

ASPIRATIONS



A publication of the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts Institute, the non-profit partner organization with the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts



40 YEARS



ONE NOCCA



MASTERING LEARNING & CREATIVITY



Dear Friends of NOCCA,

NOCCA – and its approach to learning – have flourished since a small cadre of students and artist/teachers first gathered in borrowed rooms at the New Orleans Museum of Art and the University of New Orleans in January, 1974.

Particularly over the last 15 years, NOCCA has experienced exponential growth in terms of enrollment, offerings and facilities. Faculty, administration and staff have given full measure to reach each new bar.

Yet, NOCCA’s heart on day one remains NOCCA’s heart today. Everyday we watch mentors guide students as they learn to express themselves thoughtfully, with purpose, and with their own voice. NOCCA has changed the lives of thousands of young men and women – who in turn change the world in which we live. They have kept our culture vibrant and growing. For 40 years, Friends of NOCCA have shown unwavering support for the talented young artists in our region. Here’s to the next 40.

Sincerely,



Joel Vilmenay
President

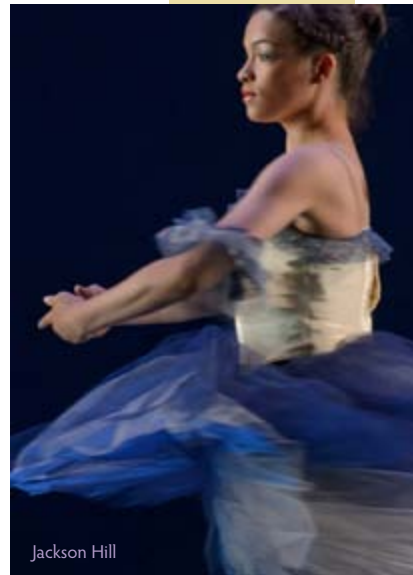


Sally Perry
Executive Director

“This year, I learned one of the simplest yet hardest lessons to grasp: how to express my values through my artwork.”

TORI GREEN
Visual Arts, Level III

See article, Page 4



Jackson Hill



The New Orleans Center for Creative Arts Institute is the non-profit partner organization with NOCCA, Louisiana’s tuition-free arts conservatory for high school students. Our mission is to provide access to excellence in the arts for students, faculty and the community at large.

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THE NOCCA FORUM CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS

Construction on the new NOCCA Forum for arts and academics is proceeding quickly and scheduled to be complete in September. With both of NOCCA’s newest programs – the Academic Studio and Culinary Arts – expanding to four full grades in 2014-15, the Forum is essential to meeting classroom, science labs and studio needs. The Culinary Arts Center features a professional/instructional kitchen, bake and butcher shops, and cafe open to the public, while academic facilities include science and math labs, fabrication studio and flexible classrooms that support NOCCA’s highly integrated, inquiry-based, master-apprentice approach to teaching. Together with a powerful curriculum and the passionate work of students and their mentors, the NOCCA Forum is poised to become a regional epicenter for innovation in learning.





LUKE DIAMOND

Drama, Level III
\$1,053,672 in scholarship offers earned.
Attending: University of Minnesota, Guthrie Theatre BFA Actors Program

NOCCA has freed me artistically by teaching me that – in theatre – there is never a right answer. There is only storytelling. How do I tell this story the best way it can be told? This question lies at the crux of what theatre artists do, and answering it is hard work. The reward: affecting audience members, like an elderly man who tugged me aside after our performance of *The Diary of Anne Frank* junior year. “I lived next door to the Franks growing up,” he told me. “And tonight, you all recreated the fear and hope of living in that time.” NOCCA has not only equipped me with dramatic skill, but with the ability to impact audiences. I owe my confidence as an artist to this school.

AVERY OWINGS

Creative Writing, Level III
\$676,000 in scholarship offers earned.
Attending: Oberlin College

This year I realized that literature isn't only an art or course of study. Literature is the collection of human experiences; learning to write is learning how to render experience more effectively. Literature, also, is a way of life, a life as committed to vividly feeling daily moments as it is to collecting a range of experiences. I'm leaving NOCCA endowed with both an appreciation of my life as it exists every day and an appetite for new moments and sights.



CHAYIL JOHNSON

Culinary Arts, Level III (Junior)

The most important thing I've learned this year at NOCCA is international cuisine. Learning the cuisines from so many other countries is a wonderful experience and often mind-blowing. It has given me a greater respect and knowledge of other cultures: how they live, how they correlate with other diversities, and most specifically how and why they eat what they eat. What I might enjoy the most is seeing how all of these completely different countries can sometimes tie into each other on one common meeting ground to become a new cuisine that's the best of both cultures. This is something that I'm excited to learn about when I wake up in the morning.



PRINSEY WALKER

Musical Theatre, Level III (Junior)



ZSAK POWE

Media Arts, Level III
\$80,000 in scholarship offers earned.
Attending: New York University

What NOCCA has taught me the most is the importance of communication. Whether that be with a crew working on a film set, with actors when scheduling, or just letting others know what project you are currently working on. Allowing people to hear your ideas, concepts and plans not only helps when creating a project, but also in networking and getting others involved. Often, we get caught up with activities, plans, promised assignments; we mess up and forget. But instead of focusing on the failure, we address our weaknesses and try to work on them. Becoming professional is not an overnight process, it takes many failures and trials, but when you reach that level, it becomes worth it. Communication is an element that is necessary for all of us.



JEFFERY MILLER

Jazz Level IV
\$301,642 in scholarship offers.
Attending: The Juilliard School

This year at NOCCA I learned that music is truly a part of who I am. With each passing

KNOX VAN HORN

Musical Theatre, Level II (junior)

NOCCA has taught me a lot over the years. I've learned all kinds of singing, acting and dancing that I would never learn anywhere else in this city. But NOCCA teaches more than that. I think the most important thing I learned this year is that there is always a place for you, no matter what. I came to NOCCA my freshman year, but was unable to attend my sophomore year because of scheduling with my sending school. I was terrified to come back because I didn't know who would be in my class. But in many ways it was like I never left. My new class welcomed me immediately, and I felt instantly at home with them. I don't think there are many other places like NOCCA where you could come in and be accepted immediately, no matter what.



minute, I think of more and more music. I am constantly composing in my head. NOCCA has helped to instill in me an eternal loyalty to my art. Here, surrounded by my classmates and teachers with whom I share an indefatigable love of music, I learned to execute music with utmost care



LEONARD GALMON

Visual Arts, Level I
\$210,000 in scholarship offers earned, including the Ron Brown Scholarship
Attending: Yale University

Before coming to NOCCA art was more or less a hobby, something I enjoyed doing in my free time. I had already taken an art class at my sending high school, but I saw it only as a break from classes. I didn't have any aspirations then. But entering NOCCA, surrounded by so many talented students and excellent teachers, inspired me to see how far I could take my skills, and I began trying to improve, trying to actually say things through my artwork. Although I'm nowhere near as good as I would like to be, gratification came when I realized that my peers, the amazing group that I admired and envied, actually respected me as an artist. They liked my artwork and I was happy. I guess the most important things I've learned at NOCCA this past year are, first, I have a lot to learn, and second, I have the potential to really become a professional artist.

As I enter my senior year at NOCCA and look back, the most important thing that I have learned is that creativity is a wonderful thing. The most effective art is often produced not by one person, but by a collection of people. After

watching my friends grow as intellectual artists, I have seen how we impact the lives of others, while we do what we live to do. We have all developed our own voices, but when we work together, what we create is above and

beyond. In the performing arts, our teachers often preach ensemble. NOCCA is one huge ensemble. Each student, teacher and discipline comes together to support one another and to integrate our arts to impact New Orleans.

and respect. The pioneers of this music sacrificed so much so that we are even able to play it, so it is only right that I learn it the right way. Learning it the right way helps me love it the right way. And loving the music the right way helps me to love myself since music is such a big part of me.



THE ACADEMIC STUDIO: YEAR THREE
 Kyle Wedberg, NOCCA President & CEO

We call it the NOCCA DNA. It is comprised of the elements we used as our design principles for the full day curriculum and they were drawn from NOCCA's work in the arts.

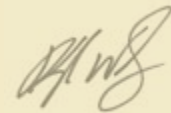
They are, simply put: having command of subject; being able to take and give critique; respect for artists, work and material; attention and awareness; individual voice collaboration; professionalism and the skills to live and make a living.

Others are catching on. If you google 21st Century Skills you will find similar lists. These are the skills that many thinkers believe our workforce and leadership need to display and inhabit in order to be great in this century, the century in

which today's high school students will be operating for the next 40 years.

I am proud to lead a faculty and a student body that is not focused on an arbitrary sense of finish or completion - whether that be a competition, an end of course test or some other manufactured place where finality is insinuated. Being an artist, being a thinker, being a leader and just being better than one was yesterday is a life long endeavor.

Whether called the NOCCA DNA or 21st Century Skills, they are the attributes being honed everyday by students at NOCCA. And it is this work embodied through them that fills me with hope for our city, state, country and world.



% of Academic Studio students scoring at the two highest levels
ALGEBRA I 90% • BIOLOGY 92% • ENGLISH II 100% • GEOMETRY 89% • ENGLISH III 91%

THE BOXCAR: NOW OPEN (and tastes so good!)

We're happy to announce that The Boxcar - The NOCCA Institute's food truck project - is officially open for business!

You can keep tabs on The Boxcar's menu and location by following @BoxcarNOLA, liking The Boxcar's Facebook page, and visiting BoxcarNOLA.com.

The Boxcar uses fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs from the Press Street Gardens (another Institute project), ensuring our menu is seasonal and locally sourced. The menu was devised by NOCCA

Culinary Arts faculty and alumni. The truck is aligned with NOCCA's Culinary Arts program and offers students the opportunity to get first-hand experience in the real-world restaurant industry.

While the Press Street Gardens continue to remain in the city permitting process as of our press deadline, garden staff are producing from a satellite site leased from Habitat for Humanity. With construction soon to be underway, we anticipate a production and educational garden fully blooming by early fall.



ANDREA GROS
 Drama



"An Open Mind, a Brave Heart, and a Willing Spirit.' This quote by Mr. Sanford Meisner was one of the first things that I learned as I walked into NOCCA's Drama Department five years ago. And over the past five years I've done everything I could to exemplify these characteristics. *An Open Mind* - The Institute and NOCCA have allowed me to dream big and achieve the unthinkable. *A Brave Heart* - The NOCCA Institute made it possible for me to attend our senior trip to Chicago where I auditioned for over 16 schools. Out of 16, I was accepted into 14 BFA Acting programs across the country. And *A Willing Spirit* - Thanks to the Institute's financial support, I had the privilege of attending Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts Summer Acting Conservatory in 2013. I saw that Rutgers University was the place for me and I will be heading off to train in Acting there this fall. I am truly thankful for NOCCA and The NOCCA Institute for all that they have empowered, instilled and blessed me with. With my whole heart I am forever thankful and grateful for the Institute, my teachers, and the wonderful & creative people that have made NOCCA my HOME!"

\$330,160 earned in college scholarships
 Attending Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts



The NOCCA Institute awarded \$159,000 in Term-Time and Summer Study Financial Aid in 2013-14. Students receiving aid from the Institute graduated from NOCCA with almost \$6 million in scholarship offers and aid to college (not including TOPS). Support from foundations, corporations and individuals for this program opened the doors to exciting futures for many students, and we thank you.

VICTOR PAZ
 Vocal Music



"Many say that it takes a village to raise a child. For young artists, NOCCA and The NOCCA Institute are that village at every step - providing the necessary tools for aspiring artists, like myself, to pursue our dreams. The extraordinary training I have received from my mentors throughout my years here has not only provided me with a solid foundation in my art, but also enabled me to find my unique voice as an artist. While at NOCCA, I have learned to appreciate the level of commitment and dedication that it takes to be a musician, but perhaps more importantly, the value of art as a means of union among men. The NOCCA Institute, through their financial aid programs, has made it possible for me to spend two summers at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, a prestigious summer program in Lenox, Massachusetts. It is with humble gratitude that I bid farewell to the entire NOCCA community, assured in my preparedness to continue my training as a musician in college."

\$302,000 earned in college scholarships
 Attending Manus College The New School for Music

BRIAN KING
 Classical Instrumental



"Last summer, I was accepted into the Aspen Music Festival and School. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life. I learned a lot and met some of my best friends, one of whom introduced me to the college I will be attending next fall, Oberlin. I would not have been able to go if it were not for the financial aid I received from The NOCCA Institute and I am deeply grateful."

\$360,000 earned in college scholarships
 Attending Oberlin Conservatory of Music

CHALLENGING YOUNG ARTISTS

Each year, a cadre of master artists and alumni visit NOCCA's classrooms, expanding skill sets and challenging students to a higher level of artistry. We invite you into a handful of this year's residencies.

CULINARY ARTS ►



A diverse collective of master chefs visited Culinary Arts this year, sharing their specialties and challenging students in exciting new ways. First up, **Chef Jeff Henderson**, who invited students to appear with him on his syndicated cooking show, *Family Style with Chef Jeff*. **Becky Brocato** showed students how to turn bread into iconic art for New Orleans' St. Joseph Altars, while **Rachel Stickney** taught students how to make

melt-in-your-mouth macaroons. As the year closed, **Chef Nathan Richard** passed on Cajun traditions and the time-honored way to make hogshead cheese and boudin sausage.

BALLET MEMPHIS ►



In a residency made possible through a grant from the New Orleans Theatre Association, Ballet Memphis members **Virginia Pilgrim** and **Brandon Ramey** spent a week at NOCCA, leading master classes for Level I - IV dance students and choreographing a new work on 11 upper-level dancers. The new piece, called *Caprice*, premiered to audiences at May's Dance Concert. The team residency featuring the collaboration and expertise of both a ballerina and a male dancer turned out to be a perfect model. "Absolutely rewarding and confidence building," as one student exclaimed.

SARAH VOWELL ►



We love **Sarah Vowell**. The essayist, NPR commentator and columnist always finds time to visit with NOCCA's Creative Writing students, sharing with them her acute sense of observation that allows her to see ironies and connections in history. "My work is about how things are remembered, and how the past is still so present. I assume I'll have to explain some things, so I decided to enjoy the

ride," filling her work with tangents and digressions that amazingly and insightfully tie together in the end. She came to writing first as an art critic, then as a radio commentator. "On radio, the writing must be action-packed and fast because listeners have so many distractions. But it makes for an exciting kind of storytelling." She has a keen love of sense of place: "Not every town has a fascinating backstory, but yours does. There is an embarrassment of riches all around here. These don't have to be the subject of your work, but they can filter into and color what you write."

FONDAKOWSKI & WORTEL ►



In preparation for recreating one of NOCCA Drama Department's most powerful works, *Se-Pa-Rate*, current Level I - III students worked with Emmy-nominated screenwriter and playwright **Leigh Fondakowski** (*The Laramie Project*) and visual artist **Reva Wortel** (above) over two weeks in April. The guest artists showed students techniques for storytelling other than the spoken word, setting the foundation for the new production scheduled for this November.

MICHAEL FREEMAN ►



Jazz alumnus **Michael Freeman** returned to NOCCA to discuss with jazz and

classical instrumental students careers in music additional to performance. Now an advertising music supervisor with clients such as American Express and NASCAR, Michael explained the legalities, realities and creative sides to the field: publishing vs. master rights, licensing vs. parody use; how music is paced differently in a movie vs. an ad where the music represents the brand. "To walk into a music house, you need to be really good at what you do, including engineering skills. But most importantly, don't be afraid to go after what you want." "Did college prepare you for that?" one student asked. "Honestly," Michael replied, "NOCCA did. I was light years ahead of my classmates when I got to college."

VISUAL ARTS ►



Visual Arts alum **Carl Joe Williams** (above left) was joined by **Todd Johson** (above right), **Maddy Rosenberg** and **Meg Turner** for week-long Visual Arts workshops which gave students the opportunity to focus on using found objects for painting surfaces; the intersection of 2- and 3-D design; bookmaking using mixed media; and wet plate photographic printing.

THEATRE DESIGN ALUMNI ►



Via support from the New Orleans Theatre Association, Theatre Design and Musical Theatre teamed to bring in four alumni to stage the major production, *Curtains*, this spring. Sound designer **David Rigamer**, lighting designer **Josh Courtney**, set designer **Derek Blanco** and stage manager **Kate Bartels** (bottom left) brought to NOCCA new technologies, such as intelligent lighting systems, and equity house rules - expanding students' skill sets and professional expectations.

SULLIVAN FORTNER ►



As a student at NOCCA, Oberlin College and Manhattan School of Music, and as the winner of prestigious fellowships (Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship and a current finalist for the American Pianists Association Jazz Competition for the Cole Porter Fellowship) **Sullivan Fortner** has had the privilege of working with the world's finest musicians. He brought all of that knowledge and more to master classes for Jazz students in May. "Pianist Fred Hersch has described three kinds of time: metronomic, emotional and human." And over the course of two days, he worked with students to understand these as they affect rhythm and melody. "Try imagining the piano as an orchestra with the top keys a flute, the mid section a trumpet, the bottom keys a bass. Or think of the piano as a breathing instrument; make it sing, as the late Mulgrew Miller told me. I

challenge all of you to think of your instruments in this way as you develop color and texture. We have the luxury to think outside the box, as long as the fundamentals are there. And it's fun, man. This stuff isn't going to happen over night. You will be trying to practice what you learned at NOCCA and elsewhere for the rest of your life. That's good. It will keep you humble."

BRENDA MARIE OSBEY ►



Describing her residency with 10th and 11th grade Academic Studio students as a once-in-a-career-experience, **Brenda Marie Osbey** equally inspired students with the power and magic of words and rhythm. Ms. Osbey is the former Poet Laureate of Louisiana and current Distinguished Visiting Professor of Africana Studies at Brown University. She came home to New Orleans and to NOCCA to work with students as they completed an Integrated Humanities lesson in which they created their own project in response to a poem from her latest collection *History and Other Poems* (2012). Students found most of their projects "mashed" the modern with the historical. The term "middle passage" originally referred to a point on the globe, Ms. Osbey explained to students. "But by the time you get to the second canto of Robert Hayden's poem *Middle Passage*, you understand what slavery is," as she described how poems can change and shape our understanding of history. "Creating a work of art, poem or song is not a finite point of expression. It's a way of processing and understanding. Much of writing poetry is taking away, taking away whatever is not necessary."



The first-ever White House K-12 Student Film Festival included the work of three young filmmakers from NOCCA. Producer Trad Willman (Level II), director and writer Richard White (Level II) and cinematographer Nick Ramey (Level III) (above, L to R), screened their three-minute film *Pip* at the White House in February. Two thousand videos were submitted showing how technology's role in education will develop in the future, with 16 selected as finalists. You can view *Pip* on YouTube under White House Student Film Festival: Official Submissions.



Students won awards this year in the following prestigious national and regional competitions:

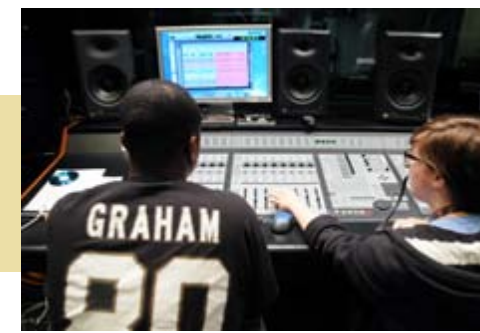
- 1 student was a nominee and 1 was a semifinalist in the United States Presidential Scholar Program.
- 3 seniors were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Competition as Finalists, 2 as Semi-Finalists, and 4 were named Commended Students.
- 3 seniors were recognized by the National Achievement Scholarship Program.
- 1 student was recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program.
- 23 students received national honors and Gold Key recognition in the Scholastic Arts and Writing Competition.
- Jazz student **Jeffery Miller** was selected to the Thelonius Monk National Performing Arts High School All-Star Septet.
- Vocal students **Rebecca Nuss** placed second while **Garri Paul** and **Lindsey Reynolds** tied for third in the women's high school division of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Southern Region Auditions. **David Murray** placed third in the men's high school division.
- Media Arts student **Patrick Burtchaell** was selected as *Downbeat Magazine's* Outstanding Performance Winner for Engineered Studio Recording at the Performing Arts High School level.



The Port of New Orleans invited NOCCA Visual Arts students to exhibit work themed to riverfront industrial scenes at the port's offices, including Level II's Rory Cummings digital print at right.



Classical Instrumental Level IV student, **Georgia Bourderionnet**, was selected to the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America by Carnegie Hall and the Weill Music Institute. The orchestra will tour across the country this summer. Georgia was also a 2014 recipient of the Jack Kent Cooke Young Artist Award which included performing in National Public Radio's show *From the Top*.



2014 SENIOR AWARDS

The Helen A. Mervis Award for artistic and academic achievement and community service was awarded to **Patrick Burtchaell**.

The Lisa Marie Catalanello Memorial Scholarship for visual arts achievement and generosity of spirit was awarded to **Summer Claybrooks**.

The Daniel Price Memorial Scholarship for Aspiring Young Artists was awarded to **Leonard Galmon**.

Ellen H. Golodner M.D. Jelly Roll to Jam Scholarship in Jazz was awarded to **Noah Albright**.

Seth Daniel P. Memorial Award for multi-disciplinary artistic accomplishment was awarded to **Tori Lambert**.

Emeril Lagasse Foundation Scholarship for achievement in Culinary Arts was awarded to **Victoria Farmer**.

ASCAP Foundation Louis Prima Award presented by Mrs. Gia Prima was awarded to **Jeffery Miller**.

Hurst Recordings Award for Outstanding Accomplishment in Audio Production was awarded to **Patrick Burtchaell**.

Terri A. Bartlett Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Drama students **Mariah Guillmette**, **Tyler Johnson** and **Sarah Sanders**.

Wendell Pierce Scholarship was awarded to Drama student **Andrea Gros**.

New Orleans Rotary Club Scholarship was awarded to **Ashlyn Joy Haywood** and **Tyrone Thorton, Jr.**

Mickey Gil Satyricon Award in Musical Theatre was awarded to **Jonathan May**.

Broadway @ NOCCA Scholarship in Musical Theatre was awarded to **Natalie Rine**.

John August Otte Memorial Award in Visual Arts was awarded to **Alexis Baudoin**.

Ingram Lee Foundation Scholarship in Culinary Arts was awarded to **Lauren Pedeaux**.

Lee & Kathy Randall Award in Creative Writing – **Avery Owings**

Milly & George Denegre Award in Dance – **Leah Samuels**

Helen Hill Memorial Award in Media Arts – **Deborah Amann**

Make It Funky! Award in Jazz – **Phillip Torres**

Glennadora & James H. Perry Award in Vocal Music – **Victor Paz**

Moses Hogan Award in Classical Instrumental in honor of Willa Slater – **Ashlyn Haywood**

Freda M. Lupin Award in Musical Theatre – **Mary Catherine Pintado**

Kuumba-Keener Award in Drama – **Mariah Guillmette**

Madalyn & Robert Schenk Award in Theatre Design – **Lexis Ogden**

The NOCCA Institute Collection Award (Visual Arts Purchase) – **Lily Tepper**



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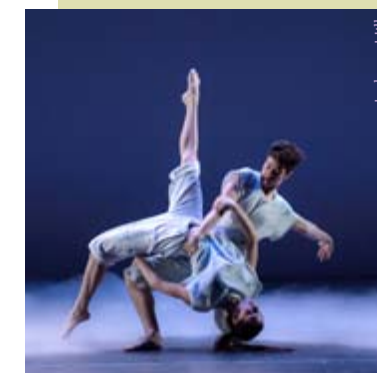
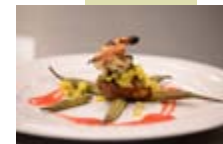
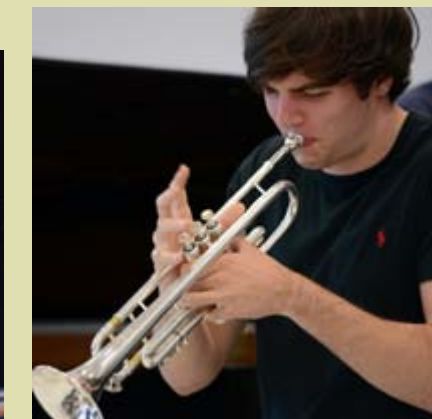
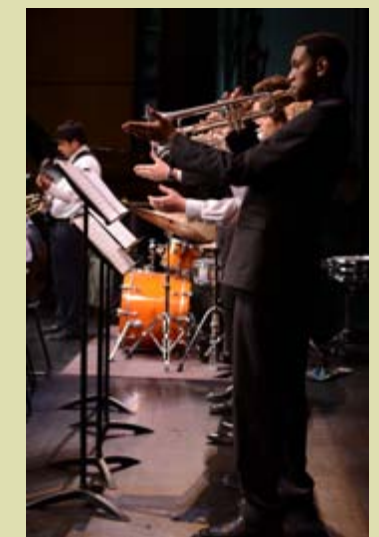
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*Dish finalists Quana
 Bourgeois, Landry
 Duchane and winner
 Arieanna McKnight
 with her dish above.*



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LIZARD

Cypress Oliphant,
Creative Writing,
Intro Level

Mighty Alligator,
you lift your tail.
The world trembles.

Komodo Dragon,
you poison water.
The world drinks it.

Treacherous Iguana,
you clenched your jaws.
The world flinches.

Green lizard,
you try.



Felix Fiallos
Visual Arts, Level II
The Impossible Girl

MEDITATING IN THE MORNING

Tori Lambert, Creative Writing, Level III

press your legs into the floor. a tiny jolt
of your breath when your bangles clink.
this is the way it always feels: the day
like warm milk pouring through the window.
ashes on your sweater, just glimpses.
this is the way it feels. nobody home, just glimpses.
this beam in the ceiling like you on the floor.
where do all the ashes go bangles clink ashtray here.

this is the way it feels: like you're pressing your ear
to the floor,
the warm living room the ashes the empty home.
your eyes like they're on fire. your eyes on fire.

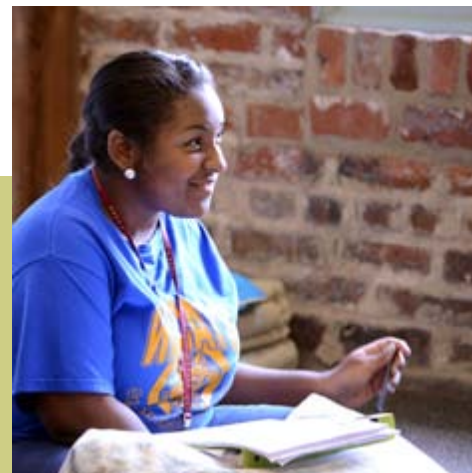
PEAR

Adia Heisser, Creative Writing, Level III

Dull with skin paler than grass: thin and dry. Your
spots only dark freckles sprinkled, not painted,
upon dusty cheeks.

Curved and veiled like a mother's body. You grow
your seeds with sweetened milk from a bottle.
They want more.

Kiss them on their slim faces and leave your lips
blemishing their foreheads like juice—No. Wine.
Check your forehead.



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