

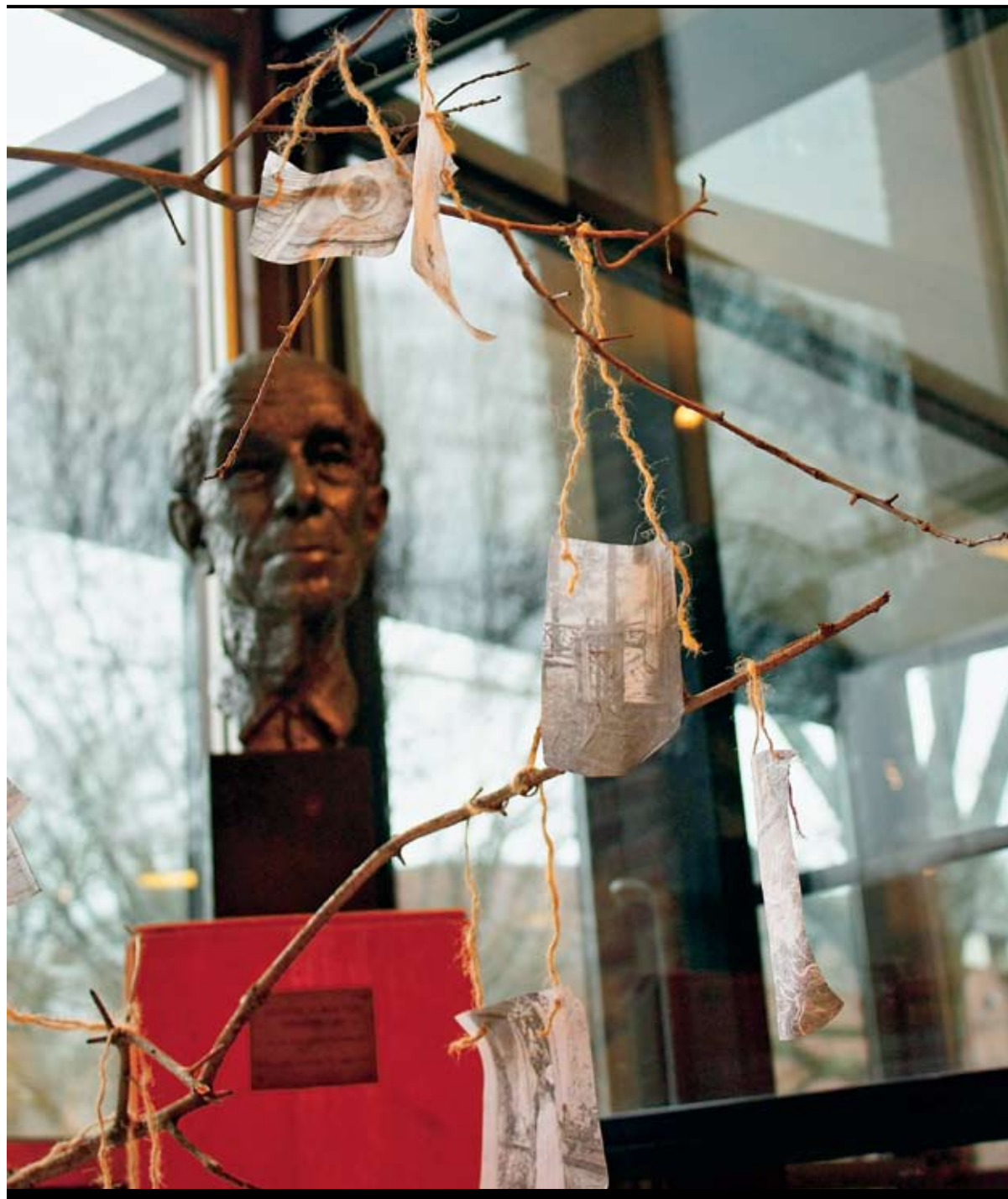


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PHOTOS: *Inside Front Cover*: In her studio located on the top floor of Retford, Elizabeth Arvey '08 worked on her paintings for her senior portfolio. (Photo by Bruce Weller)
Front Cover: Heidi Stroh '10 created this three-dimensional photographic sculpture in her AP Alternative Photographic Processes class. (Photo by Caleb Savage '11)

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BRUCE WELLMER



HEAD OF SCHOOL NANCY STARMER posed in front of the painting “Hunter Farm” by artist Anthony Antorino of New Hope, Pennsylvania. The painting was donated to George School by Rennie and Cap Roberts. “The painting is a beautiful Bucks County farm scene that, coupled with South Lawn out my window, gives me a sense of being surrounded by nature and peace,” says Nancy.

Perspectives EDITED BY JULIANA ROSATI

Innovation and Insight through the Arts

The strength of our arts curriculum has long been a point of pride at George School. In the book *George School: The History of a Quaker Community*, the late Kingdon W. Swayne writes, “George School’s arts program had, from the beginning, been given more weight than was common in academic secondary schools at the time.” Our many graduates in the arts include actress Blythe Danner, composer and performer Meredith Monk, actor George Segal, and composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim. Our current arts program—with twenty-eight classes in ten different arts forms—represents a brilliant testament to this history.

In addition to updating our arts offerings as part of the recent curriculum review, we continue to update our thinking about creativity. Members of the George School faculty recently read a book by British author Sir Kenneth Robinson, an internationally recognized leader in the field of innovation. Entitled *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*, the book makes a compelling case for schools to intentionally develop creativity in young people. Citing a recent study by McKinsey Inc., Kenneth Robinson argues that when schools focus

on standardized test results and allow arts classes to be the first under the hatchet when funding gets tight, they contribute to a critical twenty-first-century shortage of business leaders who are able to adapt, to respond creatively to constantly changing circumstances, and to lead through uncertainty. “Creativity now is as important in education as literacy,” Kenneth Robinson argues, “and we should treat it with the same status.”

In this Perspectives section, we explore the ways in which arts classes at George School cultivate the kind of innovation and insight about which Kenneth Robinson writes. We look at what our graduates learned through studying the arts at George School, what role the arts play in their lives today, and how they have applied the creative qualities that they developed in arts classes. I think you will be as impressed as I am by the results.

Nancy Starmer

Perspectives

Alumni Build Lives in the Arts

BY KAREN DOSS BOWMAN

Cellist Tara Chambers '87 describes playing in the orchestra pit of *Among Friends* as her favorite and most powerful experience in the arts at George School. Ten years after the show, she began performing in orchestra pits on Broadway.

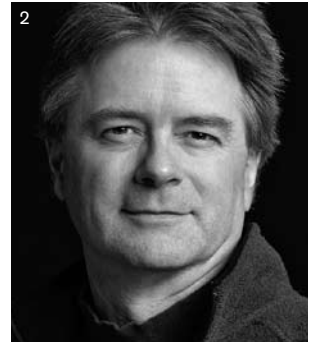
"I fell in love with that fabulous show," says Tara of *Among Friends*, a beloved 1984 production that was written, directed, and choreographed by George School students. "I still remember feeling sad when we performed the last show, as I didn't want it to end."

Since 1994, Tara has performed for several Broadway productions, including *Miss Saigon* and *Phantom of the Opera*. She recently performed as a member of the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular* orchestra and as cellist for the off-Broadway show *Signs of Life*.

"I still love being in the pit," Tara states. "It's a dream come true that I'm beyond grateful for."

Though Tara began taking music lessons as a child, it was at George School that she seriously began to consider pursuing a career in the arts. She's not alone. The arts program at George School has cultivated the talents of many of Tara's fellow alumni, inspiring them to pursue a life in the arts.

Painter and printmaker R. Michael Wommack '74 credits the inspiration for his career to the late George School art teacher John Sears. "John was responsible for nurturing my drawing and painting abilities," says Michael, whose work can be found in



the corporate collections of Johnson and Johnson, Dow Chemical, and other companies, as well as in various galleries and private collections. His recent art includes a series of pastel drawings that explore suburban America. "Through John's class, George School gave me an opportunity to immerse myself," remembers Michael. "I think George School was unique at the time in its devotion to and emphasis on the arts, and I benefited from that."

"Through John's class, George School gave me an opportunity to immerse myself. I think George School was unique at the time in its devotion to and emphasis on the arts, and I benefited from that."

Winter Miller '91, a playwright, recalls that former George School theater teacher Nelson Camp inspired her to view theater as a potential force for social change.

"He was really interested in art and activism, and how they intersected. He wanted us to think critically, and he wanted us to know about people who were not necessarily like us or like people we'd grown up with," Winter says of Nelson. "Looking back, that's just a good foundation for believing that theater is relevant and that the arts are relevant."

Winter's play *In Darfur* brings art and activism together to address the genocide in Sudan. To conduct research for the play, Winter traveled to the border of Sudan with *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof and interviewed genocide survivors. First produced by The Public Theater in New



ALUMNI ARTISTS 1. Tara Chambers '87,
2. R. Michael Wommack '74, 3. Winter Miller '91,
4. Anne Comfort Morrell Robinson '66.

York City, *In Darfur* has recently been published by Playscripts Inc. and is set to be produced by Washington DC's Theater J this April.

"I write plays to be in dialogue with people about questions I have about the human condition," says Winter, who holds an MFA in playwriting from Columbia University. In addition to Nelson Camp's classes, her professional life has a connection to George School's student newspaper, the *Curious George*. Once a contributor to the *Curious George*, Winter has written for publications such as the *New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, *Village Voice*, *Variety*, and the *Boston Globe*.

small organic farm and satisfy my need to create," says Anne, who earned a degree in equestrian studies from the nationally recognized program at Southern Seminary Junior College (now Southern Virginia University). "I had time between farm work and family duties to listen to my creative side."

When Anne's children grew up and left the farm, she phased out farming and concentrated full time on her art. Since she began quilting in 1971, she has made over 450 quilts. Anne teaches her craft to individuals, groups, and conferences across North America, and publishes her quilt patterns in books and magazines.

"Most of us have to come to the reality that actually making a living from art is seldom achieved without teaching or publishing. I had to be willing to accept living a simple life in return for doing my art."

Feeling inspired to build an artist's life is one thing, but actually making art the focus of one's life, and earning a living at it, isn't easy. Most artists do not land the most desirable jobs at first. Tara admits to taking on some "mediocre gigs" after she earned her master of music degree from the Manhattan School of Music in 1994, but says that she met some great contacts through those jobs and was able to get better work every year. Tara is able to earn a living in the arts, performing as a cellist for on- and off-Broadway productions, chamber music, orchestral concerts, and operas; and teaching twenty-five private piano students.

Internationally renowned and award-winning fiber artist Anne Comfort Morrell Robinson '66 took a different route, managing her family's farm for many years while beginning her quilting career.

"Gradually I slipped into a career in the arts as a way to supplement both my life and income on our

"Most of us have to come to the reality that actually making a living from art is seldom achieved without teaching or publishing," Anne observes. "I had to be willing to accept living a simple life in return for doing my art."

"Unconventional" is the way Michael Wommack describes the path he has taken to support his painting and drawing. After receiving his BFA from Temple University's Tyler School of Art, he made a living by doing commercial airbrush work.

"I was drawing every day, but I was using colors that I'd never use in my own work," he says. Then one day he got the call from renowned architect Robert Venturi, who asked him to airbrush a line of furniture. Michael has worked on commission for the architect since 1984, painting wall graphics in buildings such as the Sainsbury Wing at the National Gallery of Art in London, England; the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego,



5. Donzaleigh Abernathy '75,
6. Samuel Moyer '93

California; and the Nikko Kirifuri Resort in Nikko City, Japan.

Not everyone will appreciate an artist's work, and overnight success is rare. However, the true artist keeps putting his or her art into the world, according to actress, published author, and public speaker Donzaleigh Abernathy '75.

Custom furniture designer Samuel Moyer '93 echoes Donzaleigh's advice.

"Be fearless, be humble, and keep asking the hard questions, even if you can't see what the answers are. Work hard, work harder, and then you still haven't worked hard enough," he offers as wisdom for current George School students aspiring to

"If you truly believe that you can make this dream come to fruition because of your creativity and your artistic soul, you have to totally commit yourself to it and work unrelentingly."

"If you truly believe that you can make this dream come to fruition because of your creativity and your artistic soul, you have to totally commit yourself to it and work unrelentingly to be the best you can be and to put your art out there," says Donzaleigh. The daughter of civil rights leader Ralph David Abernathy, who was a close friend of Martin Luther King Jr., Donzaleigh starred for four years in the critically acclaimed Lifetime Television dramatic series *Any Day Now*. She has appeared in films such as *Gods and Generals*, *Don King: Only in America*, and *Murder in Mississippi*; and television shows including *Commander in Chief*, *EZ Streets*, and *Chicago Hope*. Also the author of *Partners to History*—a book about her father, Martin Luther King Jr., and the American Civil Rights Movement—Donzaleigh holds a BFA from Emerson College.

Donzaleigh notes that the most important step to making the arts the focus of one's life is learning the craft. "Aspiring artists need to follow their dreams, but with that dream comes the responsibility to be the best that you can possibly be," she says.

careers in the arts. Sam, who counts George School woodworking and furniture design teacher Carter Sio '76 as a mentor, has operated a furniture studio in downtown Los Angeles, California, for over six years and gained recognition for his creations in *Men's Vogue*, the *New York Times*, and *Real Simple* magazine. A graduate of Brown University, where he earned a dual bachelor's degree in literature and architectural studies, Sam creates his furniture by hand from sustainable materials.

"If you really love art and really are a creative person, you're working all the time—but it isn't work," Sam says. "It's living your life, and that's the best gift of all."

Alumni Profiles:**Sam Laybourne '93****What did you do after graduating from George School?**

I majored in English and American Studies at Wesleyan and then completed my master's at Columbia University Teachers College to teach high school English. When I was teaching I modeled my lessons and style on the classrooms of both John Gleeson and Terry Culleton. I brought art into my English classes and used an interdisciplinary approach to learning as a way to awaken my students' creativity. I found that when they were engaged creatively, the more technical work of critical analysis and vocabulary building were much easier to accomplish.

What are you doing now?

I am a TV and film writer, currently working on "Cougar Town" on ABC. In the past, I've written for shows like "Arrested Development" and "Aliens in America." I also recently sold "Rehab," to Twentieth Century Fox.

What attracted you to the field of arts?

Going to George School from a public school where I was on the "jock track" really opened my eyes. At George School the emphasis is on kids trying everything. We had permission to explore so many things—athletics, arts, science. You were rewarded for trying hard and having a positive attitude. No one was funneled into a specific niche. More importantly, it was cool to try new things. I could play on the football team and be part of the school's musical productions.

Was there an event or teacher at George School that continues to have an impact on your arts?

George School was where I found my creative spark. I especially enjoyed working with Michael Sherrin. Senior year I was the Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance*. I enjoyed his sense of play and even today I can still hear him laugh. His lessons about dialogue and comedic timing are especially helpful with my work now. He instilled a sense of professionalism in his students, expecting them to be on time, to work hard, and to do their best.

**Jody Krosnick Rodgers '79****What did you do after graduating from George School?**

I had planned to be a plastic surgeon since second grade and so after George School I went to Yale and majored in biology while continuing my flute lessons. After that, I took a year off from my medical studies to complete a master's in music at Yale. Playing the flute helped me listen differently—to feel myself in the middle of the orchestra. I hear the flute part with my whole body. After completing my master's, I stopped playing. I was addicted to playing and often I could spend eighteen hours a day practicing. I needed to turn my attention to my medical career.

What are you doing now?

I'm working as a reconstructive plastic surgeon near Jefferson City, Missouri. Our daughter, Carly Rodgers '12, attends George School.

Was there a particular event or teacher at George School that continues to have an impact on you?

John Sears had an amazing ability to teach his students how to see. We looked at things in three dimensions, took them apart, and put them back together. This cognitive function training helped us with our perception, creation of imagery, thinking, memory, and judgment. These skills are particularly important to reconstructive surgery.

Why did you decide to send Carly to George School?

It's the right place for her. She loves being there. George School is a magical place for adolescents who are in the throes of discovering who they are. Students at George School have permission to legitimize their dreams. They receive authentication from the community and feel safe in an environment that allows them to test their ideas.

Perspectives

Designer's Career Relies on Creativity

BY KAREN DOSS BOWMAN

Gia Sung '92 creates art for a living, but it isn't the kind one finds in a gallery. Her art—made from a combination of materials such as precious metals, luxurious leather, and rich wood—is found in the world's finest department stores and gift shops. As a packaging and product designer for international manufacturer A.T. Cross, Gia creates anything from ink pens to leather-bound journals and product packaging, turning practical, everyday items into keepsakes.

"When you pick up one of our products, you should feel the history and care that were placed in it. It should be an object you want to keep for a long time, give as a special gift, or pass down to future generations," Gia says.

While aesthetics are a key consideration for any artistic creation, Gia also has to consider the functionality of the products she designs. "As a designer, it's important to consider people's actions and perspectives before and after they're about to pick up a product, look at a photo or image, or enter a building," Gia observes.

Her job requires a high level of innovation, with attention to basic marketing principles. Ultimately, she must deliver on specific design goals set by the company. The materials she selects for each product, for example, ultimately affect the production costs for the company and the retail price for consumers. So her creative ideas must go beyond visuals and functionality to consider the bottom line.

"We have specific targets we have to hit on what the company needs in its products, so part of our job is delivering the best products, paying attention to quality and design, but within a certain group of



A.T. CROSS Masquerade pens and Signature journals are just two of the products designed by Gia Sung '92.

rules," Gia explains. "You have to be really creative about how to do that. The product has got to work and function correctly for the consumer and look good at the same time."

For Gia, producing art within such parameters is exciting and keeps her interest level high. She never saw herself as someone who would spend solitary hours creating paintings and drawings. Rather, she likes the challenge of meeting specific goals through design while collaborating with international teams of coworkers.

"It gives me more of a focus, and I like being able to make things that will come out on the market," she says. "I also like the process involved in making these products—it involves so many teams, including global partners." Because A.T. Cross is an international company, Gia and other members of her project teams may be separated by up to thirteen-hour time differences.



GIA SUNG '92 enjoys collaborating with different teams to create new items.

Though Gia has enjoyed creating art from a very early age—she is also a pianist—she credits George School with nurturing her artistic talents by exposing her to a wide variety of art forms, including photography, ceramics, woodworking, music, and painting and drawing. For most of her four years, Gia concentrated on painting and drawing classes. She also spent a year working on the staff of *Opus*, George School's yearbook, in a communication design class.

"The classes served as a great foundation and stepping-stone," she states. "If it weren't for that great foundation at George School, I'm not sure if I would have continued to be so passionate about pursuing art and design. I consider the George School arts program responsible for what I do in life now."

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At the time that Gia started looking at colleges, however, she was uncertain about whether to pursue a career in the arts. Former George School painting and drawing teacher Karen Cuchel advised her to choose a college with a strong academic program that included an emphasis on the arts. That led Gia to Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

Intrigued by Mount Holyoke's extensive foreign language programs, Gia started out as an international relations major. By the time she started taking economics classes, however, she realized the field wasn't the right fit for her. Following her sophomore year at Mount Holyoke, Gia had a summer internship with a marketing and packaging company.

During staff meetings, Gia recalls, she would sketch out her ideas on paper, and her coworkers often praised her art skills.

"Art kept calling me back," she says. Upon returning for her junior year, Gia switched her major to studio art and art history. After graduating from Mount Holyoke with a BA in 1996, Gia enrolled at Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island, where she studied furniture design and graphic design, earning a BFA. For the past decade, Gia has worked for manufacturing and design firms such as Swing Ltd., a manufacturer of fine home products, and Square Peg Design, an international design studio. Her projects have included everything from furniture and monument signs to stationery items and packaging.

Gia's eye for good design influences her life, she says, and it's impossible for her to go out into public places without noticing and analyzing the design work all around her—such as retail items and their packaging, or signs directing the flow of people around buildings. By closely examining design elements created by other people, Gia is able to gain insight into her own ideas about good design. Sometimes her ideas are altered by what she observes; sometimes they're reinforced.

"I don't think there's a day that goes by that I don't think about things that are visually compelling or visually boring to me," Gia remarks. Though Gia enjoys the process of product development—collaborating with different teams and coming up with ideas for new items that customers will like—one of the greatest rewards is seeing the practical application of her artistic designs. She finds it exciting to go into stores and see the items she designed on display and for sale.

"Being able to go out anywhere, to see your stuff actually out there in stores, and say, 'I did that,' is a great feeling," she says. "Those times when I'm in a café and see someone take out one of my notebooks and one of my pens—that's really rewarding."



EGOPO's year-long Samuel Beckett Festival included *Company*, *Endgame*, and *Waiting for Godot*.

Perspectives

Director Brings Innovation to Classic Theater

BY SONYA ARONOWITZ

As director of the Philadelphia-based classic theater company EgoPo, Lane J. Savadove '85 draws fresh insights from classic and sometimes-neglected texts. Admired for its imaginative, movement-based ensemble work and bold, risk-taking approaches to great literature, EgoPo has received critical acclaim during the current season for its year-long Samuel Beckett festival. Lane says that his drive to create "spectacular, unforgettable classic theater" is rooted in his time at George School, where he first studied ensemble work.

When Lane entered George School in tenth grade, he had already had a taste of theater; he had starred as a freshman in a high school production of *Blythe Spirit*. At George School, however, he found himself playing much smaller roles at first, and learning to embrace the spirit of ensemble work. On the sports field, too, he became immersed in teamwork for the first time—playing soccer, swimming, and rising to become captain of the golf team.

"My most formative experience at George School came from my fellow students," Lane shares.

"There was a generosity of spirit I had never experienced before."

Lane continues to foster that "generosity of spirit" through using an ensemble—a group of actors trained in movement-based techniques and largely attuned to one another—as the basis for his work. EgoPo has been an ensemble-based company since its founding in 1991, with each show cast from a core group of actors who train together year-round. Lane says that he also developed his abiding love for all aspects of theater—from digging deep into challenging texts to developing the joyfulness and play inherent in acting—at George School.

Lane completed a double major in theater and psychology at Haverford College in Haverford, Pennsylvania. When he graduated, he already had a strong vision of the theater he wanted to create, and a name, EgoPo, drawn from a French psychological phrase.

"EgoPo," Lane explains, "is derived from 'le moi peau,' the self that lives in the body." This means that the theater takes a movement-based approach. Lane teaches his own version of the acting technique Viewpoints, a method that arose from

the postmodern dance world. Viewpoints was developed by directors Anne Bogart and Tina Landau. It draws on the belief that by listening to the body and following one's physical impulses, the actor will find greater emotional truth in performance. Movement is not an accompanying note to the spoken word, but an integrated part of the life of the characters and the play. This places rigorous demands on the actor. For example, Lane recalls that he and actor Doug Greene tried over fifty iterations of the first five minutes of Beckett's *Endgame* before they knew they had perfected the movement.

Lane, who is known for his teaching and development of Viewpoints, says, "In theater, the bodies of the actors are by far the most expressive tool a director has." The beauty of expressive movement, he believes, is the reason why live theater can never be replaced by other media. "My goal is to bring this vital aspect of theater back to the surface," he says. Lane's approach does not aim to give movement precedence over the script. Instead, Lane explains, EgoPo relies on specific, poetic movement to elicit "the full poetic potential" of great texts.

Nick Anselmo, theater program director at Drexel University, says, "What's great about EgoPo is that they take an innovative physical approach to rarely produced classical work. This is what makes their work unique." EgoPo was in residence at Drexel University in 2008-09, where the company collaborated with students on a production of *The Bluebird* by Maurice Maeterlinck.

Lane teaches Viewpoints not only to EgoPo's actors, but also to his theater students at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, where he is currently an assistant professor. He has taught at several other universities, including Loyola University New Orleans, New York University, and Rider University.

EgoPo's innovations extend beyond acting technique to bold decisions about production concepts. This approach can completely transform the audience's experience of a text. One example is *The Maids x 2*, which Lane considers one of the company's most innovative works. Using the text of Jean Genet's two-character play *The Maids*, Lane rehearsed separate male and female casts, producing two different experiences of the text. He then put the two versions in a production, so that the play was staged twice in the same evening.

During the current season, EgoPo involved entire audiences in its adaptation of Samuel Beckett's short story "Company," which the theater originally produced as a radio play for National Public Radio. For the production, EgoPo invited



LANE J. SAVADOVE '85
draws fresh insights
from classic and
sometimes-neglected
texts.

attendees to bring blankets and pillows for a "Beckett slumber party." Audience members were led blindfolded into a room to lie on their backs and embody the role of the story's central character, an elderly man lying in the dark who hears an unidentified voice speaking about his childhood. EgoPo's actors spoke the words of the unidentified voice, adjusting audience members' bodies and whispering in their ears while describing scenes from the elderly man's life. The show won praise in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the *Philadelphia City Paper*. *Philadelphia Weekly* described it as "uniquely immersive," and a perfect example of EgoPo's brand of drama.

"I really like the challenge of great classical works," comments Lane, who holds an MFA in directing from Columbia University in New York City. "I want to bring the audience to the more difficult art, to serve as their guide."

The current season's success is a point of great pride for Lane. EgoPo was once based in New Orleans, where it had established itself as one of the city's most innovative companies. In August 2005, the company traveled to Philadelphia to participate in the Live Arts Festival. Then Katrina struck, destroying EgoPo's theater and everything the company owned.

"There is no guide to how you should recover from life being torn out from under you," says Lane. The only positive note was that Lane happened to be in his hometown when New Orleans was devastated, and it made sense to start the company again in Philadelphia.

Looking back over four years of hard work, Lane is proud of the company's achievements. He is excited by the prospect of reaching larger audiences for his work, and continuing to challenge himself, his ensemble, students, and audiences. He is also very thankful for the role George School played in his broad fortunes. "If it weren't for George School, I wouldn't be a professional theater artist," he states.

Perspectives

George School Enhances Arts Offerings

BY JULIANA ROSATI

George School has a long and vibrant history in the arts. Founded in 1893, the school offered thirteen arts courses by the time it had reached its fiftieth birthday. Today George School offers twenty-eight arts courses in ten different arts forms—dance studies, vocal and instrumental music, theater arts, stagecraft and design, ceramics, communication design, painting and drawing, photography, woodworking and furniture design, and video production. The arts curriculum includes various International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) options.

“I’m forever appreciative that I work at George School because it gives such support to the arts,” says Arts Department Head Pam Grumbach, who teaches painting and drawing and coordinates the IB visual arts program. “If you teach a serious approach to art, I believe you can help students to think creatively and independently in all subject areas.”

Pam describes the Arts Department faculty as “a community of art teachers who believe in the importance of mastering technical skills in all the media.” She also notes that the arts faculty strike an important balance between technique and ideas. In Pam’s painting and drawing assignments, for instance, once students have become experienced with a variety of media, she will ask them to produce a work that illustrates a particular concept—such as emergence, boundaries, or transformation.

“They have techniques they’ve learned, but the assignment pushes them to think creatively,” explains Pam, who has taught at George School for thirteen years.

According to Pam, the arts at George School offer valuable opportunities for students to think creatively, solve problems, give and receive feedback, and build confidence in a hands-on environment. Creativity and problem-solving are important in any artistic endeavor since there is no one answer to how students should arrive at a final

result, or what that result should be. “You have to work on an idea and pursue it, not knowing what the result is, and come up with improvements as you go,” Pam says.

Students in arts classes give and receive feedback in various ways. In the visual arts, this happens through in-class critique sessions where students are asked to share their work, listen to their fellow students’ reactions, and consider making improvements. “That’s a really important lesson,” Pam comments.

She notes that George School arts faculty provide individualized attention that helps students to build confidence in their work and themselves. “Teaching art opens the door to reach students at many different levels. The communication goes beyond the project and allows students to understand who they are,” Pam says.

In recent years, George School has made various enhancements to its already considerable arts offerings as a result of the school’s five-year curriculum review, conducted from 2002 to 2007. While the review changed the arts requirement from four years to three, it also added the option of taking two arts concurrently. Pam finds that many students enjoy the opportunity to take two arts at once.

Reilly Bergin-Pugh ’10 for example, completed her three required years of arts in two years, taking the Video Production and Painting and Drawing classes at the same time. Now she is surpassing her requirement by taking Scott Hoskins’s Advanced Video Production class.

“I enjoyed video so much, I decided to take it again this year,” she says. The advanced class will allow her to strengthen and refine her video-making skills while learning more complex techniques.

Pam reports that overall, the recent changes are intended to provide more choices and additional opportunities for in-depth study.



BRUCE WELLS

ARTS DEPARTMENT HEAD Pam Grumbach discusses brush stroke technique with Arielle Egan '09 and Capri Bronaugh-LaRocca '09.

New Opportunities Enhance Performing Arts Skills

The curriculum review resulted in new structures that allow theater and instrumental music teachers to instruct students in contexts that are not geared towards specific performances. Instrumental Music class now includes small-ensemble work in addition to the full orchestra rehearsals that prepare students for concerts. Similarly, the theater program now includes a Theater Arts class that focuses on acting techniques, while the established Theater Performance and Musical Theater classes yield productions of specific shows.

a string ensemble.” The ensembles are directed by instrumental music teachers Betsy Loughran and Steven Heitzer, while Karen Hollowell is director of the full orchestra.

Kobina Quaye '11 is a student in Theater Arts, taught by Maureen West, the coordinator of performing arts. He describes the class as “a wonderful source of acting language, history, tips, hints, and development” and observes that the class’s training helps actors to reach their fullest potential in the Theater Performance and Musical Theater shows.

A new music course entitled Fundamentals of Music Theory, History, and Style represents

“Educating for a new kind of world requires fostering a creative mindset. Our students will need to be able to access creative ideas and new solutions to solve the problems of the future.”

According to Pam, these new opportunities provide “what all performing arts teachers want—regular class meetings that are not tied to performances.”

Ahmin Chung '10, a violinist enrolled in Instrumental Music, reports that participating in a string ensemble allows her more time to focus on the nuances of string instruments. “It is so nice to learn how to play with other instruments similar to my own,” she says. “There is a very special sound to

another addition to the performing arts curriculum. Offered since the 2008-09 year, the course is taught by music teacher Jacqueline Coren. It is designed to provide an introduction to the elements of music and to prepare students for the IB Music Seminar, an advanced class in which students compose several works and participate in performances.

CALEB SAVAGE '11



ELIZABETH BROWN '10 manipulates her photograph in Danielle Picard-Sheehan's Digital Imaging class.

Visual Arts Course Offerings Expand

Changes to the curriculum in photography and ceramics have arrived as a result of the department's continual reevaluation of best practices. Starting in the 2010-11 year, a new Mixed Media Sculpture course will join the ceramics program, which currently includes Ceramics and Advanced Ceramics classes taught by the program's faculty, Judy Bartella and Amedeo Salamoni.

Another recent update is Alternative Photographic Processes, a class taught by photography teacher Danielle Picard-Sheehan. Formerly entitled "Advanced Photography," the course has been revamped to focus on a variety of techniques beyond traditional photography and digital imaging. One assignment this year asked students to create three-dimensional photographic sculptures to express an idea metaphorically. Tony Gao '10 of Shanghai, China, photographed children playing outdoors in Zhongba village, an area badly damaged in the May 2008 earthquake in Wenchuan, China. He printed the images on transparent film and placed them over the door and window openings of a small wooden house.

"I chose a wooden house as the sculpture to express the idea that 'we are all under one roof, and we are always willing to reach out our hands for the victims,'" explains Tony, who has done service work in Zhongba village three times, including one trip this past summer alongside participants in George School's Global Service Program.

New Recognition for Role of Teamwork and Physical Activity

As another result of the curriculum review, seniors can fulfill their team activity requirement through a class in stagecraft, chorale, dance studies, theater performance, instrumental music, musical theater, or communication design. In addition, dance

classes now count towards the physical activity requirement. Previously these obligations could be met only through athletics or physical education. Students agree that the changes make sense.

Ian Culleton '11, a member of Scott Hoskins's Stagecraft class, explains that he and his classmates must work together to create and move stage equipment effectively. "In my opinion, teamwork is not just an important part of stagecraft, it is possibly *the most* important part," states Ian. "You trust your classmates because you have no other choice. You cannot do your job right, or even at all, without their help."

Caitlin Brimmer '10, who is enrolled in Dance Studies 5 taught by dance teacher Barb Kibler, says, "Teamwork in dance studies is just a given. We help each other develop as dancers, and improve our skills and our technique. We collaborate with choreography." She adds, "It also is just like a sports team as far as the physical demands, cooperation, patience, and relationships."

Inky Sul '12, a student in Chorale, a performance ensemble directed by Jacqueline Coren, observes, "A song in Chorale can only come out well when everyone is doing their best."

In conclusion, perhaps the best result of the recent changes is the continued enthusiasm and commitment of students. According to Pam, George School's arts program prepares students for a life with art in it, whether as an artist, a participant, or an engaged observer. But she also believes that the arts have an important role to play overall in preparing students for life in the twenty-first century. "Educating for a new kind of world requires fostering a creative mindset," Pam says. "Our students will need to be able to access creative ideas and new solutions to solve the problems of the future."

SUSAN HOSKINS '71



IB VISUAL ARTS STUDENTS enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of Philadelphia's murals and public art, leaving with an understanding of the complexities of mural-making.

IB Visual Arts Seminar Added to Curriculum

BY JULIANA ROSATI

George School arts students can take courses leading to the International Baccalaureate (IB) exams in Visual Arts, Theater Arts, Music, and Dance. The IB program's extraordinary and challenging curriculum often results in college credit for students who take exams in six subjects to earn the full diploma, and students who take individual exams to earn subject-specific certificates.

While IB arts at George School aren't new, the recent curriculum review did add a new component to the ways that students prepare for the IB Visual Arts exam, the IB Visual Arts Seminar. Composed of a weekly meeting and weekend trips to museums and galleries, the seminar brings together the IB students from the seven different disciplines that lead to the Visual Arts exam: stagecraft, ceramics, painting and drawing, photography, video production, woodworking and furniture design, and com-

munication design. The seminar provides the opportunity for students to focus on their investigation workbooks, also known as research journals, which are a key part of the IB Visual Arts exam.

"I want kids to realize that the passion, creativity, planning, and reasons people create are similar across the arts," says Arts Department Head Pam Grumbach. Through the seminar, she explains, "students who don't necessarily take the same art can feed information across the disciplines."

Pam coordinates the seminar with George School English teacher Eric Wolarsky. Eric, who taught art history earlier in his career, gives lectures in the seminar about topics that cross all arts disciplines. Through the lectures and field trips, Pam and Eric add to the material that students can draw upon as they write and sketch in their IB research journals. In addition, photography teacher Danielle Picard-Sheehan, George School's gallery coordinator, arranges for guest artists who exhibit on campus to speak to the seminar students.

The research journals are intended as a place for students to reflect on projects as they progress, plan future projects, and examine the work of established artists. They count for 40 percent of the IB Visual Arts exam grade, recently increased from 30 percent by the International Baccalaureate Organization. The remaining 60 percent is based on the students' artwork. The journals and artwork are assessed by the appropriate George School visual arts teachers and an external examiner to produce the exam grade.



WORK BY STUDENT ARTISTS 1. Isabella Zhang '10, 2. Ann Lemmo '10, 3. Bryce Miller '12, 4. Jyoti Arvey '10



“I want kids to realize that the passion, creativity, planning, and reasons people create are similar across the arts.”

IB visual arts students begin their journals in the summer after the sophomore year. Eric reports that when he looked at seniors’ journals this winter, he saw that in many cases their work had transformed dramatically over the course of the book.

“This shows you that the journal is authentic in the sense that it’s making kids actually reflect on their work,” he observes. Students echo his statement.

Nell Sweeney '10, a student in Gretchen Nordleaf-Nelson’s Communication Design class, says of the journals, “I think it’s an opportunity for people to explore the facet of art they enjoy the most, be it art history, technique, or composition.” Nell is a senior editor of the *Curious George*, George School’s student newspaper, which the students in Gretchen’s class produce.

Tyler Porten '11, enrolled in Pam’s Advanced Painting and Drawing class, says, “By flipping

through the book, I can see my progress of skill, and also of my analytical thoughts on artwork.” Tyler is strongly considering a college major in graphic design or illustration.

Myra Jacobs '11, a student in Advanced Woodworking and Furniture Design taught by Carter Sio '76, developed her own set of aesthetics through reflecting on furniture makers in her IB journal.

“I learned that I like creating bright, colorful, and textured things out of wood,” says Myra, who is considering a career in architecture. An example of Myra’s style is an Eiffel Tower-shaped lamp that she created in Carter’s class. She filed the wooden surfaces of the lamp to make horizontal markings. Then she painted the lamp in layers of purple and turquoise and sanded it to produce a multicolored effect.

Perspectives

eQuiz Highlights

The December eQuiz asked alumni to share their experiences in the arts at George School and beyond. Some of the responses are highlighted here. Thank you to the 233 alumni who participated.

Skills and Lessons Learned in the Arts

1956 | NATALIE SCULL WATKINS

Discipline, practice, patience, deep understanding of the work at hand, cooperation with others, striving for the best—these were all necessary preparation for a good performance. They are traits that can easily be transferred to other aspects of life.

1959 | NICHOLAS SPIES

I learned to never be fearful of failure before trying, and then [to try] my utmost until I succeeded. A corollary of this is to realize that nearly everyone else is fearful of failing as well, so life's playing fields are more level than most suspect.

1965 | VIRGINIA W. WALDEN

My art classes with Ruth Pleasanton inspired my life with possibilities and the skills to make them real. As I developed skills, I developed confidence in how to express my feelings and emotions and my ideas. This skill has carried over into all areas of my life and has spread into a gift for teaching the arts as well. My art skills and explorations have kept me sane and connected to my center, my Inner Self, in our challenging world of today.

1968 | MOIRA EITZEN HAAG

Theater is one of the collaborative arts, and is a great place to learn the value of each member of any team or working group, in addition to offering its variety of creative outlets...The arts and creative writing, which I also very much enjoyed at GS, are an important part of a complete education. Testing new ideas, and finding new ways to look at the world around us are always valuable experiences.

1969 | JOHN C. WIDENMEYER

As a scientist, I have come to recognize an ability that some have to step beyond the formula and leap to the answer. Medicine contains the artist's ability to be creative and inspired.

1969 | DAVID R. WILLIAMS

I am a teacher and educational leader. The acting skills learned at GS have increased my effectiveness in communicating by orders of magnitude. Further, as a science major in college, I continued to take acting classes as a means of balancing my mental and emotional being. Too much left brain needed a bit of right brain to offset it. Karma balancing dogma, if you will.

1972 | BARBARA P. WINN

Anything worth doing is worth doing well. Striving for excellence in all things, whether it's your particular talent or not, makes the world a better place. Imagination, creativity, and high standards are surprisingly welcome (and sometimes a welcome surprise) in non-artistic settings.

1977 | PAMELA HOWARD GOFFMAN

Autonomy and collaboration are highly transferrable skills. In teaching me autonomy, my experience gave me confidence to try out my ideas without fear of failure. In teaching me collaboration, [my experience allowed me] to learn how to really listen to others, self advocate, compromise, or put my own ideas aside to try someone else's.

1988 | TIMOTHY (TIM) CASE

Scott Hoskins was among the most influential teachers I had in four years at GS. I learned a great deal about finding balance in life while being deeply involved in one activity. He taught me about prioritization and focus, and finding joy in group craft-making.

1988 | LAUREN YUSEM GUMS

I was the photography editor of the yearbook. The experience taught me a lot about working with others, and experiencing and appreciating their work through their eyes—something I do every day in my job as a healthcare administrator in quality.

1988 | ARIELLE SAIBER

I loved all my visual art classes and teachers, even though I was not good at drawing, painting, or ceramics. I fared better with stagecraft, audio-visual crew, and the yearbook (I was the editor my senior year). I learned a great deal from [these arts],

especially with regard to organization, focus, teamwork, patience, and problem-solving. I also learned a number of technical things (lighting, sound) that fascinated me. I think my love of technology grew, in part, out of my work in these arts.

1990 | D. SCOTT COLLINS

[I learned] patience and perseverance. You have to be willing to put a lot of hours into a woodworking project, which is what it takes now in the working world.

1991 | ELIZABETH EVANS RYLANDER

I stood up and auditioned for vocal groups, in and after college. I stood up and left a college I didn't like. I stood up to give a presentation at a conference during law school. I stood up and argued in court. Just standing up is still the hardest part.

1995 | DASHIELL D. FLYNN

The most important skill I learned is to always look for other solutions or other ways of presenting your ideas.

2003 | DAVID (SAM) METCALF

I have found that creative thinking is essential not only to self-expression and observing visual and spatial relationships, but also to almost every thought process that requires analysis, whether it be semiological or scientific. The skills I developed through art were particularly helpful in studying literature and visualizing information.

2007 | JAMES (JIM) TOGGWEILER

I'd say studying art in general has fostered a great deal of patience in me. More so than in other areas of study, dedicated and long-term artistic study truly impresses upon the artist the simple lesson that if you practice something (anything), you will get better at it, and also serves as a very clear medium for that progress to be observed by the artist and by others.

2009 | JOANN RIKER

The most valuable technique I learned from theater teacher Maureen West was Meisner's "in the moment" acting method. It helped my growth not only as an actor but also as a person. It also has given me an edge over the other international business majors because I am prepared to react calmly and instinctively to problems I am given, and to the mock interviews we have to do in class.

Memories of GS Arts

1948 | ANN RIDGE ADAMS

[Leah] Perkins: her devotion to art and the practices of the various media. "Uncle Jack" Talbot and his instruction in writing. I have gone on to short story writing and entered successfully in various competitions.

1949 | DAVID BINDER

I learned to work closely with about twenty classmates to design, write, and edit our class yearbook and to appreciate their talents and dedication to a highly original creation...I became a professional newspaperman where I used both writing and editing skills I practiced at George School.

1955 | DAVID W. ATKINSON

Jack Talbot [taught me that] written music is only one way of presentation of a piece. Changes in time and value of notes, while retaining the original melody, can often enhance a performance. Jack provided this insight for my solo in the "Lowland Sea" production in 1955. I continue to use this thought in all of my musical theater experiences.

1956 | CAROLYN BUCKMAN HENNIGE

William Cleveland and [Lylburn] Steele taught me to try new approaches and explore different talents that were rewarding then and now.

1957 | JEROME H. MAJZLIN

Our class established a lab theater in the basement of Main. We produced, directed, and acted every week. It was like a repertory company; it taught us ensemble work and professional attitudes. [In particular I] learned the skills of pantomime and excelled in it, [eventually] directing a mime show, "Silence is Golden," with other students performing original mimes. . . . GS provided for me the most creative environment for the arts to flourish, both curricularly and extra-curricularly. My GS teachers were highly skilled not only in their fields, but (testifying as a professional teacher myself) were superior teachers.

1958 | MIRIAM MARECEK

Dorothy Wills, our home economics teacher, gave me a gift for a lifetime. She taught me how to sew. I made my own white graduation dress and continued to sew all my clothes in college and throughout my life. She made the class so enjoyable—we had fashion shows in the auditorium with lively

music....[Dorothy] nurtured our gifts and helped me enter a national contest where I won The Homemaker of the Year award but I did not tell anyone at GS for fear I would be teased. What a wonderful teacher she was!

1958 | GEORGE L. PICKERING

Palmer Sharpless helped me understand and appreciate the practical applications of mechanical drawing and woodworking skills. He encouraged me to follow my interests that eventually led me from an industrial design position with a large corporation into public school education.

1959 | ELIZABETH (BETSY) BONNER ZIMMERMAN

Richard Lafean taught ceramics. His willingness to open the studio to students such as myself at all times of the day or weekend, outside of class, was my first glimpse of dedicated teaching. It allowed me to begin to work independently and discover my own path of creativity and then to fall in love with clay....Being treated with respect and equality was immensely important for women then, and it happened so easily and calmly that it wasn't really apparent until college. Knowing that I had a voice that counted and could speak up for my interests was not just something that came from the arts environment, but from the entire GS experience. The ceramic studio was simply the first place I recognized it.

1961 | DAVID W. FRASER

Ken Burton taught me to draft carefully. Palmer Sharpless tried to teach me to clean up after myself.

1964 | DEBORAH TEEL BRADLEY

My involvement in the arts at GS was entirely in music. The music director/teacher at the time was [Richard] Averre....He was supportive both musically and personally.

1967 | S. DAVID MILLER

[Ernestine] Robinson gave her students an appreciation of some of the lost arts of life: proper grammar and usage, the power of the printed word, meeting deadlines, and [making certain that] whatever you print is factually correct....I've always been blessed to be able to write wherever I worked, be it for trade journals, company newsletters, training manuals, etc. When I was retired for a few years, I was even able to go back to sports writing for a newspaper in North Carolina.

1969 | ELIZABETH (LIZA) SHOREY MYERS
Betty Powell taught me to be tenacious.

1972 | ANDREW P. RIVINUS

Palmer Sharpless taught me drafting, woodshop, and stagecraft. He taught both the design element, how to create it, and the implementation element, how to bring the idea to life. Then he taught me how to use the tools to do both. Palmer taught me about the raw materials, how to apply them, and how to pick them. I still use the desk I built at George School (featured in the *George School Bulletin*, September 1972) nearly every day. Those skills have served me continuously for forty years in everything from industrial/home design and improvement to artistic/recreational construction.

1975 | SARAH M. LOWE

Lars Clutterham taught a terrific music history class to a small group of us in 1975. I remember the last trimester began with Chopin and ended with jazz! It was amazing to see how he linked what I had thought of as "classical" music with popular music.... By ninth grade, I knew I wanted to study art history. I attended Vassar College, which has an excellent program, and received a PhD in art history from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. I have published six art books.

1977 | M. ELIZABETH HAWKINS WINNINGHAM

Esther Curtis taught me to believe in myself.

1980 | LAURENCE (LARRY) HEINEMANN

I certainly had my confidence in myself as a musician boosted by music teachers John Brobeck and Michael Sherrin at a key time in my life. I was not virtuosic by any stretch of the imagination but I was enthused and competent. Their enthusiasm for music in general and my potential in particular allowed me to take the possibility of making music as a lifelong pursuit seriously!... After two years of both musical and non-musical study at Oberlin College I left to go to New York City where I have worked as a professional musician, composer, and recording engineer, most notably as a founding member of Blue Man Group.

1980 | SARAH (SALLY) E. JURAM

Tom Goss taught us the technical aspects of photography, but also was brilliant at encouraging creative work, which gave us important perspective in the high school years.

1981 | TIMOTHY (TIM) RAYEL

Director of Theater Arts Hank Hackett had a great way of communicating acting skills from the basic to the advanced. I started in college as an actor and transitioned quickly into theatrical management, but even twenty-eight years later, I still rely on the skills I learned with Hank.

1985 | BETSY A. ROSENMILLER

John Sears had a true love of art that was conveyed to the students. His excitement about the arts was contagious, and his support and encouragement gave me a lot of confidence.

1992 | AMISH C. MORRELL

I have great memories of both first year ceramics, and even more so, of photography with Mark Osterman. I now teach art theory and criticism at the university level, including the theory and history of photography, so Mark played an important role in encouraging these interests. When his students were at the developing sink or in the darkroom, he was often experimenting with historical processes. The thing that was most interesting about Mark was that he was as much a performer as he was a photographer, and it was amazing to be caught up in his eccentric, romantic, and often comic world of reenactment. When I teach the history of photography, I do a week on historical reenactment, and always show Mark's work, including a photo of his "Dr. Barnabus Bumstead" medicine show, that he sometimes put on during Harvest Weekend.

1993 | RACHEL PICKERING COPENHAVER

I learned to find the beauty of the unexpected and imperfect—Judy Bartella was not only my ceramics teacher, but also my co-op supervisor. Sometimes what came out of the kiln bore little resemblance to what I had hoped would come out. Judy's critiques always helped me see a different side of my work. I still try to use that sort of eye today to find beauty in objects, people, and motion.

1993 | EVE GIGLIOTTI

I have a distinct memory of sitting on the floor of [Michael Sherrin's] office, next to his piano. He kept on playing the notes higher and higher, and I kept on singing. I had no idea how high I was singing, but it was easy (I wish it still was that easy!). Michael looked at me with this smirk on his face. He told me later that I needed to go straight to New York and to study opera. But I wanted to be Bette

Midler—I had no idea what opera was. Regardless, two years later, at eighteen years old, I had rented an apartment and enrolled in the Manhattan School of Music. I was studying opera and I still am. Michael was right. I still have the miniature Italian ceramic bouquet of flowers he gave me for graduation. Even though he is gone, he continues to give me flowers every day. . . . I am a working professional opera singer. I am making my Metropolitan Opera debut this spring, as well as my Avery Fischer Hall debut.

1994 | SAMUEL (SAM) BERGMAN

Chorale taught me the kind of teamwork skills I never seemed to grasp in a sports or classroom setting, and instilled in me for the first time a love of singing. . . . I've been a professional musician since graduating from college, and for the last ten years, I've been a member of one of America's top symphony orchestras.

1996 | MELICIA ESCOBAR

I always felt that my woodshop experience was unique from that of my friends at other schools. Not only did woodworking teacher Carter Sio give me a thorough foundation in working and being creative with wood, but he also impressed upon me an appreciation for natural element itself and the function and meaningful objects that one could create. One of my most favorite days at GS was a tour through the local woodworker George Nakashima's studios and gallery, which Carter arranged for our class.

2000 | JODY LEE LIPES

The first year GS offered a video class, Scott Hoskins put a camera in my hand. That experience completely changed my life; I've worked as a filmmaker since I graduated from high school. Scott gave me a Maglite when I graduated from GS, and I used that as a film lighting technician when I first finished college. I still think about the basics that I learned from him every day. . . . I went to NYU's Tisch School of the Arts filmmaking program. I work as a director and cinematographer. . . . I just directed and shot a movie for PBS's *Great Performances*. It is a scripted adaptation of a Jerome Robbins ballet that is considered the abstract counterpart to *West Side Story* (which Jerry also created, choreographed, and directed).

2002 | LAUREN S. MESHKOV

Jackie Coren was a great music teacher and always encouraged us to pursue the arts. I so much enjoyed singing in her chorale and community chorus....I continued singing in the University of Pennsylvania chorale, university-wide chorus, and chamber music ensemble. I also received a BA in music theory and composition in 2006. Although I am now in medical school, I would never exchange my musical studies for anything!

2009 | GRACIANNA R. COSCIA

Dance teacher Barb Kibler taught me many things throughout my career at George School. I studied dance at George School and am now going to Temple University as a dance major. [Barb] taught me a lot about technique, but most important, I learned to see dance as an art. Dance at George School was a journey for me. I did not start out seeing dance as a form of art. By the end of my George

School career, Barb Kibler had taught me so much about myself, my art, and my own expression, and opened my eyes to choreography.

2009 | AVIVA I. DINTENFASS

Among the many valuable lessons [that painting and drawing teacher Pam Grumbach] taught me, was that everything needs to be balanced. There must be both freedom and discipline in art. Or, at least, in any art that the greater world should understand.

2009 | ERIC R. ENGELHARDT

Orchestra teacher Karen Hallowell was always a good influence in orchestra and always pushed us to excel.

Responses may have been edited due to space limitations and Georgian style guidelines.

Alumni Profile:**Sarah Kemp Newton '96****What did you learn through the arts at George School?**

I learned the value of artistic expression and the power of the arts to uplift and to add meaning to the human experience.

Have you been able to use the skills you gained from George School arts in non-artistic settings?

Yes. Mastery in any art form refines important skills like creative improvisation, problem solving, and analysis, and improves the ability to focus and pay attention to detail.

Did you learn something particularly valuable from a George School arts teacher?

Nancy Glassey [Williams] taught me the basics of ceramics and instilled a lifelong love of the artistic process and functional pottery. This was by far my most valuable learning experience at George School.

How have you pursued your interest in the arts since graduating from George School?

I majored in fine arts and minored in arts administration at the University of Oregon. I have continued to make ceramics over the years while working in arts administration. My most recent position was director of programs and technology at the Society for the Arts in Healthcare in Washington DC. The society's mission is to transform the health care experience by connecting people with the power of the arts at key moments in their lives. This rapidly growing field integrates the arts—including literary, performing, and visual arts and design—into a wide variety of healthcare and community settings for therapeutic, educational, and expressive purposes.

What are you doing now?

I married Adam Newton and we purchased our first home in Washington DC last year. We started Square Axis, a web development and graphic design company and I am making plans to set up a ceramics studio at our new house.

Are there any other thoughts you would like to share?

I've spent time in a lot of ceramics studios since graduating from George School. The facilities at GS are by far the best that I've worked in.



Talented Cast Revives West Side Story

Under the hot stage lights of Walton Center Auditorium, thirty-six students in George School's Musical Theater class practice and block the final scene of *West Side Story*. Maria cradles Tony, who has just died in her arms, shot by a rival gang member. While grieving for the love of her life, she must decide if she will seek revenge or use the moment to bring two warring gangs together in peace. There isn't a dry eye in the house.

"I find that the play resonates with the values we learn at George School. It's about stepping outside of who you are and trying to understand the other person's perspective," says theater teacher Maureen West.

"Issues of discrimination, prejudice, violence, and generational differences continue to plague our society in the twenty-first century," continues Maureen. "By revisiting artistic works such as *West Side Story*, we remain committed to overcoming the forces that divide us."

Adapted from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the play is about two teenagers, Maria and Tony, who meet and fall in love although connected to rival gangs. When a fight for control over the neighborhood is planned, Maria asks Tony to stop it. Despite Tony's best efforts, events spin out of control and he is killed.

The collaborative idea for *West Side Story* was born in 1949 between Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein. Together, they wanted to write a musical with depth, perception, and a social point of view. From the onset, the pair planned to make the musical a contemporary version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Their first idea was to be called *East Side Story*, a love story between a Jewish girl and a Catholic boy on New York's East Side, a work intended to point out the poison of prejudice. The project was put aside.

Approximately six years later, a huge migration of Puerto Ricans into New York's extreme west side had taken place. *East Side Story* now became *West Side Story*, addressing the intense hostility between New Yorkers and the new Hispanic immigrants. Of particular interest to the show's authors was the fact that this aggression seemed to affect the young even more than it did the old. Bernstein originally intended to write both the music and the lyrics but instead hired Stephen Sondheim '46 to write the words. Although a recognized writer for television, Stephen Sondheim's *West Side Story* would mark his first contribution to the theater at the young age of twenty-five.

"*West Side Story* is really a director's dream in that the story is still relevant today, and the music is

one of the best scores in musical theater,” says student director Donna Hordis ’10.

The commitment of the student performers brought *West Side Story* alive with passion and focus. Julie O’Mara ’11, who played Maria, made everything look effortless, from her giddy romanticism in “I Feel Pretty” to the overwhelming grief that defines the end of the show. As Tony, Martin Roza ’10 did an excellent job of conveying his character’s complicated emotions, trying to balance his love for Maria and his loyalty to his gang, the Jets.

“Working with Maureen was truly a treat. She leaves room for us to grow, and for the actor to develop their characters individually,” says Julie. “Just saying the lines doesn’t deliver a good performance.”

Ryan Krocker ’11 rose to the challenge of his difficult role as Bernardo, leader of the Sharks, an extremely aggressive and violence-prone teen who must be responsible for keeping his people safe in a new, unfriendly community. In her performance as Anita, Liz Reynolds ’11 was electric. She was brash, flirty, and full of life.

“Probably the best thing that happened during the process was how the cast really grew into a family,” enthuses Liz. “Everyone was supporting each other 100 percent of the time. That’s an amazing experience to have. I feel close to every cast member. Only a few of us knew each other before *West Side Story* but by the end, we were truly a family.”

The other individuals in the cast were believable gang members, pacing nervously, snapping their fingers, shaking their fists, and moving across the stage as tension built. Some of the musical highlights included a rousing “America” and a funny, robust “Officer Krupke,” full of attitude with Bryce Miller ’12 singing the lead. Maddy Wiley ’13 expressed the show’s underlying theme of hope with her rendition of “Somewhere.”

“When I was little, my dad used to bring me to see George School productions,” says Maddy of her father, George School science teacher Mark Wiley. “That’s how I got my theatrical education.” Maddy recalls that she and her best friend Chandler Rex ’13, who played one of the Sharks, used to tell each other “When we go to George School we’re going to be on that stage together!” Maddy reflects, “I guess we just fulfilled a childhood dream.”

“Leonard Bernstein’s score is very challenging—both technically and emotionally,” comments music teacher Jacqueline Coren. “It has been exciting to watch the students absorb the music and make it their own.”

The actors were accompanied by an orchestra that was composed of community members, including violinist Ahmin Chung ’10.

Eleven students in George School Stagecraft classes made up the well-oiled stage crew. They performed seamlessly, aided by the modern set and lighting design. “The play is about territory—capturing it and defending it. Our set design helped the actors define their respective home turfs,” explains stagecraft teacher and designer Scott Hoskins. “The design was very monochromatic and somewhat dreary so the love story stood out. Most of the color came from the costumes and the lighting.”

“The cast and the crew have an immense pride in their work and an insane amount of dedication to this production,” says stage manager Liz Bitzer ’10. “Once they left the stage, the actors were pacing the hallways and rehearsal spaces practicing over and over. Members of the crew reviewed their cues in the same way.”

“With this production I learned that theater truly is a collaborative art form—that the whole is as great as the sum of its parts.”

“With this production I learned that theater truly is a collaborative art form—that the whole is as great as the sum of its parts,” continues Liz. “I also was introduced to the challenges that actors face, and the immense commitment that every single one of them has for the show.”

Pre-production started last November, with more than seventy-five talented students auditioning for the available roles. The cast rehearsed for two to three hours a day, five days a week, for three months before the performance, with many students spending extra time with vocal and acting coaches, as well as with choreographers.

“Our focus this year is on the impact of language on acting,” explains Maureen. “*West Side Story* is a classic. Its language helps define the conflicts and the differences between old and new, between teens and adults, and between the Sharks and the Jets.”

Especially compelling for Maureen is the message of hope at the end of the play. “I want people to leave the performance with hope for the future and the ability to see that each of them can make a difference,” she says.



JUDITH LAVORI KEISER '78 AND TOD RUTSTEIN '79 as Maria and Tony in the 1978 production of *West Side Story* at George School.

Alumni Recall Their Own West Side Stories

West Side Story was performed at George School four times previously—in 1971, 1978, 1986, and 2001.

The play's message of hope was just as relevant at George School then as it is today and members of each production continue to hold fond memories of the experience.

BARBARA WINN '72: I had the privilege of playing Maria in 1971 under Michael Sherrin's direction. I had braces on my teeth at the time! My roommate told me that every girl at school wanted to murder me because I got to be kissed by Lark Madden, the senior boy playing Tony!

LARRY PASSMORE '72: I was a Shark. I believe I shellacked my red hair black. I adored the music, and loved being part of the production.

MARGO GARRISON '72: I was in the dancing chorus, playing one of the Sharks' girlfriends. My particular contribution was my wolf whistle, using two fingers in my mouth. We wore these rather tight and slinky dresses and I remember worrying that I would fall while wearing some very high heels.

LAUREN MESHKOV '02: I played the role of Maria in 2001. Although it was a lot of work balancing school, sports, and the show, it was one of the most rewarding experiences I had at GS. As always, I made lots of new friends and was so proud of everyone involved in the production.

HENRY (HANK) HACKETT FFAC: I directed *West Side Story* in 1978 and it was one of the highlights of my career. An amazing cast who worked so hard I almost couldn't believe it, wonderful musicians with Michael Sherrin at the helm, the fabulous dance teacher Sarah Bailey, who did the choreography. But it was the kids...they were just amazing. Just amazing.

LAURENCE HEINEMANN '80: I was an electric bassist in the pit orchestra in the 1978 production.

MAJORIE LANE '71: It is still one of my fondest memories of high school.

SHIRWIL SCHULTZ '71: I played Anita. It was the perfect role. I had been dancing since I was five, been involved with music on varying levels since I was six, and started theater at GS the year before. Michael was so good as the director, getting us all involved and into the roles. He had all of us dancing and singing our hearts out.

VALERIE KESTER '72: I was in the orchestra pit. I remember the cast members—Barbara Winn '72, Lark Madden '71, John Bassert '72. They made Lark dye his beautiful blonde hair black and when the dye wouldn't come out, he shaved his head! Anything Michael Sherrin had a hand in was glorious.

Celebrate Your Days at George School

Alumni Weekend May 7, 8, and 9, 2010



BRIAN WOZNIAK '05

Calling all graduates from the Classes of 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005! Celebrate your five-year reunion at Alumni Weekend, May 7, 8, and 9, 2010.

All alumni, students, parents, faculty, and friends are invited to attend Alumni Weekend activities. Whether you come for a fascinating master class, a memory-filled class luncheon, a special tour of our new Mollie Dodd Anderson Library, a relaxing reception with friends, or an enlightening stroll down memory lane, join us to make sure you don't miss out on everything George School.

Register online at <http://www.georgeschool.org/alumniweekend>. Alumni Weekend registration is located in Main Lobby. Make this your first stop to pick up your Alumni Weekend name badge, confirm your schedule, and receive other materials.

On Friday, May 7, start your day with Flash-back Friday while you visit classrooms and favorite teachers, attending classes just as you did as a George School student. Then join us for our assembly at 10:20 a.m. in Walton Center. At 8:00 p.m. come to the Class of 1983 Café in the Anderson Library for the Open Mike, a perennial favorite, where alumni and current students share music, stories, poetry, and more.

On Saturday, May 8, join alumni and faculty for breakfast in our new library at 8:30 a.m. The morning continues with master classes (see page 48 for the schedule), an alumni-student tennis scrimmage at the tennis courts, and children's activities on South Lawn.

Our All-Alumni Gathering begins at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday in the meetinghouse with the Head of School address, and presentation of reunion gifts and alumni awards. This year George School is pleased to honor Karen Sulzberger '70 and Donaldson Romeo '80. (See the next two pages.)

Saturday afternoon begins with lunch and reunion class photos followed by an equestrian demonstration and alumni games featuring boys' baseball and lacrosse, and girls' softball and lacrosse. At 3:30 p.m. we gather in the meetinghouse for memorial meeting for worship to celebrate the lives of deceased classmates and friends, faculty, and staff.

On Sunday, May 9, meeting for worship is held in the meetinghouse at 10:45 a.m.

*Alumni Award Recipient:***Karen
Sulzberger '70****BY ANDREA LEHMAN**

"History is not inevitable," says Karen Sulzberger '70. "We are all part of making it." Learning about history, she goes on, should not be "about dates but about understanding individuals and the choices they make." Through her own career choices, Karen has made a little history of her own. More than ten years ago, she became inspired by Facing History and Ourselves, an educational and professional development program that guides teachers and students to examine the role of prejudice, apathy, and fear in history. She spearheaded efforts to bring the program to Los Angeles area schools, and by doing so, has helped make history more meaningful for thousands of students.

Karen was not always interested in history, nor particularly aware of the impact of racism on it. She did not learn about the Holocaust—one of the main topics addressed by Facing History—at the New York City girls' school she attended previously. George School, she discovered, was a better fit for her. "I loved the feeling of George School. The teachers smiled at you. You were encouraged to be creative and thoughtful, and they allowed the students to stand up for themselves in a peaceful way. George School allowed me to be myself for the first time."

At George School, Karen also found her inner artist. She went on to study art history at Tufts University and to positions at the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington DC, and the California/International Arts Foundation, after

moving to Los Angeles with her husband, the writer Eric Lax. Then, serendipitously, she learned of Facing History.

The Facing History organization, itself more than thirty years old, has grown from a grassroots effort to an international one. At its core is a program of professional development whose goal is "helping classrooms and communities worldwide link the past to moral choices today." Though rooted in the Holocaust, the program deals with varied historical events and issues related to prejudice, from the U.S. internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II to homophobia. Facing History has even helped Rwandan educators address how to teach about the genocide there. As Karen explains, "Facing History technically may be a professional development program for teachers, but in actuality it is a personal development program for all who come in contact with it... I came to understand that 'strangers' aren't strange. We just haven't met them yet."

In addition to helping found the Los Angeles chapter, Karen served as chair of its board and on the board of the national organization for many years. As a result, the L.A. program has grown in outreach and community support to include many partnerships, foundations, school districts, and individuals. Worldwide, the organization reaches 1.8 million students a year.

In reflecting on Karen's alumni award, Nancy Starmer writes, "In addition to the wonderful example that Karen sets through her commitment to the Facing History program, Karen has been incredibly generous to George School. Her ongoing interest in the school, particularly in our academic and service programs (she and Eric contributed a scholarship recently to assist students in participating in international service trips) has been very encouraging. It always means a lot to know that graduates feel as passionately about these programs as we do." That passion had its genesis forty years ago. "The values I learned at George School," Karen explains, "are continued in the work of Facing History."

It's easy to see the connection. In recalling a peaceful and effective student protest over the dress code in the late 1960s, Karen reveals her respect for a school that sees the equal value of all people, that encourages students to question, that lets all voices be heard, and that teaches students to be "open-eyed, open-minded, and open-hearted." Today she is helping introduce those ideals to a new generation of children.

Alumni Award Recipient:

Donaldson Romeo '80



BY ANDREA LEHMAN

When he was at George School, Don Romeo '80 had no idea what direction his life would take. That direction kept changing, with detours as a college student in the United States, a portrait artist in England, and a partner in the family business on Montserrat, the small Caribbean island that was and is his home. Thirty years and more than the 1,800 miles from Newtown to the Lesser Antilles later, Don has become an advocate for the people of Montserrat and was elected to its parliament in fall 2009.

Montserrat, formerly a British colony and now a British overseas territory, has always had a small population, which got considerably smaller after a series of natural disasters. As the island had only one dentist, Don decided, with his father's encouragement, to study dentistry at Temple University. But when his father was diagnosed with cancer, Don returned home, and he helped transform the family building-materials business and got involved in the national basketball team and in church.

He readily admits that he got too involved, burning himself out to such a degree that he moved to London to be with his sister. (Don's brother Julian and sister Valerie are also George School graduates.) There he discovered a gift for portraiture as well as for advocacy. When a paperwork snafu led to the revocation of his visa, Don fought deportation, garnering support from a number of influential Britons. As soon as he got a new visa 1988, however, he decided to return home.

In 1989 the category 5 Hurricane Hugo devastated Montserrat, wiping out 90 percent of its buildings and destroying its tourism industry. With most housing without roofs, art was no longer a priority, and Don returned to the family business. Then in 1995, the island was again crippled when the Soufrière Hills volcano erupted, burning or burying the southern half of the island.

A visit to a shelter changed Don's direction once again. "When I saw the conditions and realized that no one was lifting a finger to help the evacuees," he says, he knew something had to be done. He became an activist and journalist, championing the cause of Montserrat's displaced and dispossessed to the public and the British government. His biggest battle—still ongoing—is for good-quality permanent housing for those who are without a home. His role in parliament as a member of the opposition is the latest step in his efforts.

Don credits the writings of Martin Luther King Jr.—specifically the quote, "I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."—as changing how he goes about trying to effect change. At George School, he says, "I experienced what Martin Luther King dreamed of. I attended a school where being black was an asset, where I had genuine, open-minded friends and teachers... a school that reinforced what my parents tried to instill in me: encouraging me to be a good citizen."

He remembers looking up to history teacher John Davison, not only for his excellent teaching but also as an example of nonviolent protest. "I would never have predicted a life in government for Don, because for him, family was always first. But from what I know of the depth of his character, I think he will make a wonderful public servant," said history teacher John Davison.

Though Don is flattered to be receiving a George School Alumni Award, he confesses to feeling somewhat undeserving, as his work is unfinished. He is rededicating himself to forming a group to "not just apply pressure, but to provide suggestions and solutions," confident that "it just takes a small number of educated people to believe and go forward. The consequences can be devastating to a small nation if people don't wake up quickly and do what's necessary to save Montserrat." His determination is as reminiscent of Margaret Mead as it is of Martin Luther King, as he searches for that "small group of thoughtful, committed citizens" to change Montserrat, if not the world.

Campus News & Notes

BY JULIANA ROSATI AND SUSAN QUINN



POLLY LODGE

JUNIORS Jonathan Gilman, Andrew Chavez, and Ryan Krockner measured filtrate levels produced by the enzyme pectinase under different temperature conditions.

IB Science Retreat Delivers Results

Eighty International Baccalaureate (IB) science students packed up their lab equipment and overnight bags for a retreat at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the weekend of January 15 to 17, 2010. The students—who are enrolled in George School's IB classes in biology, physics, and environmental systems and societies—conducted group research projects on the topic of global warming.

The first step was to form lab groups of four students and brainstorm questions to study. Next, the students designed and implemented experiments to answer their questions. One group correlated the annual growth rings in an oak tree with average annual temperatures. Another measured heat absorption by sand, generating the heat from three types of light bulbs. Still another tested the effect of temperature on dissolved oxygen levels.

"What was so good about the retreat was that the students were doing real science, observing, measuring, waiting, and theorizing," explains Polly Lodge, head of George School's Science Department. "The students really bonded together as a group and were excited to share their work."

George School Celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day

George School held its twenty-first annual commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 18, 2010. The program began with an all-school assembly, which was followed by various town hall meetings and workshop sessions that

encouraged participants to discuss and reflect in a variety of ways on Dr. King's message of peace; diversity; and ethnic, cultural, socioeconomic, and religious inclusiveness.

Levi Roy '08 presented a workshop at the event for the second time since he graduated. "Martin Luther King Jr. Day was important to me as a student because it was a chance for everyone to focus on what made us all so unique," says Levi, who played an active role in the event at George School every year during his time as a student. "Rarely did anyone walk away from their workshops without learning something new," he recalls. His workshop this year addressed the topic of affirmative action.

George School Rises to Green Cup Challenge

With the help of newly installed electric meters in each dormitory and efforts by students, faculty, and staff to enhance campus-wide awareness of energy conservation, George School participated for the second consecutive year in the National Green Cup Challenge, from January 25 to February 22, 2010. Run by the Green Schools Alliance, the event is the first and only student-driven interscholastic energy conservation challenge.

"It is a great opportunity to bring a sharp focus to what we are doing as a Quaker community for environmental stewardship. It brings attention to what we have already been doing right in addition to what we can do to improve our energy consumption in the future," says Andrea Lindsay '11.

SUSAN QUINN



GREEN CUP CHALLENGE As part of the Green Cup Challenge, George School launched Dinner in the Dark, held every Wednesday evening during the challenge. Using as many locally-produced foods as possible, dinner was prepared during lunchtime so that kitchen equipment could be shut down six hours earlier than usual.

WILL HERBERT '11



WILL HERBERT '11 was one of seven George School students whose work was selected for the national Drexel University High School photography exhibition.

Student Photographs Selected for National Exhibition

Photographs by Jordon Friedman '12, Will Herbert '11, Soo Hyeon Kim '11, Jessica Petritis '10, Sam Popkin '11, Anneke Solomon '11, and Heidi Stroh '10, were selected for the Drexel University High School Photo Contest exhibition. These students are enrolled in Danielle Picard-Sheehan's photography classes at George School. The 150 works selected for the exhibition were chosen from over 2,200 entries submitted by high school students across the country.

Anderson Library Awarded LEED Gold Certification

George School is proud to announce that the new Learning Commons and Mollie Dodd Anderson Library has been awarded LEED® Gold certification from the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI) under the standards established by the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED, which

BRIAN WOZNIAK '05



THE MOLLIE DODD ANDERSON LIBRARY was awarded LEED Gold certification from the Green Building Certification Institute.

stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the nation's preeminent program for the design, construction, and operation of high-performance green buildings.

The Anderson Library's green design and construction elements include a geothermal field with forty wells that heats and cools the building; a vegetative roof; six rain gardens; a state-of-the-art window covering system; the use of recycled, regional, and Forest Stewardship Council certified materials; and various other features.

GS Hosts Quaker Youth Leadership Conference

The Quaker Youth Leadership Conference (QYLC) is a thirteen-year tradition that has continued to flourish thanks to the leadership and initiative shown by students like seniors Emma James and Caitlin Brimmer, co-clerks of the 2010 QYLC Steering Committee. Held at George School from February 4 through 6, 2010, the conference brought together more than 130 students from Friends high schools around the world for an intensive three-day retreat that focused on supporting, cultivating, and connecting student leadership through service, integrity, and community.



QUAKER YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE. Geetika Gupta '10, Caitlin Brimmer '10, Emma James '10, Sarah Haber '11, and Leo Gomes '11 wore their George School colors at the Quaker Youth Leadership Conference.

BRIAN WOZNIAK '06



KELLIE EDELBLUT '11 won the Girls U-19 crown in the International Junior Golf Tour held on Kiawah Island, South Carolina, from February 12 to 15, 2010.

Athletics Update

Varsity indoor track team member Priscilla Wiggins '12 brought home a medal from the Pennsylvania Indoor Track State Championship on March 6, 2010, running the mile in a George School indoor/outdoor record time of 5:09.15. She ended the indoor season ranked eighth in the state overall and second in the state for her class.

Varsity wrestler Ben Gutierrez '10 ended his season with an undefeated record of 17-0. He also medaled at the Pennsylvania Prep State Tournament on February 20, 2010, finishing in fifth place.

George School's girls' varsity swimming team members Gabrielle Griffin '11, Sydney Burns '10, Jessie Mooberry '10, and Meredith Allen '12 finished second in the 400-yard freestyle relay at the Friends Schools League championships on February 20, 2010. Jessie was the top finisher for the girls' team, while Keenan Halpin '12 was the top finisher for the boys' team.

CALEB SAVAGE '11



ESL ASSEMBLY. Noorjahan Akbar '10 and Yasamin Rasoul '11 performed a traditional Afghan dance at the English as a Second Language (ESL) assembly. This assembly gives international students the opportunity to share their culture with the George School community. More than one hundred students of foreign nationality or Americans living abroad are at George School this year, from thirty-four countries.

SUSAN QUINN



THE GEORGE SCHOOL EQUESTRIAN CENTER held a short opening ceremony on March 23, 2010, to celebrate the success of a parent initiative to raise the funds to resurface two outdoor riding rings. The informal campaign raised nearly \$30,000 and was led by Shelley Bitzer, mother of Liz '10 and Hannah '11, and Michele Peruto, mother of DeAnna Meckling '12. The work to renew the footing on both riding rings was completed during the school's spring break.

ANGIE TELATON/OH '11



LIVE MUSIC WEEKEND is one of George School students' favorite special events. Sam Popkin '11 performed with several different bands.

CALEB SAVAGE '11



COWBOY ASSEMBLY. Norman Tjossem, Fran Bradley, Ralph Lelii, and James Grumbach sing "My Heroes Have All Been Cowboys," accompanied by Alyssa Schultheis and Kevin Moon, at the faculty-produced cowboy assembly.



STAY CONNECTED

SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE

1. Fill out the form at <http://alumni.georgeschool.org>
2. Or send it by email to: georgian@georgeschool.org
3. Or mail to:
Georgian, PMB 4438, Newtown PA 18940

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VISIT THE ALUMNI WEBSITE

See class homepages, update personal profiles, contact friends, check the event calendar, see photos, and more at <http://alumni.georgeschool.org>.



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SOUTHERN, MD

PHOTOS: **Back Cover:** George School students enjoyed an early spring day of sunshine on South Lawn. **Inside Back Cover:** Tools for Woodworking and Furniture Design classes are cleaned and stored for easy access. (Photos by Bruce Weller)



Printed using soy-based ink on recycled paper with 30% post-consumer waste, manufactured using Bio Gas and Green-e certified renewable wind-generated electricity.

