

## HSArts Community Newsletter - Feb 24

Brian Nieh • hace un día • Friday, Feb 24 at 12:00 PM • **San Francisco High School of the Arts**



**San Francisco High School of the Arts Community Newsletter | February 24,  
2023**

**FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

**Important Dates**

**Feb 25** Summer Camp Open House

**Mar 3** Starbound Dance Competition

**Mar 15** Q3 Music and Musical Theatre Showcase

**Message from our Artistic Director**

*Mr. Dongsheng Wei, Artistic Director*



**Remarks from our Head of School**

Greetings everyone!

It is wonderful to see hard work get rewarded! The sweat and tears from our dancers and our teachers was highly recognized during this past week's Applause Talent dance competition by winning five of the first place in every single category entered, best Choreography and being the school with the highest points! Go Phoenix!

Our dancers are so focused in their daily training and practices throughout the school week. We are looking forward to a whole new progress on the artistry and detailed techniques developments in dance!

Congratulations to everyone on winning the first place for five dances and achieving the highest score of the competition in last weekend's Applause Talent Dance Competition! Congratulations to our choreographer and dance teacher, Ms. Hanna Zhang, for winning the best choreographer award during the competition! Thank you to all of the teachers and students for your team work and hard work! Go team! Go HSArts!

*- Dr. Sherry Zhang  
Head of School  
San Francisco High School of the Arts*

**ACADEMICS**

## ***Featured Academic News of the Week***

*Mr. David Gallagher, English Teacher*

Here are a few highlights in English classes over the past few weeks.

In fifth grade we are about halfway through *Holes*, a 1998 young adult mystery comedy novel written by Louis Sachar. The protagonist, Stanley Yelnats, is under a curse that began with his great-great-grandfather and has followed the family since then. Stanley has been sent to a boys' detention center where the boys build character by spending all day digging holes exactly five feet wide and five feet deep. There is no lake at Camp Green Lake. But there are an awful lot of holes, thus the title.

In middle school, we are just finishing up the Rod Serling teleplay, "The Monsters are Due on Maple St," which was written and performed for the television show "The Twilight Zone," in 1960. The teleplay shows how easily society can tear itself apart when people are afraid and suspicious of one another. It begins on Main Street, U.S.A. and ends as a paranoid, out-of-control mob.

In high school, our freshman and sophomores just finished writing an argumentative essay about the novel, *The Lord of the Flies*, written in 1954 by the Nobel Prize-winning British author William Golding. Students presented written arguments designed to persuade readers who or what was responsible for the demise of society on the island where a group of young British boys are stranded.

Finally, in British Literature, we are wrapping up 1984, George Orwell's dystopian masterpiece, published in 1949. The iconic English novelist and social critic writes about the risks of government overreach, totalitarianism and repression of all persons and behaviors within society.

## **ARTS**

## Featured Artist during Black History Month

Ms. Dana Crigler, Ballet Teacher



**Alvin Ailey Jr.** (January 5, 1931 – December 1, 1989) was an American dancer, director, choreographer, and activist who founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT). He created AAADT and its affiliated **Alvin Ailey American Dance Center** (later **Ailey School**) as havens for nurturing Black artists and expressing the universality of the African-American experience through dance.

Born in Rogers, Texas, at the height of the Great Depression in the violently racist and segregated south, during his youth Ailey was barred from interacting with mainstream society. As an escape, Ailey found refuge in the church, sneaking out at night to watch adults dance, and in writing a journal, a practice that he maintained his entire life. Ailey studied a wide range of dance styles and techniques — from ballet to Native American inspired movement studies — at Horton's school, which was one of the first racially integrated dance schools in the United States. **[13][14]** Though Horton became his mentor, **[15]** Ailey did not commit to dancing full-time; instead he pursued academic courses, studying romance languages and writing at UCLA. **[16][17]** He continued these studies at San Francisco State in 1951. Living in San Francisco, he met Maya Angelou, then known as Marguerite Johnson, **[18]** with whom he formed a nightclub act called "Al and Rita." **[19]** Eventually, he returned to study dance with Horton in Los Angeles. **[20]**

In 1958 Ailey founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater to present his vision of honoring Black culture through dance. The company had its debut at the 92nd Street Y. The performance included Ailey's first masterpiece, *Blues Suite*, which followed men and women as they caroused and cavorted over the course of an evening while blues music played in the background until church bells began to ring, signalling a return to mundane life.

Though AAADT was formed to celebrate African American culture and to provide performances for black dancers, who were frequently denied opportunities due to racist mores of the time, Ailey proudly employed artists based solely on artistic talent and integrity, regardless of their background. **[35]** In addition to his work as artistic director and choreographer with AADT, Ailey also choreographed ballets for other companies including American Ballet Theatre, **[36]** Joffrey Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, **[37]** and The Metropolitan Opera. For American Ballet Theater, he created *The River* (1970), one of several choreographies he set to the jazz music of Duke Ellington. **[38]**

## Featured Arts Teacher - Ms. Annie Lester

We are happy to introduce Ms. Annie to HSArts and our dance department! She has been working closely with Ms. Dana and Mr. Wei with our ballet program, both full-time and for the Young Artists. We look forward to working with her!



Annie Lester is a Baltimore, Maryland native. After training through her middle and high school years with The Washington School of Ballet, Baltimore School for the Arts, Midatlantic Center for the Performing Arts, Pittsburgh Ballet Theater, and spending summers with American Ballet Theater and Houston Ballet, Ms. Lester relocated to San Francisco in 2021 to pursue her second year with Alonzo King LINES' training program after completing her first year via Zoom during the pandemic. Due to an injury, she ended her performance career early, but has since been getting in touch with her background in teaching ballet, jazz, modern, and contemporary with various schools in the Midatlantic region, and has just joined the school this January. She is elated to join the accomplished staff and talented students of the HS Arts dance program.

## ***ADMISSIONS***

## ***Admissions News***

HSArts will continue to provide private campus tours over the next several weeks giving all interested students and their families the opportunity to further explore our programs and offerings. Please RSVP [here](#) to schedule your tour.

For families interested in learning more about the 17 exciting summer programs at HSArts this year, please join **HSArts Summer Camp Open House/Info Session on Feb 25, 2023 at 2:30pm**. Please RSVP [here](#) for the event!

## ***MSSONS***

## ***YOUNG ARTISTS***



## Young Artists News of the Week

Ms. Hanna Zhang, Young Artists Director and Teacher

Another successful competition weekend at Applause Talent Dance Competition! We took home five 1st Place Overall awards 🏆🏆🏆🏆🏆 and the Highest Score of the Day studio award 💎. Here are a few pictures from the competition. A full award breakdown can be [found here!](#)



Abigail Wong (10) from our Young Artists Program received 1st Place Overall 🏆 and an Elite Platinum award in the First Call Junior division for her solo "Ode to Lotus" and was crowned the Junior Applause title winner! 👑



Emilie Fu (14) from our Young Artists Program received 1st Place Overall 🏆 and a Double Platinum award in the First Call Teen division for her solo "Dancing in the Rain," as well as a Special Judges' Award for her amazing lines ❤️💎



Abbie Tanabe (13) and Kylie Tang (12) received 1st Place Overall 🏆 and a Double Platinum award in the First Call Teen division for their duet "Together We Stand." 🐱🐱



Kylie Tang (12) from our Young Artists Program received 3rd Place Overall 🏆 and Double Platinum in the First Call Junior division for her solo “Remembrance”!

Ms. Hanna received the Best Choreography Award 🏆👑 for her masterpiece “Calligraphy” among 200+ entries from all studios!

HSArts received the Highest Score of the Day award 🏆 as the dance institution that accumulated the greatest number of points in the First Call competition level!

Next stop on the list — we will be heading to @starboundcomp in March! Stay tuned!

## ***STUDENT LIFE***

## **Cooking Club - Biscuit and Gravy**

They made biscuits and gravy.  
Pictures coming soon, I hope!

## **Spring Quarter Three Music and Musical Theatre Showcase - Coming Soon!**



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Coming soon!**

- Feb 25** Summer Camp Open House
- Mar 3** Starbound Dance Competition
- Mar 14** Quarter 3 Showcase Open Rehearsal
- Mar 15** Quarter 3 Music and Musical Theatre Showcase
- Mar 17-April 1** Taiwan Trip
- Mar 27-31** Spring Break
- May 19** Headliners Dance Competition

Communication is essential and we strive to connect with our students, parents, and families throughout the school year. We will continue reaching out to you with this weekly newsletter. We also encourage you to visit our website and follow our social pages including Facebook and Instagram for announcements, information, and celebrations.



2-24-2023