

A Bright Light in the Darkness of Winter Term: WinterFest 2023

MIRA PONNAMBALAM '26

On Friday, February 10, and Saturday, February 11, as part of Lawrenceville's annual theatre festival, WinterFest, students will present a series of short student-acted, student-directed plays in the Kirby Arts Center's black box theater. This year's WinterFest features nine plays: *The Harbingers of Turpitude*, directed by Lily Hooge '23 and Roan McDonald '23; *Chai*, directed by Anoushka Sharma '23 and Rania Shah '23; *Dr. Fritz or: The Forces of Light*, directed by Philip Burgess '24 and Gabrienne Chery '24; *Another Beautiful Story*, directed by Eric Frankel '23 and assisted by Anna Saltarelli '25 & Cira Sar '25; *Love is Knocking on Your Door*, directed by Adrian Carlisi '24 & Sofia Carlisi '24; *Candy Heart*, directed by Stephanie Xu '23; *The Omelet Murder Case*, directed by Frances Hsu '23 and Claire Jiang '24; *After*, directed by Allie McKeon '24 and Sonia Singhal '24 and assisted by Remy Abromavage '25; and *The Learned Ladies*, directed by Emily Hammond '23 and assisted by Mimie Pinakornkul '25.

In contrast to previous years, there will be one set of plays with a longer run time rather than having an A night and a B night with two different sets. "[This change] is to make sure people could see all the plays that they wanted to," Assistant Head of WinterFest Malia Zovich '24 explained. This year's WinterFest lineup includes shows from Lawrenceville's play library, along with two original shows: *Chai*, written by Anoushka Sharma '23, and *Love is Knocking on your Door*, co-written by IV Formers Adrian Carlisi and Sofia Carlisi.

Many students collaborate to put together WinterFest. Head of WinterFest Autri Basu '23 and Zovich provided their insights on



WinterFest Rehearsal Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAW-

the shows and organized the various parts of the production. With only 15 minutes between the two runs on Saturday, time management is imperative. "There are 130 minutes of content, according to [Basu], that we have to fit into two hours," Anika Ponnambalam '25, an actor in *Chai*, stated.

Student directors, meanwhile, are in charge of coordinating each individual play. They must take the script and turn it into a cohesive performance. Claire Jiang '24, co-director of *The Omelet Murder Case*, emphasized the importance of "finding different ways to make [the actors] feel like it's their space, like it's something fun and exciting, but also trying to make the play enjoyable for an audience." She also described trying to implement what she learned from her experience working with the faculty directors of *Our Town*, Performing Arts Teacher Matthew Campbell and English Teacher Maddy Smith, to direct her own show.

For the original plays, the transformation from writing to performance is a unique experience. "I feel really grateful that other people are reading my writing, but also that I have actors who are willing to [execute my vision on stage]," said Sharma, "There's always a little bit of pressure to make sure you're delivering something good."

The fact that WinterFest is an almost entirely student-driven and small-scale production presents a unique set of challenges. For one, "because students are basically responsible for everything, the acting, directing, producing, the set, and costumes, it's kind

of hard to have a huge vision, elaborate set, or intricate costume pieces," Jiang said. Additionally, with this Winter Term's atypical schedule and the numerous long weekends, directors and actors alike struggled to find time for rehearsal. To ensure that the shows progress at an appropriate speed, Basu and Zovich scheduled mandatory rehearsals. Students have also had to adapt to numerous changes in schedules, writing, and casting. "A lot of our directors decided to change the plays. A lot of our actors decided to not participate this year," Zovich added.

However, the student-driven nature of the production also has its benefits. The smaller scale of the show comes with a smaller stage; rather than using the entire KAC stage, WinterFest occurs in the much smaller black box theater. Ponnambalam described the black box theater as more intimate, saying, "it allows [the actor] to form more of a connection with the audience."

Students also have control over the show that they would not otherwise have, which allows them to produce the show that they want the Lawrenceville community to see. Shah cherished the ability to be part of a show that represents the experience of South Asian girls. "It's definitely something that I would have wanted to see in my years at Lawrenceville," she said.

Many Lawrenceville students have worked tirelessly to perfect this year's WinterFest shows full of fourth wall breaks and excitement, so be sure to grab tickets (and your friends) to come see them live tonight and tomorrow!

Lawrenceville Quashes Its (Second) Biggest Rival, 8-2

AKI LI '25
NEWS ASSOCIATE

Last Thursday, Lawrenceville's Boys' Varsity Ice Hockey team played its annual match against Princeton Day School (PDS) at the Tsai Field House's new ice rink. The game concluded with Lawrenceville winning 8-2.

Oliver Clarke '25, a member of the hockey team, recounted the game to be "overall great," with the atmosphere being "very loud, very energetic" and "fun to play in." Although Lawrenceville had won 4-0 in the annual PDS vs. Lawrenceville game last year, Clarke explained that the game was "very Covid restricted," so the atmosphere was "not as fun." When considering Lawrenceville's victory over PDS, Clarke mentioned that the Lawrenceville team was "just a stron-

ger team," with opportunities throughout the season to play "against stronger competition." Altogether, he concluded the hockey team to be "doing a great job" and currently "a step ahead of our rivals in New Jersey."

In his recap of the game, Clarke mentioned DJ Parouse '24 to have "scored a great goal," where he "went through a couple of guys" for the second goal of the game. Clarke also lauded Kyle Ozgun '24, goaltender of the team, for having "played extremely well," as he was "on top of his game" in blocking opposing goals. Clarke said that the game was "an awesome experience" and so far, "one of [his] most memorable hockey games" throughout his Lawrenceville career.

Sean Scarpa '23, a member of the Big Red Dog Pound,

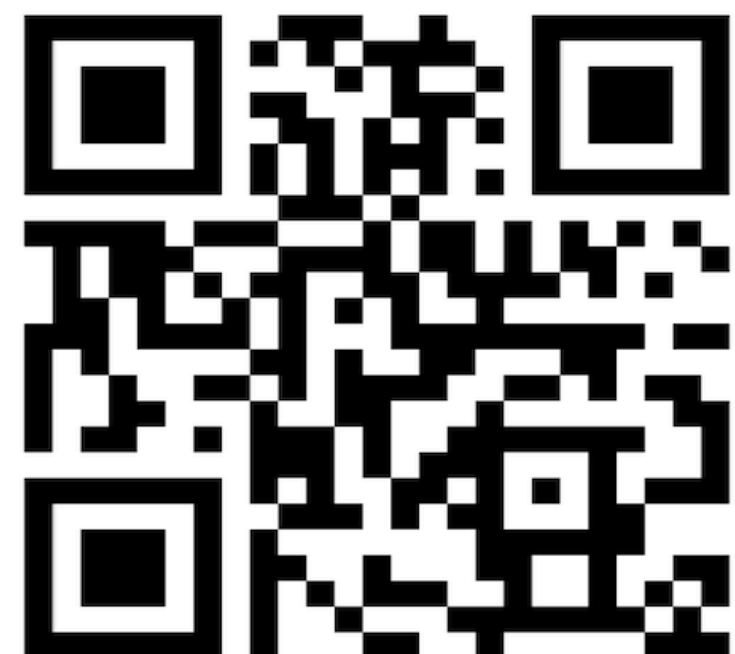
Lawrenceville's hype squad, described the atmosphere to be "very electric." "We had lots of hype," Scarpa explained, with the hockey team's performance having spectators "on the edge of their [seats]." With the role of the Big Red Dog Pound being to "show up, have a good time, [and] make sure other people have a good time," Scarpa succeeded in this mission, stating that the crowd "really made the game."

Although Na'imah Ford '25 was initially hesitant to attend the hockey game, as she had "hours of work" to do, Ford noted that she was "really glad [she] went". "Everyone was there," Ford explained, adding that the "bleachers [were] almost full." She described that the game had "uproars every five minutes from both sides," as both PDS and Lawrenceville students were "cheering like crazy." Regarding Lawrenceville's major victory over PDS, Ford recapped the game as essentially a "belligerent battering" against the PDS team. "There was so much spirit and Lawrenceville pride all around," Ford stated, claiming there to be "nothing like a good game." Ford believes that the game "was all around a great way to destress," and encourages Lawrenceville students to watch future athletic games, "just for the fun of it."



Students at the PDS v. Lawrenceville Ice Hockey Game

Help Turkey and Syria



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CORRECTIONS

Readers who notice errors should contact the Managing Editor at kpark23@lawrenceville.org.

Dog of the Week (Teddy!) Maddy Widener '24 and Eloise Widener '26



Editorial The Lawrence: A Self-Examination

The Lawrence's charter states that this newspaper is "the primary mirror and voice of the student body," or, at the very least, that it strives to accomplish that purpose.

Yet have we, the 142nd Board, truly been able to live up to that goal?

I didn't write for *The Lawrence* throughout most of my II Form year. My choice wasn't due to a lack of interest, or a belief that I wasn't "good enough" at writing to participate; rather, I could never get on the 139th Board's mailing list because the only editor I knew—one of my prefects, no less—continually ignored my requests to be added.

In the Raymond House of 2019-20, the chance to write for *The Lawrence* amounted to a status symbol. One friend of mine was published nearly every week, somehow churning out opinions faster than I could even conceptualize them; another, on the other hand, gave up after having three different pieces rejected, despite only writing in the Fall Term of their II Form year. The former was "good enough" to make it onto those hallowed pages; the latter was effectively driven away forever.

I can't say that I haven't fallen into the same trap myself during my tenure on the Board. New students' infectious enthusiasm for writing is part of what makes this job so great in the first place, but when you realize that you have to fast-track another five pages in the next three hours, the temptation to rely on those same few writers—whose work you know matches the *Lawrence* "style"—to fill up the empty space in your InDesign

page grows increasingly intense.

So on we go, with the same four or five people producing 80 percent of each section's content. No wonder so many of my friends joke that "*The Lawrence* is a cult"; the seven hours you spend each week cooped up in a tiny basement office brings you closer, yes, but heaps of time together also create an environment where our own opinions constantly reinforce one another. Most of our editorials are signed off with majority (and often unanimous) approval, only to be met with heaps of criticism once they reach the Upper House or Bunn Library; we've also had numerous conversations with Opinions writers who feel as if our editing process fundamentally changes their opinions. In essence, the very structure of *The Lawrence* itself—from restricted access to the office to the fact that the majority of editor-writer communication occurs exclusively through email—only makes our paper more insular.

However we try to disrupt our patterns, whether by formatting pages differently, modifying distribution locations, or holding writers' workshops, these changes are constantly pushed to "next week." I know about this problem especially well because its existence is honestly my fault—but I simply can't bring myself to ask the same editors I just kept in the office until 10:30 PM to come back for even more work the following day. And so, *The Lawrence* continues in its same-old state until our Board has just two "next weeks" left.

A 2016 *Lawrence* article introduced the idea of the "Lawrencev-

ille bourgeoisie," a select group of students who seem to have it all: great grades, great extracurriculars, great social lives, and great college prospects. Yet if that same article was submitted today, its very publication would be inherently ironic—after all, when you look at the school meeting stage, who do you see? Three *Lawrence* editors. When you go to the information sessions for the scholars programs, who are giving presentations? Nine *Lawrence* editors. The very "bourgeoisie" that has control over so much of the rest of this school's life has even taken over the one place where people could openly discuss its existence; and when we're all stretching ourselves between our nine other commitments, we unsurprisingly find that the easiest thing to do is just publish our petit-bourgeois friends, the very students we've anointed to take over for us (because believe me, '25s and '26s: we're watching you).

One of the biggest complaints my friends have with *The Lawrence* is that students rarely read it, and much of that issue comes from the fact that students—besides those for whom their future with the paper is already obvious—rarely write, either. I could sit around begging more people to write for the sake of making my own life easier, but in all honesty, having your articles published—your voices, your opinions, your ideas—helps make this school a better place. I hope you now know why.

- ABB

Does Your Laptop Have a Shot at Being the Next Picasso?

And What Even is Art Anyways?

MICHAEL MENG '26
AKI LI '25
NEWS ASSOCIATE

There is nothing quite like making art. As an idea that existed solely in my head takes on corporeal form, I feel a quiet, indescribable sort of exhilaration. Sometimes, my art turns out exactly as I have envisioned it. Other times, it couldn't be further from what I had planned. Regardless of how my works turn out, the art that I create is my pride and joy; I nurture it with the same fondness that a mother might a child.

"Théâtre D'opéra Spatial," an artwork generated by A.I. art engine Midjourney, won first prize in the Colorado State Fair's annual competition for digital artists. "Commissioned" by Jason M. Allen, the piece portrays three humanoid figures facing a moon-like orb in an opera-meets-space-station-esque room. Although Allen explicitly noted his use of the A.I. engine, his win faced intense backlash from several other artists, who accused him of cheating. Even though A.I. art engines have existed since the late 1960s, such technology has only entered mainstream prevalence in late 2022, with generators like DALL·Es, Stable Diffusion, and Midjourney producing artificial artworks that are almost indistinguishable from human works. Although this development in A.I. art is an innovative feat, its products are still far from "real" art.

While the definition of "real" art has been

debated since the beginning of time, A.I. art forces us to further refine our definitions. As an artist myself, I would define "real" art to be any product of a process with the intent of capturing an idea or an emotion. On a fundamental level, every human being is capable of artistry: From the toddler who scribbles on the wall to externalize their feelings, to the highly-trained painter who creates portraits to convey a message of personal beauty, human-made art knows no bounds. The Mona Lisa, a world-famous painting, is art—but so is the doodle that I drew in the corner of my Algebra worksheet on Monday. Distinguishing "real" art has nothing to do with quality; all art needs to have is direct creative intention.

The purpose of art is to bring temporary, abstract ideas into permanence. Through art, one

casts fleeting ideas into physical shapes that can convey messages untainted by the

bias of words and prose.

Therefore, as long as the intention to express is present, any work can be defined as real art. This definition may seem extremely broad. Yet, at the same time, this criteria completely excludes A.I.-generated art on the basis that A.I. "art" has no intentions, emotions, or ideas behind it. The fundamental difference between A.I. art and human art lies in the lack of creativity and intent behind A.I.-generated art.

A.I. art is created using complex

algorithms and data analysis. Programmers write algorithms that analyze countless images and use discriminators to determine which themes are most popular among audiences. The algorithm then generates new images that replicate the aesthetics it has observed in other art pieces.

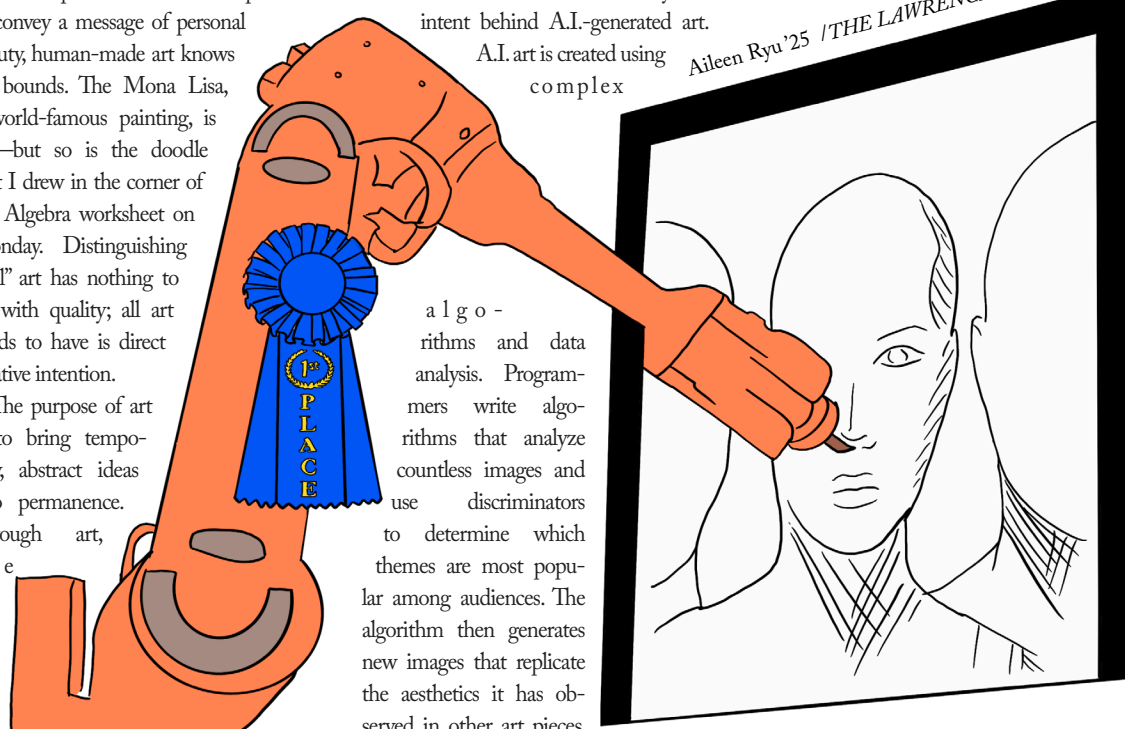
There is thus no creativity or individuality; the algorithm generates nothing but imitations of other human creations.

But what about those artists who draw inspiration from the works of others, or the artists who strive to imitate the styles of others? Wouldn't the art that these artists produce fall short of the mark to be considered real art? Here is where intention comes into play. Even when humans imitate the style of other artists, they do so with the intent of expressing their own ideas

own ideas more accurately and precisely. On the other hand, when an A.I. art engine imitates other human artists, it does so with the intent of merely reproducing human ideas.

This isn't to say that A.I. art isn't beautiful. Because it is. Enragingly so. While my blood boils and stomach churns to admit this, out of the few thousand monstrosities the generators can crank out every second, there are some works that are undeniably beautiful. To me, the "Théâtre D'opéra Spatial" is the epitome of A.I. generated art. The colors, shapes, and ambience just work—I can't deny their harmony. Yet knowing that the piece was generated in an instant by an A.I. that melted together millions of pieces of art, breaking down the brainchildren of a million artists into bytes of data, is sickening. The final piece that the A.I. spits out is the product of a hunk of 0s and 1s that lack creativity, intent or soul. It's a desecration of the utterly human imagination that creates real art.

But at the end of the day, for all its soullessness, there is still beauty in A.I. generated art. Not everybody has to appreciate art for its meaning. For those who casually indulge in art for its outward aesthetic, A.I. art may be right up their alley. A.I. art may be a Frankenstein-esque arrangement of bytes of chopped up data—but hey, at least it appeals to the fickle human eye.



Aileen Ryu '25 / THE LAWRENCE

Roses Are Red, Violets Are Blue... ...Money Should Not Define My Love For You

ANGEL XIN '26

From overstuffed ACME flower bouquets to Tiffany & Co.'s omnipresent advertisements ("Her love language is Tiffany, this Valentine's Day and every day"), it's almost impossible to not realize that Valentine's Day is around the corner—as is the holiday's underlying philosophy. Somehow, receiving an object associated with love on Valentine's signifies that we are loved. Somehow, gifting a loved one a piece of valuable jewelry or watch becomes a mandated action—an action that indicates that you care about another individual. But since when?

Surprisingly enough, Valentine's Day originated from Lupercalia, a Roman celebration heavily associated with blood, violence, and animal sacrifice, done in the name of warding off infertility. During this festival, strangers were matched together as a couple, male citizens whipped female citizens, and young men went on naked runs. By the 5th century, however, the rise of Christianity transformed this celebration of fertility into St. Valentine's Day. While the latter was considerably less gruesome and bloody, it did maintain red and white as the primary color palette for the holiday. In later years, medieval writers romanticized St. Valentine's as a celebration of true love; for instance, Chaucer's "Parliament of Fowls," one of the first ro-

manic poems about St. Valentine's Day, promoted this Christian holiday as a day of courtship for humans and birds alike. However, it was the rise of printing in the 17th century and the Industrial Revolution of the 19th that eventually led to the foundation of the Valentine's Day we know today: the mass production of romantic love-themed cards.

Now, in 2023, the National Retail Federation expects Americans to spend approximately \$26 billion on Valentine's Day; in other words, the average person will spend about \$190, or around two full days of minimum wage work. Evidently, the supposedly loving nature of Valentine's has slowly evolved into one based on purchasing. But such a transformation isn't too surprising. After all, our capitalist society celebrates the assembly line model; it pushes us to employ maximum effort in minimal time to optimize economic output, and thus the amount of money we earn is directly correlated to the time and effort that we utilize. Of course,

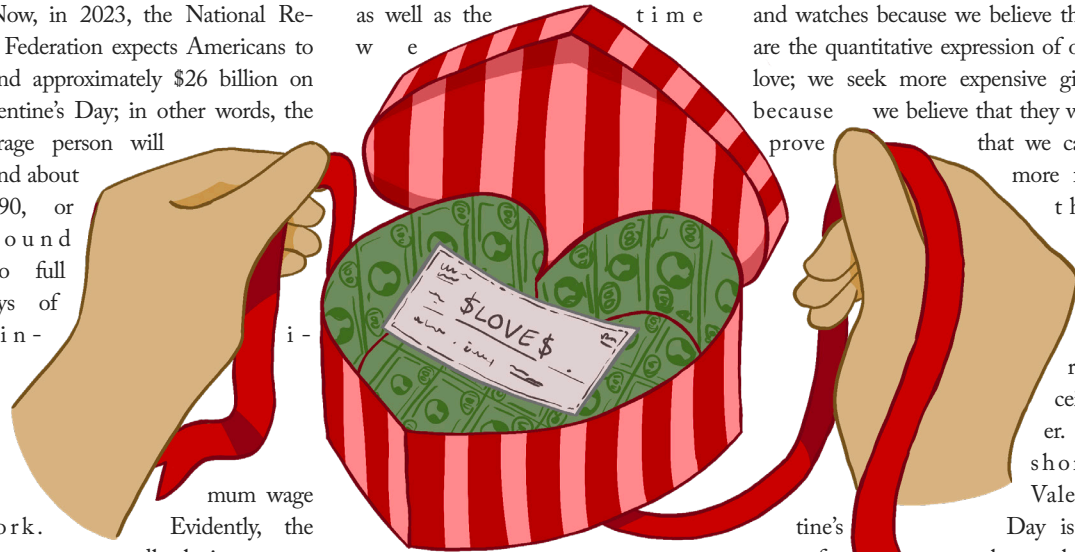
a product with a greater price tag denotes that a greater amount of time and effort was put into creating said product.

Inevitably, we apply this same economic model to our personal lives. When our work time is constantly quantified with a set income, it becomes exceedingly easy to also quantify the emotional worth of our loved ones, as well as the time we

them. And voilà—we have quantified love.

Naturally, the greatest purpose of a Valentine's Day gift is to prove to the receiver that we love them. Whether it be for a family member, a loved one, or a friend, a Valentine's Day gift is a token that represents how emotionally invested we are in them. We shop for chocolates, teddy bears, roses, jewelry, and watches because we believe they are the quantitative expression of our love; we seek more expensive gifts because we believe that they will prove that we care more for them.

Mimie Pinpakornkul '25 / THE LAWRENCE



spend with them. And since love is best measured by the strength of the emotional connections we gain through spending time with another individual, we, consciously or not, begin to associate emotional connections with quantifiable values. The greater the connection and the greater the time we spend with a significant other? The greater the love we feel for

them. In short, Valentine's Day is a way for us to show others that despite our limited time and financial capacity, we understand, treasure, and uphold the quantitative measure of the love we feel for them. Valentine's is just a way for us to show others that we do care.

This leaves us with one last question: Does spending money take away the sincerity of holidays? Or, is quantifying love harmful to us?

My answer is yes. Over the past few centuries, we humans have sought to speed up our lives for the sake of optimizing our productivity; as we leaped from one extreme level of productivity to another, we began to lose the precious time and space we once saved for intimacy. Without that time and space, it has become increasingly difficult for us to judge whether we are loved or not. So, instead of spending reflective time to determine whether we want to continue engaging in a time-committing relationship, we use quantifiable values to make this judgment.

For instance, we may gift an expensive necklace to our significant other to compensate for our inability to spend time caring for them when they are down. But flashy gifts cannot fill the missing role of love expressed with time and effort. Love is supposed to take time and effort, and such time and effort cannot be simplified and equated to a few dollars. We cannot truly convey our love without leaving quality time for those whom we love.

So, perhaps we should spend this Valentine's Day extending some quality love to the ones we treasure. Perhaps we should share breakfast with our partners or grab coffee with an old best friend. Perhaps we should show our love through our actions and words; perhaps we should simply express our love through ourselves.

Perhaps we should give and receive the form of love that we deserve.

...U.S. News Rankings Are Not Always True

GARRETT HEFFERN '24

Every IV Former has begun to feel a vague uneasiness surrounding the ever-daunting "college process." We are at a crossroads, and before us lies 4,000 streets—4,000 different colleges—out of which only a handful seem capable of leading us toward success. At Lawrenceville, each junior works with a college counselor with years of experience—our counselors could probably compete with Fiske if only they too had a marketable Scandinavian name. However, many of us forget the value of having a college counseling staff on campus.

Few schools have access to designated, trained college counselors. Public schools in the United States dump the responsibility of college counseling on their guidance counselors, the same people responsible for sorting through discipline issues, rearranging student schedules, and mentoring kids. Unlike Lawrenceville's college counselors, guidance counselors at public schools do not get designated time off to travel to college fairs and learn about specific schools. Public school students, like those at the nearby Lawrence High School, can receive general essay feedback and career advice from their guidance counselors; however, the hefty responsibility of strategically planning college lists and blocking out essay-writing time falls solely on students.

Is it fair that we receive so much more college aid than America's public school students? Well, no. The advantage of Lawrenceville's college counselors cannot be understated: they have years of experience sending students to renowned schools, can help students navigate their Common App, and they're attuned to the nuances of college admissions. Lawrentians need

this expertise—we need college counselors—because the vast majority of students are aiming high, looking to attend Ivy Leagues and other renowned schools that require spotless applications.

But why do Lawrenceville students want to attend elite schools? Our standard answer, "for a better education," conceals much of the truth. While top American universities do offer unparalleled resources (research opportunities, experienced faculty, etc.), many students (and parents) at Lawrenceville simply seek the prestige of the schools ranked Top 25 by U.S. News.

If you receive an acceptance letter for an engineering program from Princeton University and from Texas A&M, which would you choose? Even if you know that Texas A&M is ranked #10 for engineering and Princeton ranked #20, Princeton University is far more appealing. It has that shine to it, an elite prestige that is difficult to walk away from. While college counselors recommend to us an assortment of reach, mid-level, and safety schools, students regard their counselors as a sine qua non of the impeccable application which is a sine qua non of admission to a prestigious school. We expect our college counselors to polish our applications to a degree that top schools might consider admissible, and, in this way, we contribute to the prestige of Universities.

Thus as much as we like to believe it, our ambitions with the college process are not purely academic. While prestige can correlate to academic standing, highly regarded academics are often more an effect of prestige than a cause. Stanford University, for example, struggled financially throughout the 1920s; however, in the 1950s, Stanford graduates became known as forerunners in

the technological world, founding the companies that would later become Silicon Valley. The reputation of graduates' success, rather than Stanford's original academic programs, is what transformed the school into

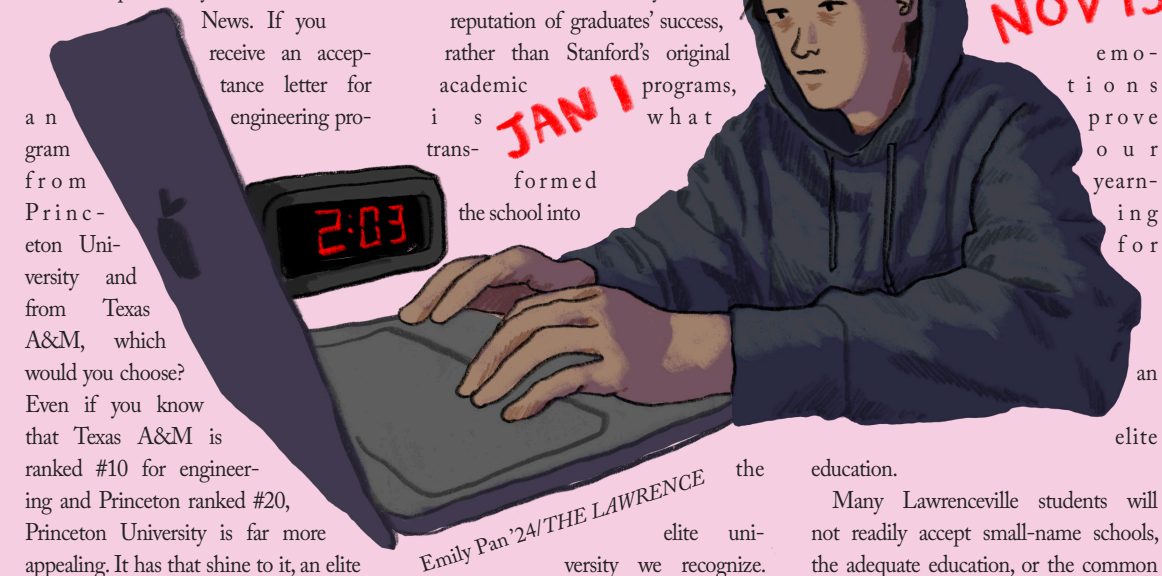
to gain more capital and popularity.

As Lawrenceville students, we have already elected to participate in this cycle. Many students at Lawrenceville also applied to Exeter, Andover, or Deerfield, not because of their campus cultures, but because they are all prestigious boarding schools renowned for their competitive academics. We attend Lawrenceville, a historic "feeder" school, also to get a leg up in the college search. Lawrenceville's popularity, our college counselors, and our own

emotions prove our yearning for an elite education. Many Lawrenceville students will not readily accept small-name schools, the adequate education, or the common life. We have gotten used to attending a prestigious school like Lawrenceville; we have gotten used to having five hours of homework per night and juggling multiple major assignments in the span of a couple days. Like it or not, we expect more from ourselves after having endured four years of Lawrenceville. Why don't Lawrenceville students apply early decision to a school like TCNJ, skipping all the palpable college admission stress? U.S. News

ranks TCNJ as #5 of Regional Universities—North in America. 96% of TCNJ's last graduating class is already employed, and the average salary has already reached \$60,500 annually. These are not mediocre numbers; a \$60,500 salary gives ample opportunities for graduates to live comfortably and find their place in the world. However, TCNJ's 62% acceptance rate discredits the school in our eyes as common and easy to get into. We disregard the potential that smaller-name schools offer us and instead, we prefer to search for selectivity.

We bring the need for college counselors onto ourselves. While college counselors make applications much easier for students, we often see our meetings with them as mere rungs on the ladder that we hope will lead us to an elite education. Yes, it is not equal or fair that we have a robust college counseling program on campus while the vast majority of high school students apply on their own. However, we must recognize that there are a vast number of public universities and high-acceptance-rate colleges that offer fantastic resources and a fantastic experience to students who utilize their resources. A college counselor is a huge advantage in achieving those final few steps toward the spotless application for an elite school—but not every route to success requires elite schools and college counselors. We use college counselors because we chase the elite, and the lack of college counselors in public schools hurts those with the same goal. However, we must recognize that elite schools satisfy our pride more than our minds. For the dedicated student, there are thousands of colleges whose names may not silence a room, but whose resources will offer an advanced education to those who use them.



Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

The Dresdner Quartet

DOROTHY LEE '26
NICHOLE JIN '24
NEWS ASSOCIATE

"I was a bit nervous, but also really excited," reflected Angela Yang '25 on her emotions during the New Jersey American String Teachers Quartet-Fest. Yang is the cellist of the Dresdner Quartet, a classical music performance ensemble founded at the beginning of the school year. She and her fellow players, Arisa Okamura '25, Henry Tsai '26, and Arya Vishwakarma '25, recently won their first competition together at the Quartet-Fest.

Vishwakarma and Okamura first proposed the idea of starting a student quartet after a Midday Music performance during the Fall Term. "We decided that two of us [were] good, but what if we had twice as many?" Vishwakarma remarked. Tsai and Yang were both part of Lawrenceville's orchestra, so they decided to join the smaller ensemble. "It's such a different experience from orchestra or solo playing," Vishwakarma explained. "It's right in the middle."

The Quartet aims to practice once every week despite their conflicting schedules. "We are excited about what we do, but it's hard to find time to rehearse, so it takes a lot of emotional investment to keep this going," noted Vishwakarma. The quartet practices relatively early in the morning, with their current practice time scheduled as Wednesday at 8:00 AM. "We're all trying to get there as fast as we can... someone's always in a rush," Yang elaborated.

The Dresdner Quartet also initially struggled to grasp the "flow" of one piece by Mendelssohn. They soon decided to alter how they counted the rhythm of the song, focusing on "[moving] together in order to stay together," Vishwakarma explained. As the competition date neared, Yang noticed that the quartet further mastered the "feeling" of their piece, which she con-

sidered "a major contributing factor to [their] success."

On the day of the Quartet-Fest competition, the Dresdner group received private coaching from teachers at Montclair State University. The Quartet played two movements by Mendelssohn, described as "tricky and delicate" by Vishwakarma. Afterward, they were given feedback on their performance. "I feel like [the teachers'] advice helped us improve a lot," Yang noted. For their second piece, the group played a quartet by Shostakovich, on which they received more feedback because they were "still trying to get the right feeling" for the piece. Vishwakarma described how the Shostakovich contrasted with the Mendelssohn, the former being "very dark" and "very brutal."

"In a quartet, the success of the group depends on you...so I felt more pressure playing," Yang explained, highlighting a significant difference between performing alone and as part of a group. Although stressful at times, such responsibility taught Yang the "importance of teamwork" and of "listening to [one's] groupmates."

After the private lessons, the judges evaluated each quartet's final performance. The teachers listened for improvement in performance and assessed whether the groups truly "implemented [their] feedback" the second time. "We kept in mind all the feedback that we got previously," Yang said, attributing their win to their effective use of the advice they received.

After the competition, Yang sensed that everyone in the quartet was "really proud" of their work and performance. "It was just fun to see the outcome of all the hard work that we put into the quartet and the pieces we played," she added. Vishwakarma attested to this: "It was a lot of emotional investment...but it's always worth it," she declared, encouraging students to participate in chamber music. In the future, the Dresdner Quartet hopes to compete in and potentially win the Fischhoff Competition, the nation's largest chamber music concours.

SCAMP Releases Counselor Applications for its 125th Year

HELENA CHEN '24
NEWS ASSOCIATE

During last week's school meeting, Executive Director of the Lawrenceville School Camp John Hughes officially announced that applications for School Camp, or SCAMP, counselors were released. SCAMP is a two-week residential summer program located in Warren County, NJ, where middle school students from underserved communities can attend. Every year, two sessions are held—one for girls and one for boys—with around 60 children attending in total. SCAMP allows local boys and girls, who may not be able to afford a traditional summer camp experience due to socioeconomic or personal circumstances, to experience summer camp. This will be the 125th year that SCAMP is held by Lawrenceville. The 2022 camp counselors were V Formers Kevin Chiang, Andy Cook, Noah Laubach, Kate Mirkovic, and Sean Scarpa, as well as IV Formers Luke Benitez, Victor Colliluri, Chelsea Lim, Noha Naami, Jessica Peters, Zachary Pyskaty, Thann Tuchinda, and Jackie Williams.

During the two weeks at SCAMP, camp counselors will offer different activities for the campers, including basketball, soccer, swimming, and fishing. Counselors will also host activities like capture the flag, kickball, and dodgeball. In the evening, campers will participate in scavenger hunts and carnivals, activities that bring the entire community together. In addition to these activities, a point system at SCAMP helps motivate the campers to participate in different activities. At the camp, there are four cabins, each with a different name, similar to Lawrenceville's House System. Each cabin competes in a competition for

the most points. Points are given out for many reasons, ranging from sportsmanship to the children's positive attitude. For example, every day, the campers are assigned a different location in camp (to be responsible for the cleanliness). The cabin that does the best job will earn points. At the end of the session, the cabin with the most points gets taken out for a special breakfast on the last morning.

Colliluri recalled that his summer at

Hughes described his considerations when looking for camp counselors. "I'm looking for people who are responsible, people who have demonstrated that they care about working with others," Hughes said. Hughes's goal is to have a team of Lawrentians come and serve the community of campers, so he tries to build a group of counselors who function the best as a team. More importantly, Hughes hopes that camp counselors are motivated and



Counselors and campers at Scamp

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

SCAMP was one of his most memorable experiences. "Taking care of campers was not easy, but it was a very rewarding experience," Colliluri said. He believes that as a camp counselor, it is important to be open-minded and listen to campers, as they have just as much to say as anyone else. Some of his best experiences were just listening to what the campers had to say and getting to know them better, which takes a lot of work. Besides working with the younger campers, Colliluri explained that SCAMP also gives him a great opportunity to get to know people who he never got a chance to talk to before. "I hope to join SCAMP again this year," Colliluri said.

ready to prioritize the campers. "You have to redirect and navigate the needs of your campers, and for 12 days you put them first, before you," Hughes explained. At the end of the camp, camp counselors often improve their organization and teamwork skills. Most importantly, working as a camp counselor develops great leadership skills that will benefit counselors in the future.

"I hope everybody applies," Hughes said. Prior counselors often say that their summer at SCAMP was the most powerful and important thing that they did while at Lawrenceville. Hughes agreed, saying, "I know from being a camp counselor myself that that's true!"

Lunar New Year Celebrations Across Campus

SYDNEY WANG '25

The Lunar New Year is one of the most significant holidays in the many East Asian countries that follow the lunar calendar. Unlike the Western Gregorian calendar, a new year on the lunar calendar commences when the first new moon appears at the end of January. The festival continues as the moon waxes, and ends when the moon is full. During those two weeks of celebration, families come together for a feast, where dishes that symbolize prosperity, such as spring rolls and dumplings, are served. Family members exchange recent news, and elders and married couples give younger generations money stuffed in bright red envelopes. After the feast, families tied to Chinese culture often watch the China Central Television (CCTV) Spring Festival Gala together. These traditions all epitomize the welcoming of good fortune and luck in the new year.

During the last week of January, Lawrenceville hosted multiple events, including the Dumplings for Dreams Dumpling Making event, the International Students Association (ISA) Dinner, and the Pan Asian Alliance (PAA) Mahjong Night for the community to come together and celebrate Lunar New Year.

President of Dumplings for Dreams Julia Chiang '23 organized



Students enjoying a Lunar New Year dinner together

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

last Tuesday's Dumpling Making event, which took place in the Kirby Arts Center. Participants learned how to wrap dumplings in a variety of ways with pre-prepared fillings. Then, after the dumplings were boiled, students enjoyed eating the dumplings together. Grace Zhang '25 was excited to participate in the event. "To me, [the point of] Lunar New Year is being with friends and family [so we can]

celebrate it together," Zhang explained. The event indicated a fresh start and reminded her of when she would stay up late with her family to eat snacks and watch the CCTV Spring Festival Gala. "It's just really nice to enjoy the meal with people we love," added Chiang, who felt fortunate that this event helped many Lawrentians come together to share their love for food.

Another popular event that

many students attended was the ISA Dinner. Unlike previous years, the Office of Multicultural Affairs joined the ISA in co-hosting the event, putting up a feast for dinner in the Abbott Dining Room on January 23. Dorothy Lee '26, an international student from South Korea, believes the event was meaningful and helped demonstrate how the School respects East Asian customs.

The Lunar New Year Dinner had always been hosted to provide a sense of belonging to those who cannot reunite with their family during the holiday. "It can feel quite isolat[ing] to not be able to indulge in that same practice that they might do at home with their friends and family," said ISA Co-President Adeline Zhou '23. Because everyone at Lawrenceville is, in a sense, one family, Zhou hoped the event would return a sense of community to the campus, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic had impaired the connections people shared.

Similarly, PAA's events focused on enforcing the bonds within the community. To make the events less rowdy, the PAA hosted a Mahjong Night and co-hosted a Coffee House Open Mic event with the Sustainability Council. Despite the low profile of both events, they both garnered a good turnout, which was perfect for the PAA's goal of creating smaller and tighter blocks of community. "Remembering [to celebrate Lunar New Year] is pretty important to me," said Pan-Asian Alliance President Ashley Wang '23, emphasizing the sentiment that sometimes it is easy for new students to feel lost and isolated. Keeping the tradition of celebrating the Lunar New Year can remind students of who they are.

World War II Turned on its Head: A Review of *Prisoner of Night and Fog*

SONIA IVANCIC '25
ARTS ASSOCIATE

World War II novels fill the historical fiction genre to the brim. Thousands upon thousands of books set during this time period are published, with Amazon selling around 70,000 different historical fiction books surrounding World War II alone. These texts, set all around the world, all probably mention Hitler in some way or another. Nevertheless, very few actually have Adolf Hitler as a main character, or as someone with dialogue and a direct connection to the protagonist. *Prisoner of Night and Fog* by Anne Blankman is one of the books that does have this connection, which makes this novel quite distinct from other YA World War II texts.

This novel, though based on true fact, centers around the fictitious teenager Gretchen Müller and her family in Munich during the 1930s. Like many other German families during these years, times are tough for the Müller family, as Germany's economy sinks into a depression. Gretchen's mother runs an old, small boarding house with a strict budget, pinching pennies and cutting mold off of bread to fill their hunger. Yet, Gretchen is not like the rest of the girls in Munich. She is the martyr's daughter.

Gretchen's father, Klaus, was one of Hitler's close friends from the Great War. Growing up, Hitler, or Uncle Dolf, as Gretchen calls him, was like a second father to Gretchen, his little pet. On November 8, 1923, Hitler and his fellow National Socialist comrades,

Gretchen's father among them, staged their coup against the present German government in Munich. Known as The Putsch, this day ended in chaos and disaster for the Nazis. The following day, in a final attempt to leave their mark, the Nazis marched towards the city center, Hitler in the front with Klaus by his side. The National Socialists were met with a barrage of bullets from the waiting police forces at the main square. It was at that moment that Klaus Müller leapt in front of his friend Hitler, taking the bullets meant for Hitler and dying himself.

Gretchen's father's fatal sacrifice earned her the nickname "the martyr's daughter." Uncle Dolf truly became like a father to Gretchen as she grew up fatherless and in poverty. She circled around the Nazi elite at their parties and gatherings, and ran to her uncle's arms whenever she needed someone to tell her she belonged. Uncle Dolf, Gretchen's desire to become a doctor, and memories of her kindhearted father are the only things in her life that keep her going as she lives with her apathetic mother and vicious brother.

One by one, however, these three pillars of Gretchen's life begin to crumble when her mother forbids her from continuing her education, forcing her to find a job instead. A mysterious Jewish journalist, Daniel Cohen, begins to contact Gretchen. Gretchen has been taught all her life to hate Jews, and what's more, Daniel claims that he has evidence that her father was not, in fact, killed valiantly by saving Hitler from a policeman's

gun. Instead, he thinks one of Klaus' Nazi comrades shot him from behind. Even though Daniel is Jewish, and tells Gretchen that everything she has been previously told was a lie, she can't help but believe Daniel, for reasons she herself cannot name.

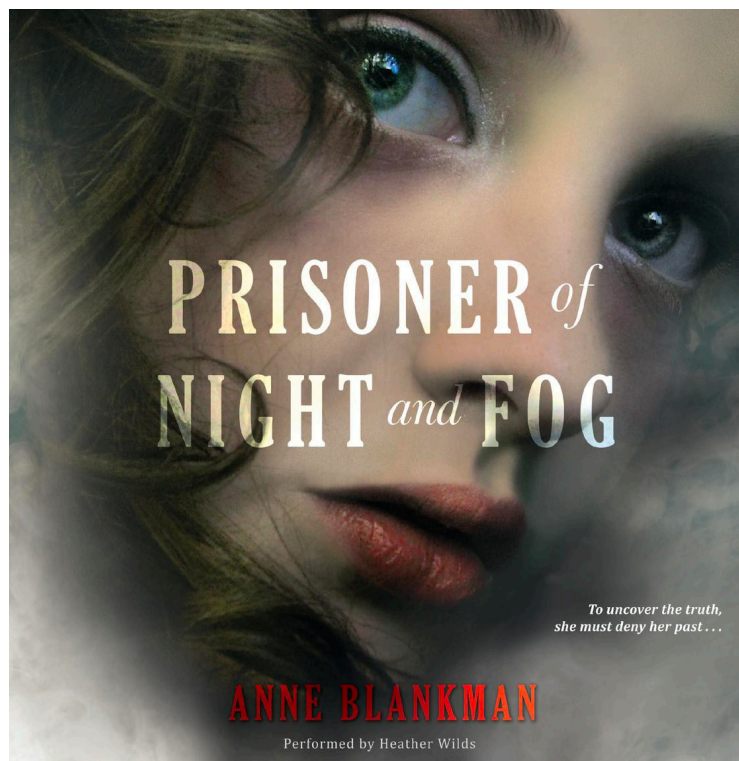
Through Daniel, Gretchen is finally able to see through the thick wall of lies the Nazis have built up around her. By this point, the story truly kicks off as the pair try to untangle the web surrounding Klaus Müller and his death. Blankman skilfully crafts Gretchen's character arc as she grapples with the truth, her family, and her

loyalties to Uncle Dolf; in no way do the main character's new values seem forced or unnatural. It is a truly deep work on how people can change for the better when they are faced with new perspectives. Not only does the book comment on personal development, because Hitler is such a developed character, Gretchen's exploration of who her Uncle Dolf really is explores the deep flaws in Hitler's character, the many theories as to why he did the evil that he did, and the secrets surrounding his mental state.

The final chapters are extremely fast-paced, with plot twists, and

fragmented parts of the mystery quickly piecing together, which is quite a stark difference to the stretched-out beginning. While this did take me out of the story, the intense turn of events drew me right back in as Gretchen and Daniel finally uncover her father's secret, and Gretchen severs all her ties to the people she grew up with and, most of all, to her cherished Uncle Dolf.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone who has enjoyed World War II literature in the past, but wants a very unique plot, setting, and an intense character journey; Blankman masterfully depicts, woven into the story, Gretchen's abusive family dynamic, the lacking mental health awareness at the time, and the overall feeling of division and suspicion spreading through Munich. Not only was the writing highly engaging (I finished the book in two days), it taught me a lot about the early Nazi party, as well as how Munich was distinctly divided by political affiliation and religion (the Jews lived in one area, the Nazis in another, the communists in a third...) before the war. As such, readers truly feel the tensions brewing in Munich as these groups come into conflict, and see the large role politics played in daily life. Readers are left with a cliff-hanger-like end, though there thankfully is a second novel. *Conspiracy of Blood and Smoke* is sure to be just as exciting as it takes place when the world is at the brink of war, with Gretchen having to face her now-enemies in the Nazi inner circle.



Prisoner of Night and Fog book cover

Courtesy of [Libra.fm](https://libra.fm)

Good Art? Bad Art? Who's to Tell?

LOUIS PARK '26

Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Édouard Manet, Paul Cézanne...

All of these names belong to famous French impressionist artists, the patrons of one of the most beloved art styles in the world. This movement began in a small salon in Paris in the late 19th century, but their art movement is now regarded as the origin of modern painting. It may be hard to believe now due to the movement's popularity, but in the late 19th century, French society was dominated by neoclassical French painting that inherited styles from the past, and impressionist painters who emerged from this conservative social atmosphere were treated as failures. Nowadays, however, these same artists are treated as geniuses of their time. Their works of art have not changed, but society's values have. Throughout the different eras of artistic evolution, art has always been a communicative window reflecting personal ideas despite external influence, symbolizing the freedom of expression.

The overall environment of a society heavily influences art. In a repressed country, authoritarian politics restrict not only the freedom of the audience to evaluate art, but also the artistic freedom of creators. For example, in Russia at the beginning

of the 20th century, the "avant-garde" movement rose to existence, defined by denying the recognition and value of existing art and pursuing a new concept of art. The avant-garde movement also expressed social phenomena well in abstract expressions, and its representative artists included Wassily Kandinsky and Kazimir Malevich. After the Russian Revolution, avant-garde art was decried as decadent, and the painters were forced to paint only landscapes and other paintings that did not contain social messages. Only after more than 60 years did people re-evaluate avant-garde art, and audiences had the chance to come up with their own interpretations of the medium.

Even outside an oppressed society, if, at the time when the work of art was created, a piece defies social norms, it will likely end up being turned away by most audiences, just as 19th-century French impressionist paintings were. Because societal norms and people's perceptions of the artistic status quo are constantly changing, the already subjective definition of "good art" is a fickle one. On that same note, due to changes in perception or sociocultural contexts, art can experience completely new interpretations.

A work of art should be evaluated freely and in various ways according to the sensibilities and interpretations of those who see, hear, and feel it. The

free interpretation of the audience is as important as the artist's creative freedom.

People's perception of art has changed a lot today. Artistic freedom is challenged less by society compared

to the past, people can freely express their voices through art, and viewers are encouraged to take their own perspectives. Such an environment has changed people's perceptions of art by allowing viewers to be more

accepting of different and unique art pieces. Although many view art as a channel of communication and messaging, there are many cases where art is easily overlooked by using the point of 'expression' to reduce the value of art. People who do not sincerely express themselves, but simply wrap their works in 'expressions' on a surface level have gained deep influence in contemporary art. There is no way to distinguish these "bad pieces of art" from "good pieces of art" because this is also what artists call "one's own way of expression".

Thinking along this train of thought, the question comes up: "Is there really a bad piece of art?" The only way to discern the quality of art is through its sincerity. Art should never be evaluated by the method of its expression or artistic technique, but rather, how well an artist's thoughts and feelings are embedded in their work. For example, Ufan Lee, one of the most notable artists in contemporary art, is famous for drawing a single dot in his work. Seeing this kind of work, people may think, "Why does a dot on canvas cost billions of dollars?" However, there is a reason why such a simple-looking work is recognized for its worth, and a painting made with dots on a white canvas is just a painting with dots on a white canvas. The focus of art lies not on the dot on the canvas, but what the purpose of the point is.



Sonia Singhal '24 / THE LAWRENCE

Senior Spotlight: Math, M&Ms, and Prefecting

LOUIS PARK '26

Do you have a student role model whom you look up to? V Formers exerting a positive influence on the underformers in the Lawrenceville community are a vital part of one's education here. There are so many V Formers invested in various activities whom we Underformers can take inspiration from. In this Senior of the Week, The Lawrence proudly introduces Satvik Dasariraju '23.

Since his II Form year, Dasariraju has gained notable influence around campus as a result of his hard work. Before peeking into Dasariraju's accomplishments, however, let's learn who he is. Dasariraju was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 2005, and now is a day student from Princeton, New Jersey, where he lives with his parents and 10-year-old sister. During his first year at Lawrenceville, Dasariraju was a proud member of the Thomas House; ironically, however, he is now a prefect in the Davidson House. Dasariraju also called the Dickinson House home as a III and IV Former. According to Dasariraju, his current favorite things are the color purple, Eminem, Arctic Monkeys, and the number three. Dasariraju also runs with the Boys' Varsity Cross Country team, and the Boys' Varsity Indoor and Outdoor Track teams where he specializes in long distance, the mile and two miles.

Dasariraju has pursued a

wide array of academic interests at Lawrenceville. Inspired by the intersecting concepts of molecular biology and anthropology, Dasariraju likes to take the quantitative spirit of problem solving in physics and mathematics and apply them to questions of human biology like aging and what it even means to think or to feel. Specifically, the Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged his interest in viewing medicine and global health beyond "the bigger picture." Additionally, Dasariraju noted that learning about how stress leads to a measurable effect on the length of telomeres, a structure found on one's chromosomes, has made him want to further study the "dialogue" between biology and the social sciences. Expanding on his passion for biology and scientific research, Dasariraju has researched cardiovascular disease as a Hutchins Science Scholar and explored his passion for math through the Math Club.

Dasariraju also loves to explore physics that deals with "roller coasters, falling off, landing back on, and the chalky residue of questions," that haven't been answered. Additionally, recently, French literature and poetry have really "captured [his] imagination." His favorite works are *The Red and the Black* by Stendhal and satirical comedies by Molière.

Many admire Dasariraju as a highly committed student and his strong dedication to academics, but equally important is his considerateness and his

warm-heartedness. His fellow Raymond House prefect, Victor Zhu '23, commented that "Raymond and his fellow prefects are lucky to work with him." Another prefect, Eddie Newsom '23, remarked that Dasariraju is "super caring and thoughtful, as he understands others' emotion from an analytical viewpoint."

His warm nature, along with his intention to help others, led Dasariraju to his favorite activity at Lawrenceville—being a prefect in the Raymond House. Being a prefect "was definitely the most formative experience [he has] had," and he knows "it'll be one of the memories [he'll] constantly look back on after Lawrenceville," said Dasariraju. He "wanted to step up to the demands of the role," because Lawrenceville and his previous Houses have been "really formative," and now as a V Former, he wanted to give back the care and memory from his previous prefects to the new class of II Formers. Dasariraju remarked that the role of a prefect "means a lot for [him] to be able to leave a legacy and say words that hopefully will be meaningful for three years after [his] graduation." Acting as a Raymond prefect has been so much fun for Dasariraju, but he has also "learned a lot about [himself], as well as what goes into shaping a community." Feeling responsible for shaping the future generation, he said he puts "a big emphasis [on] cultivating a set of norms that helps Raymond build towards



Satvik Dasariraju '23

Courtesy of *The Lawrenceville*

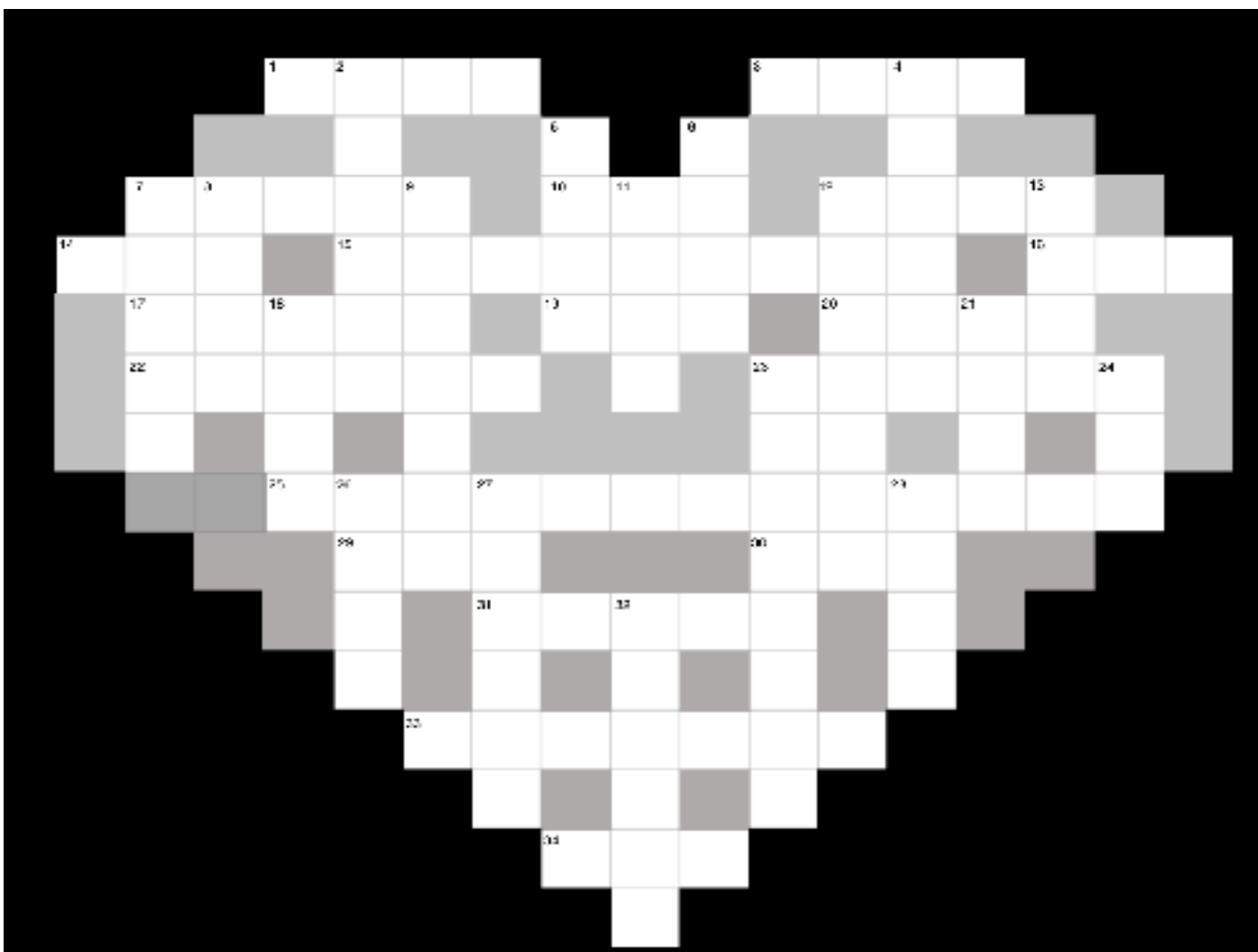
a collective sense of belonging." Moreover, despite the challenges of prefecting, Dasariraju says it is "great to work closely with the Heads of House and the other prefects." Above being a prefect and being a mentor, Dasariraju is closer to the definition of a friend. Interacting with II Formers through playing chess, ping pong, and most recently, the 'Prefect vs. Freshman' basketball game, he feels "so grateful for the opportunity to guide and be alongside the boys, it means the world to [him]." Without a doubt, Dasariraju has worked hard for the Raymond boys and the Lawrenceville community. Dasariraju has also left a message to Raymond boys: "You're halfway there! Clear eyes, full hearts, can't lose."

Under the motto "keep it simple, stupid," Dasariraju has noted his key to success is the wonderful people around him, specifically the incredible souls

who run with him every day and the remarkable people of the Raymond House. With one final term of his Lawrenceville career ahead of him, Dasariraju looks back to his favorite moment at Lawrenceville: September 3, 2022 when Dickinson won House Olympics on the same day that Davidson won the inaugural Lower Cup—both of which coincided with his birthday. Yet he values every single moment he has spent on campus because all the time was an "opportunity to do, learn, and experience new things, making incredible bonds and friendships." Now, looking ahead to a new chapter in his life, Dasariraju shared one last thought: "Until I graduate, I want to do all my thinking and all my doing for this time and for Lawrenceville."

The Lawrence Crossword: Valentine's Day

CLAIRE CHOW '24



Across

1. Hugs and kisses
3. Female horse
7. Twitch

10. Triumph (onomatopoeia)
12. Champagne brand
14. Fear/wonder
15. Term for a four letter word

16. A Lawrenceville School color
17. On Halloween, your house is often _____
19. It is

20. What you do on a horse
22. Vivacious
23. Would you like them medium rare?
25. A classic valentine's gift: heart-_____
29. Cheer used in bullfighting and flamenco dancing
30. Movie with blue birds that are now extinct
31. What does cupid shoot?
33. Classic Valentine's Day gift
34. Chocolates that look like Skittles

Down

2. Common aphrodisiac
4. Roommate (inf.)
5. Some
6. Trio in Macbeth
7. Term of endearment
8. Wooden pirate leg
9. What schools do doctors need to go to?
11. Sky ice
13. Tourist hike
18. Grade point averages
21. Spanish artist
24. "So when you're near me, darling/ Can't you hear me _____." - ABBA
26. Grasp
27. A string of _____
28. Symbol of love and peace
32. Crew

House, Harkness, Home: A Uniquely Lawrenceville Experience

LOUIS PARK '26

My education began at a public elementary school in Daegu, Korea. In Korean public schools, students generally learn most subjects from a single homeroom teacher. All of my learning happened in one classroom, consisting of about 40 students organized by age. Considering that my school had 1,600 students, facilities were somewhat lacking—with only one sandy outdoor field, an indoor gym that could barely fit 200 people, and no other facilities to learn in other than that one classroom, my elementary school was most definitely understocked.

This style of education made me question if my teachers—who relied solely on our textbooks—could sufficiently cover all their course's material. Was this the most in-depth learning I could receive? Our lessons were standardized across every class in every grade, and the content was determined solely by age, rather than ability or merit. Our classes were conducted exclusively as lectures, so we students sat and listened to teachers' explanations without opportunities to collaborate or question the material. Although learning through repeated study and memorization does have some strengths, doing so can also fail to challenge students or discourage them from furthering their education. My

school also lacked resources for athletics and arts, so we students could not pursue their interests in those fields. Furthermore, fierce competition often sprang up between us, creating an incredibly tense environment

Although the time I spent at public school with my friends

than 300 students, which allowed me to form close relationships with friends and teachers, as well as focus on the process of learning in a smaller class. Living with students from around the world broadened my horizons and exposed me to new cultures I had never experienced during my

helped me reach a different level.

As a middle school, however, Eaglebrook still had many rules; students had to turn in their electronic devices before bed, attend daily mandatory meals, and follow scheduled bedtimes and wake-up times.

With these restrictions in

thinking skills, and I've really gotten to interact with my thinking as I've grown used to sharing my opinions and actively participating in my classes. I've gotten to view real artists' exhibitions in the Gruss Center for Art and Design's Hutchins Galleries, and even have some of my own works auctioned off. I can bury myself in a stack of books in the Bunn Library, or help work on a new Lawrence issue in Pop Hall. I've listened to prestigious speakers talk about their fields, giving me insight on subjects that I never thought I'd be interested in. But above all, Lawrenceville's House system has helped me connect and grow together with friends of different backgrounds, allowing my classmates and me to develop into thoughtful, dignified, well-rounded individuals.

What is unique about Lawrenceville is that it helps us find a path to become not only good students, but also good people, with the School's core values: House, Harkness, Heart. Through meeting great friends, teachers, alumni, and mentors who acknowledge, care, and encourage each other's differences, we learn not only within the classroom, but also outside of it, in every moment we spend on campus. My experience at this school makes me hope we ensure that this "ordinary school life" we experience is not taken for granted.



Aileen Ryu '25/THE LAWRENCE

was incredibly precious to me, I was looking for a more creative and challenging educational system. I wanted to experience studying in a larger and more diverse setting. Thanks to my parents, who understood this desire, I entered the U.S. junior boarding school system.

The first school I attended outside of Korea was the Eaglebrook School, in Deerfield, Massachusetts. The word "opportunity" best suits my experience at Eaglebrook. Eaglebrook has less

time in Korea. Before my time at Eaglebrook, the concept of boarding school was completely foreign to me; not only was it my first time studying abroad, but it was also my first time living away from family. I learned how to be self-reliant, how to adapt to an environment away from my family, and how to balance schoolwork with life. With around 60 elective courses, different levels of classes, and the facilities to support and challenge student interests, Eaglebrook's education

place, I still felt limited in my ability to delve deeper into academics or extracurriculars.

But since coming to Lawrenceville, I've been able to experience an education like no other. The numerous challenging courses I've gotten, and will be able to take—along with my top-notch teachers—has helped satisfy my intellectual curiosity in a way I never before thought possible. The Harkness method has allowed me to raise my voice and grow my listening and critical

A Non-Football Fan's Guide to Watching the Super Bowl

BRYAN BOANO '25

Hey Guys, it's Bryan again, your favorite once-a-term Lawrence sports writer (this is definitely the first time I've used that joke). Sunday, February 12, marks one of the world's most significant sporting events. In just 2 days, the Kansas City Chiefs and Philadelphia Eagles will face off at the State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona, in what will be the culmination of the 2022-23 NFL season: Super Bowl LVII. Not everyone has been intensely following the National Football League for the past 6 months, and one might find themselves completely out of their depth when attending a Super Bowl party with their friends and family. If you have ever found yourself in this situation before, be not afraid my friend, for I can help you. In at least 500-600 ish words (Andrew's orders) I will provide you with a comprehensive guide of what to expect to happen in the game, what to say to make it seem like you know what you're talking about, and,

perhaps more importantly, what NOT to say in order to prevent yourself from looking like a clueless casual. Let me not waste any more time on the intro; I need to go to bed at a reasonable time tonight.

What To Expect From The Big Game

One thing to understand is that this year's game is one of the most even Super Bowl matchups that we have seen in quite a long time. The Chiefs and Eagles both were the first seed in their respective side of the bracket, meaning that they were so good at beating people that they got to skip the first round of the playoffs and get an extra week of rest while all the other scrubs were playing through the first round. Both teams had the exact same record, 16-3, so they're both very evenly matched. Coming into this game, the all-knowing Vegas casino people currently have the Eagles spread as -1.5, meaning that if you bet on the Eagles, the bet would cash out if they won by at least 2

points. In contrast, the Super Bowl champion Rams had a -4.5 spread heading into their bout with the Bengals last year, meaning that even the never-wrong Vegas guys aren't quite sure who's going to win this one, so you can expect a very close and competitive game. But not only can you expect a close game, but you can also expect both teams to fill up the scoreboard. In the regular season, the Chiefs ranked first in both total yards (how

far they moved the ball) and total points (much more self-explanatory) per game, while the Eagles ranked third in both categories. To put into perspective, the most average offense this year was the Giants, who scored 21.5 points per game. The Chiefs, meanwhile, had 29.2. But the two teams accomplished these feats in very different ways. Despite having a worse overall offense than the Chiefs, the Eagles were top five in rush-

ing yards per game, meaning they ran with the ball a lot more than bottom-half Kansas City. The Chiefs got most of their yards and points through passing, as their quarterback, Patrick Mahomes (more on him later), led the league in total touchdown passes and passing yards. So expect the team in green to keep the ball on the ground on Sunday, while the team in white lets the ball fly all over the field.

cont. on page 8



The Eagles face off against the Chiefs for all the glory in Arizona's State Farm Stadium this Sunday

What To Say During The Game To Sound Smart, And All That Good Stuff

There are simply too many storylines and pieces of context to mention leading up to the big game to include in this article, but here are some surefire ways to start an interesting dialogue with someone more knowledgeable than you:

"The Eagles have had the easiest road to a Super Bowl ever."

The lack of signature wins over extremely strong opponents has been a prevalent criticism of Philadelphia all year. You'll get bonus points if you say something along the lines of "We'd have a Niners-Chiefs Super Bowl if Brock Purdy didn't get injured!"

"I can't believe Mahomes beat the Bengals on one ankle!"

Mahomes suffered an ankle injury against the Jacksonville Jaguars three weeks ago, one that usually takes 3-6 weeks to come back from, but he played the very next week against Cincinnati, beating their quarterback, Joe Burrow.

"Have you seen that clip of Jalen Hurts squatting 600 lb?!"

It's quite an impressive video. I've watched it myself.

"If Mahomes wins the Super Bowl and MVP this year, where does he rank amongst all-time quarterbacks? He's already the most talented QB ever."

This will be sure to start some barbershop-style discourse. (If someone asks you your current all-time QB ranking, start off safe by saying 1. Tom Brady 2. Peyton Manning 3. Joe Montana, then drop something crazy by saying 4. Big Ben. If you really want to get controversial, say "the guy who was on the Packers" isn't in your top then. If they ask if you're talking about Aaron Rodgers or Brett Favre, just say "Yes").

"Imagine if it was a Bills-Eagles Super Bowl, the country simply doesn't have the infrastructure to handle something like that."

This one is funny, because Bills fans have a reputation for jumping through tables whenever they win, and an Eagles fan recently ended up hospitalized due to celebrating too hard after they reached the Super Bowl; make of that what you will.

"Do you guys remember The Philly Special?"

Anybody besides Bostonians will appreciate this one.

"Man, Joe Burrow is so cool."

This will really get the crowd on your side.

"I wonder who Travis and Jason's mom is going to root for during the Super Bowl."

Travis Kelce, a tight end for the Chiefs, and his older brother Jason, an offensive lineman on the Eagles, are both the best at their position in the league. For added barbershop debate, say that Kelce is better than "This guy called Gronk."

(Save this one for after the game): *"Man, the [Insert Losing Team] must've been pissed when they got their scripts pregame!"*

There have been a bunch of jokes about the NFL being scripted that have been making rounds on social media.

What Not To Say

"I still think Josh Allen is better than Mahomes."

They'll hate you for telling the truth.

"I don't think Joe Burrow is that cool."

See above.

"You could put any quarterback into the Eagles system, and they'd be just as good."

Not only is it not true, but even saying it as a joke is not worth the attempts on your life from Eagles fans.

"I'm just here for the halftime show."

It's a valid reason to watch the game, but just keep this to yourself.

"When is LeBron going to show up?"

You're not funny.

So there you have it, a basic pregame analysis and an extensive list of good and bad conversation starters to help you, a non-football fan, not feel completely out of your element during Sunday's big game. Feel free to try these out, or just stuff your face with food to avoid conversation—that tactic never fails.





Most importantly, remember to have fun with the Super Bowl: after all, it only happens once a year. Get some friends, a TV, and a whole bunch of food, and just have a good time. Who knows? Maybe, if you're lucky, you'll have a Head of School Day to look forward to the next day.




This is Joe Burrow, for reference. Do you see why it might be inaccurate to say that he's not cool?!

Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAWRENCE

Winterfest Picks

	Autri Basu Head of Winterfest	Malia Zovich Assistant Head of Winterfest	Eric Frankel, Cira Sar & Anna Saltarelli Another Beautiful Story	Emily Hammond Learned Ladies	Sonia Singhal & Allie McKeon After	Anoushka Sharma & Rania Shah Chai
						
Best part of your show?	directing who?	The dark space behind the stage curtains	I don't have any more lines	The message that women are inherently smarter than men	Jellybeans	anoushka's voice actor era and rania's cup doodles
Favorite excuse to skip rehearsal?	hockey. game.	Sorry, there was traffic	showering	Some people thought eating dinner was more important	Wilder kidnapped me	a wedding in cancun
Why will your show get booed off stage?	swearing in smearing announcements	Because I'm not in it	cassie's manspreading	Because men have trouble with basic anatomy	Hunks in helmets	too woke

	Lily Hooge & Roan McDonald The Harbingers of Turpitude	Frances Hsu & Claire Jiang The Omelet Murder Case	Stephanie Xu Candy Heart	Philip Burgess and Gabrienne Chery Dr. Fritz	Adrian and Sofia Carlisi Love is Knocking on Your Door
					
Best part of your show?	My dairy farm	The scene where we bring an actual omelet on stage *clickbait*	No f bombs	Autri telling us it's too long	the directors
Favorite excuse to skip rehearsal?	It's my birthday	varsity athletes	Might get tornadoed away	"I'm not feeling it"	I'm playing laser tag.
Why will your show get booed off stage?	Copyright infringement of Impulse	we're just too funny (we're funnier than Dr. Fritz)	Sorry if we hit you with candy!	We're actually funnier than that omelet one	the actors