips; I performed for my acting teacher to get valuable critiques. Finally, the time came to audition. Despite some flashbacks from the previous year, I was calmer and more confident, even fearless. My heart beat at the pace of smooth romantic overture, nice and steady. Students walked out of the room with smiles on their faces, but I also saw some with tears. I tried to ignore the ones with crying faces because it gave me nervous jitters. Finally, it was my turn. It didn't feel like an audition. The atmosphere was warm and inviting; I was comfortable and not afraid. My monologue danced off my tongue-the directors even laughed in all the right places. Once I began my song and saw the director's smile, I forgot I was singing and had fun with it. My audition ended in a blink of an eye. Exactly a year ago, I was on my way home bawling my eyes out; now I was on my way home excitedly loading my mom with all this great information. As I remembered the girl I was a year ago, defeated and despondent, and I couldn't help but smile. My experience was the world telling us, in order to ultimately succeed you need to fail.



*Pen Illustration by
Summer Carrier '27*



*Pen Illustration by
Ashlyn Ternak '27*



*Photography by
Maya Williams '24*

Projections of the Clans

by Leah Goodwin '27

Hollyleaf, a dark gray and black cat with green eyes, sat in the field of bright green grass. Just a few moments before, her brother, Lionblaze, caused the forest to be lit in flames. However, the accident had been averted by Jayfeather, brother to both Hollyleaf and Lionblaze. Jayfeather was blind, but profoundly empathetic.

Hollyleaf, Lionblaze, and Jayfeather were all strong cats, each with their own prophecy. Lionblaze had powers of fire, creating bright and fiery flames with just the movement of his paw. Jayfeather could control water, and control the mayhem Lionblaze might cause by mistake. Yet, there was Hollyleaf, with no powers. She couldn't control fire or flames, or create water projections like Jayfeather could. She felt defeated, in her mind and in her heart-so she sat in the grass as if she were waiting for her hopes and dreams to grow in front of her like a flower.

"Hollyleaf?" Jayfeather spoke her name like a delicate tansy in the breeze. He never had anything bad to say, but because Hollyleaf sulked in the bath of non-inclusion, she wasn't up for a conversation. In response to him, she sighed and rolled her eyes. Jayfeather couldn't see her sassy look, but from her sigh, could tell she was bothered. He didn't want to exasperate her, but he had to tell her something that felt caught in his throat.

Jayfeather very lightly touched the ground; his paw glowed with a soft blue color, like his pelt. The forest transformed into an endless world of white. The grass turned gray, and the sky glittered with green and blue stars.

"Why have you brought me here?" Hollyleaf muttered, and as she looked around the void of purity, felt herself relax. Jayfeather took a deep breath before he spoke, "To calm you, but I need to tell you something. I cannot hold it anymore. But I warn you, it could change us."

continued...

Hollyleaf's eyes widened as she let out a small gasp, "What?"

Jayfeather slowly nodded, "I need you to stay calm, Hollyleaf." Not quite understanding, Hollyleaf tilted her head. What was so serious? What had happened? Hollyleaf suspected another talk to cheer her up about being powerless.

Jayfeather lifted his paw and two projected memories of cats, one with a sleek, crow-like tail, the other wearing a leaf in her tail, formed from water.



*Digital Illustration
by Leah Goodwin '27*

Hollyleaf stared at the two water memories; they were Leafpool and Crowfeather, two cats Hollyleaf once knew. Those memories faded into a third of Leafpool and Crowfeather sitting together. They seemed to love each other very much. Then, the memory darkened and showed Leafpool giving her 3 kittens away to another cat named Squirrelflight, her sister. Hollyleaf's stare grew sharper as she noticed herself in the memory. The vision faded away, leaving a trail of bright cyan paw-prints behind.

continued...

Now, it was just Squirrelflight and the kittens beside her, playing by her bushy tail. Hollyleaf's blank gaze was flooded with salty tears. Her paws quivered as she tried to blink out the river of sadness from her eyes. She understood now. She understood that Squirrelflight was not her mother. Her mother was Leafpool, a secret that had been kept for so long. But why? Why has Jayfeather never said anything? How long did he know? This is betrayal!

Hollyleaf's thoughts clouded and churned in her mind, like a painful storm forming. She looked down at the ground and closed her eyes, her tears falling onto the ground in front of her paws. Jayfeather is just a pretender. Jayfeather had not spoken a word, instead-he stepped closer and sat beside her. He leaned on her shoulder and remained quiet; there was much he wanted to say but he was at a loss for words.



*Digital Illustration
by Leah Goodwin '27*

"You've known this, Jayfeather, and you tell me now. You can't be confident in concealing the biggest lie of my life!"

"I'm not confident, I just didn't know when to tell you. I just th-"

"I should hate you, Jayfeather. I should!" Her cruelty sliced through Jayfeather's heart, the sharpest wound he ever took-his sister hating him. Hollyleaf, bristling with anger, was certain Jayfeather was intending to hurt her. After the moment of silence, she unsheathed her claws as grass sprouted up from the ground where her paw lay. Perhaps, she did have powers. Perhaps, a storm was coming. A storm of regret and misunderstanding.

The Looking Glass

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Nora Grillo '25

Addison Harry '26

Allison Herrera-Silva '27

Lila Jaber '25

Kennedy Jennings '27

Grace Kulaga '24

Tanner Lovergrove '24

Melita Maurati '25

Sophia Moreno '27

Paige Patrignelli '25

Lane Pinto '25

Ava Sasaki '26

Isabelle Taglia '26

Ashlyn Ternak '27

Megan Vella '25

Audrey Voges '25

Grace Wetmore '25

Madelyn Wolfe '26

Maya Williams '24

Jenny Wu '24



Front Row: Brianna Horowitz '24 and Lila Parkel '24

Back Row: Maria Banka '25 and Melita Maurati '25

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The Looking Glass is published annually to celebrate the creativity of the students at the Academy of Our Lady of Mercy, Loralton Hall

Cover Illustration by Ava Sasaki '26