



# The Amplifier

A Quarterly Newsletter from the  
Guerin Catholic Fine Arts Alliance  
*"Truth in Beauty"*

Late Winter Edition 2015

## Art Remains a Bridge to Religious Experience



Marcia Murphy  
Media Center Specialist

*"Even beyond its typically religious expressions, true art has a close affinity with the world of faith, so that, even in situations where culture and the Church are far apart, art remains a kind of bridge to religious experience."* -- John Paul II

Sometimes we encounter music or art that connects to a longing we have in our souls. We can't really explain it. It's just a feeling that touches our hearts. This is no

accident: It's our souls longing to be fulfilled. Listen to any song on the radio. What do you hear? Longing. Gaze at an image of "A Starry Night" by Vincent Van Gogh, a painting with a universal appeal. In the midst of all the chaos of the sky, the light from the stars and the warm glow from the windows in the village create a feeling of hope and comfort, a universal longing.

When we begin to recognize this longing in our midst, we start to see that art reflects this desire to be fulfilled. All around us, people - perhaps especially artists because of their desire to create - are longing for Christ. Sometimes, they might not even realize it themselves. Think of all the art you've experienced and how much of it centers around the theme of love, even misguided love. This is really a reflection of our desire for complete unity; a unity that will only be fulfilled by God.

Fr. James Martin a popular Jesuit spiritual writer says of the goals of Jesuit spirituality, "Find God in all things, become a contemplative in action, look at the world in an incarnational way, seek freedom and detachment." This might also be a good description of what we do when we encounter art. We must search for God. This is how our culture begins to be a bridge to our faith. We must become like Zacchaeus in the tree trying to get a glimpse of Christ. For when we seek Him, He's always there.

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**Watch for the GCFAA flash store in March, featuring t-shirts, sweatshirts, polos, windbreakers and more with the Guerin Catholic Fine Arts logo!**

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## 2015 Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Ensemble</u>
3/6	<b>Art Club Blood Drive</b> In Gym	
3/13	<b>GCFAA Meeting</b> In Room 737 – 4 pm	
3/19	<b>Guerin Catholic's Got Talent</b> In Gym - Convocation Hour	
3/30 & 4/16	<b>ComedySportz</b> In Cafetorium – 7 pm	
4/23-25 & 4/30-5/2	<b>Spring Musical and Art Show</b> In Cafetorium and Media Center – 7 pm	
5/2	<b>ISSMA State Qualification Event</b>	GoldenVoice Sounds
5/5	<b>Open Mic Night</b> Guerin Coffee House In Cafetorium – 7 pm	
5/21	<b>Spring Concert</b> At St. Elizabeth Seton – 7 pm	All
5/28	<b>Baccalaureate Mass</b> At St. Elizabeth Seton – 5:30 pm	GoldenVoice
5/31	<b>2015 Commencement</b> In Gym – 2 pm	GoldenVoice Wind Symphony & Orchestra

**ISSMA Gold!** Participants in the ISSMA District Solo and Ensemble Festival Group I achieved gold, with Emily March, Jacob Pottratz, Veronica Rancourt, Anna Cummings and Chris Hacker moving to the state festival in vocal performance. Dominic Duray achieved gold in three percussion events and also moved on to state. Anna Allgier achieved a gold rating in Group II vocal performance, and Alex Olivares earned gold in Group III piano. Congratulations to all participants!

## Events Worth Noting

**Open Mic Night – Take Two** – Following the overwhelming success and popularity of the fall Open Mic Night at The Guerin Catholic Coffee House, the GCFAA hosted a second event on Tuesday, February 10 in the cafetorium. Senior Therese Miller emceed the event and kept the audience chuckling with her on-the-spot haikus written in between the 26 acts, which included vocal and instrumental arrangements, poetry and comedy. Thanks to the student participants and all of the friends and family who came to support the artists.



Sam Gorsage



Brian Matthews



Meg Andrews



Emma Spartz



Scott Corman and Jennifer Cross

**Singers Invited to Choral Festival** – The Sounds of Providence singers proudly represented Guerin Catholic at the inaugural Chicago Regional National Catholic High School Choral Festival on Friday, February 27. The festival was sponsored by the American Federation Pueri Cantores and held at the Madonna della Strada Chapel on the campus of Loyola University.

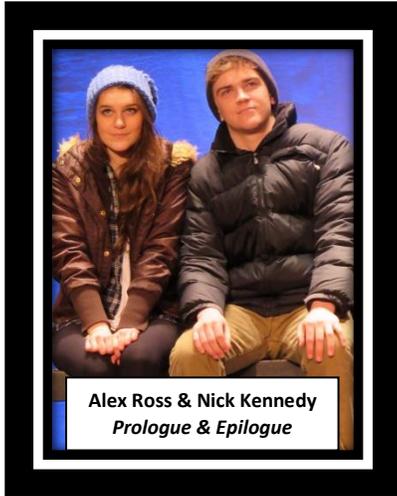


**Joyful Noise Deanery Instrumental Festival** – Nearly 150 band and orchestra students from Guerin Catholic, St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maria Goretti, Our Lady of Grace and Our Lady of Mount Carmel spent Saturday, February 28 doing what they love most; playing music together while meeting new friends at the ninth annual *Joyful Noise Instrumental Festival*. “The festival provides students from our feeder schools with a sense of familiarity and a positive fun experience of engaging musically in the high school so they will be invested in continuing their musical education when they arrive at Guerin Catholic,” said the event’s host, Guerin Catholic Music Director John Webber.

**Club Hosts Next Blood Drive** – The Guerin Catholic Art Club once again will join with the Indiana Blood Center to host a blood drive on March 6 from 8 am to 2 pm in the gymnasium. Community members and parents may sign up online. Sign up is during lunch March 3 - 5 for faculty, staff and students over 17. Students who are 16 will need parental permission. So join your friends, donate blood, save a life and enjoy a treat from Chick-Fil-A. Go to [https://www.donorpoint.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/84391](https://www.donorpoint.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/84391) to sign up.

**Guerin Catholic Presents *Oliver!*** – Fifty Guerin Catholic theater and music students are hard at work preparing for the big spring musical. Freshmen Michael Bailey and Lily Smith will play Oliver and The Artful Dodger, respectively. Also, you won’t want to miss Tristan Zavaleta as The Beadle, Nick Kennedy as Fagin and Emma Rund as Nancy. The musical opens April 23. It also runs April 24, 25 and 30, as well as May 1 and 2 at 7 pm in the cafetorium. Theater-goers are invited to check out the Guerin Catholic art show before and after the performance in the Media Center, as well.

## *Alm*st, Maine by John Cariani

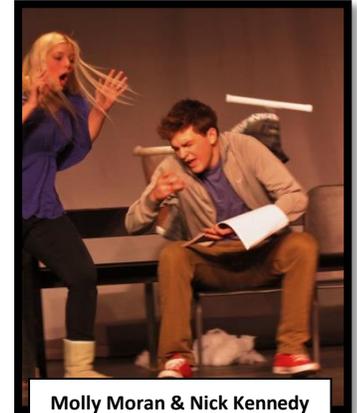


Alex Ross & Nick Kennedy  
*Prologue & Epilogue*

Thirteen Guerin Catholic students explored 19 different character roles in their winter performance of John Cariani's romantic comedy, *Almost, Maine*. According to Mike Panasuk, who teaches theater arts and directed this year's play, the original script called for two men and two women to take on all 19 roles. However, Panasuk wanted to give more students a chance to perform. The two-act play is set in a fictional town of Almost, Maine in the middle of a cold winter's night. Unlike many plays that follow a single plot line, *Almost, Maine* highlights nine stories of various Almost couples who struggle with love, rejection, loss,

exploration, heartbreak, change and acceptance.

Junior Nick Kennedy took on three very different roles. "Pete, the character in the prologue and epilogue was pretty easy to play because he was a lot like me; kind of awkward and uncomfortable," Kennedy said. "Steve, the character in *This Hurts*, was just a weird person. His 'congenital analgesia' made him very fun and interesting. Finally, Randy was a guy's guy. He was a classic, tough, work-with-his-hands kind of guy. This aspect is, in my opinion, why the end of the scene was so funny." It wasn't all fun and games, though. Playing the second character, Steve, involved multiple hits to the head with an ironing board from costar Molly Moran. "The ironing board was not bad at all," Kennedy admitted. "The rehearsals allowed us to make the hit look real without any pain. I did get pretty bruised up from falling in *They Fell*. The last night, Tristan (Zavaleta) and I crawled off of the stage to find bruises all over our elbows and knees."



Molly Moran & Nick Kennedy  
*This Hurts*

In a different scene, senior Emma Rund portrayed an endless array of emotions; annoyance, anger, frustration, surprise, and happiness all within ten minutes, while Tristan Zavaleta, who played Emma's boyfriend, watched in mostly stunned silence at the emotional circus in front of him.



Tristan Zavaleta & Emma Rund  
*Getting It Back*



Emily March & Andrew Swidan  
*Where It Went*



Michael Bailey & Mary Ganser  
*Story of Hope*



Andrew Swidan & Karen Quay  
*Her Heart*



Audrey Cross & Blake Miller  
*Sad and Glad*



Blake Miller & Claire Arrivo  
*Seeing the Thing*

## Alumna Profile – Musical Composer Christopher Wood

Sometimes, certain people touch our lives briefly, and then we never see them again, yet, their influence lives within us forever. That's *not* what happened with Christopher Wood, a 2010 Guerin Catholic graduate. Wood says three people from high school helped him find his direction in life, and he's still very much connected to them. "Of course, Mr. Duray was always encouraging us to get involved in all the music groups – band, choirs, musical theater," Wood said, and that's a habit Wood continues to this day as a musician and composer in Chicago. Even now as a graduate of DePaul University, Wood tries to go to every performance he can – jazz, orchestra/chamber, experimental theater, punk or improvised music. "It's easy here to find inspiration through all kinds of music," Wood says. "Don't shut anything out. Find something good in everything you hear."



Wood also was challenged by two Guerin Catholic students. "Charles Glanders and I pushed each other when it came to learning about new music," Wood said, explaining that Glanders studied at Oberlin and now works as a sound engineer at The Empty Bottle, a rock club in Chicago. The friends see each other frequently and continue to explore different genres of music and art together. Another student who was a little older than Wood was Will Smith. "Will was a great guitarist at Guerin Catholic, and we really looked up to him," Wood

said. Recently, Wood reconnected with Smith, in, where else, Chicago, where Smith is teaching and working on a master's degree from DePaul and has joined an experimental music ensemble cofounded by Wood. The group is known as *Mocrep*, a name developed by combining the words "composition" and "performance" and is currently rehearsing for a concert March 8 at the Spahlinger Festival, sponsored by the Goethe-Institut Chicago.



When he's not performing, Wood is busy composing. He admits it hasn't been easy working as a freelance composer eight months out of school. "It's all about networking and having your music performed," and in between, he holds a day job walking dogs to pay the bills. But little by little, musicians are beginning to take notice. "I attended a conference in Darmstadt, Germany, where I met a cellist from Amsterdam who commissioned a piece. It was performed in Graz, Austria, and will be performed again in Uzbekistan, of all places," Wood said. "Now, I am working on a piece for a Boston-based soprano that uses colloquial aspects of her life to create an uncanny performance experience. I'll be flying out there in May for the performance."

So what advice does Wood have for Guerin Catholic students interested in pursuing careers in the arts? "Work every day at your art," he advised. "I've learned it's important as a composer to write every single day. Make a habit out of it. Six out of seven days, my work might be awful, but those days develop my writing. That way, when I write something good, it is informed by the mistakes I allow myself to make." Oh, and then there's the advice from Mr. Duray that sticks with Wood to this day, "Never settle for mediocrity. Go at what you love with everything you've got. Never, never settle."

For more information about Christopher Wood and his work, go to <http://www.christopherwood.com/> or <https://www.facebook.com/ensemblemocrep>.

## Guerin Catholic Artists Earn Scholastic Art Awards

Three Guerin Catholic arts students earned prestigious Scholastic Art Awards and will be recognized at the 2015 VISIONS & VOICES Exhibition & Awards Ceremony at Clowes Memorial Hall at Butler University on March 8 at 2 pm. Their artwork is on display at Clowes from now through the ceremony. In addition, photos/links of their work have been sent to New York City for national adjudication.

Senior Noah Wilson earned a Gold Key Award for his animated project *The Late Fee*. Wilson watched a tutorial about video production and then dove into his project, which took over 45 hours to complete. "I came up with scenes as I created the video, sometimes knowing what would happen in advance, other ideas coming to my mind as I was finishing the scene before it," Wilson said. "It was a very long process, for each character that is seen has a set of "bones" that connect to the body model (ex: the finger has all joints of an actual finger, the arm has the two bones and a connecting joint, etc.), meaning that for each different movement the character makes, I had to model the bones to move in that specific way." To watch Wilson's video animation, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3GyGBGBwOo>.



Sophomore Julia Gallina also earned a Gold Key Award with her 3D work titled *Soldier*. "We were assigned to make a piece of art entirely out of hot glue based on one of our favorite songs," Gallina explained. "I chose *Soldier* by Gavin DeGraw. This song is about how one person would give their all to provide for somebody else. I admire a person who is willing to stand up for what is right. One of the reasons for the wheelchair is that it supports people who cannot support themselves. I used certain lines from the song to convey certain ideas. 'My aim is so true' inspired the two guns. 'I'm never gonna say surrender' gave me the idea of the war medals. Soldiers who have medals are generally people who went above and beyond the call of duty and didn't surrender."

Freshman Carly Demas earned a Silver Key Medal with her 3-D piece. "The assignment was to make a sculpture completely out of paper and paint," Demas shared. "We had to draw and cut out lots of different shapes and sizes, paint and decorate them and then glue them onto one larger piece of paper to make the finishing look 3D-like."



Four students including seniors Mary Elise Dorsett and Megan Elisha, junior Simon Smith and sophomore Julian Tessarzyk earned honorable mentions for their Scholastic Art Award entries. Congratulations to all.

### Honorable Mentions

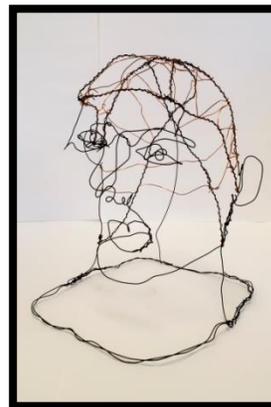
Sculpture  
Mary Elise Dorsett  
Grade 12



Painting  
Megan Elisha  
Grade 12



Wire Sculpture  
Simon Smith  
Grade 11



Mixed Media  
Julian Tessarzyk  
Grade 10



## IB Art Student – Megan Elisha



Guerin Catholic senior Megan Elisha doesn't remember a time in her life when she wasn't drawing or painting or doing something artsy. In fact, now, as a senior, when she's stressed, the one thing that makes her feel better is sitting on her bed, listening to music and sketching. "That's my comfort zone," Elisha said. That's when I am most relaxed." But right now, there's not much time to relax as Elisha finishes up her senior year as an IB art student.

What does that mean, exactly? Well, currently, she's putting the finishing touches on her IB candidate record book and choosing 15 to 18 pieces of her artwork to photograph and then send to unknown judges around the world on the international baccalaureate committee. She's also practicing for an upcoming recorded interview that will be sent with her artwork overseas. In the interview, Elisha must explain her work and how it relates to a chosen theme, which in her case, is change. "I chose change because that's a big theme in my life," Elisha

said. "I changed schools after freshman year, moving from Carmel to Guerin Catholic. I got my driver's license, and I'm getting ready to change from high school to college. Change is a big part of me right now, so it's a big part of my artwork." Some of her favorite pieces that illustrate change include a four-series pencil drawing of her grandmother at different stages of her life. Elisha also found a crayon drawing she drew of herself when she was little and then recreated the drawing as she is now, illustrating how she's changed as an artist.

Elisha was very aware of the change theme when she painted a mural of St. Theodore Guerin on the wall of the Campus Ministry office. She explained that although the painting wasn't part of her IB curriculum, she was aware of all the changes Mother Guerin experienced in her move from France to the woods of western Indiana. "I felt honored to be asked to paint her," Elisha said. "I've always liked drawing and painting faces, but it's very hard to get the proportions right, and it feels good when people say that my paintings look like the actual people." In addition to Mother Guerin, Elisha spent a lot of time focusing on the face of a young boy named Jesse G, who was adopted from Ethiopia. That name may sound familiar. The boy was the inspiration for another Guerun Catholic student, Riley Rapp, who founded Jesse G clothing line. Some of the proceeds from his company go to help youth in Africa. When Elisha heard about Rapp's work, she asked to draw an illustration of the boy. You can see her drawing in the Honorable Mentions column on page 6 of this newsletter.



While, Elisha loves art, the IB program hasn't been easy. Elisha is especially appreciative of her high school art teacher, Beth Wagoner. "I think the most important thing she's taught me over the years is to stick with it," Elisha said. "I was working on a drawing of skeletal bones, and it was so hard. I hated it and went to Mrs. Wagoner and told her I wanted to do something else. She told me that I needed to always finish what I started. I did, and today, it's one of my favorite pieces." Not only that, but it can perhaps be said that that piece has influenced Elisha's college decision. She will be attending the University of Georgia in Athens next fall and studying medical illustration. "For a while, I thought I wanted to be a nurse, but then I wasn't so sure. I was still interested in medicine, and I'll always be interested in drawing, so this seemed like a really good fit," Elisha said. She added that in the busyness of it all, she can see God's plan coming together. He's given me a talent I can use to help others, she said, and that makes me very appreciative.

## High School ComedySportz – Learning through Laughter

A “ref,” who looked a little like actor Charlie Sheen, mined the rowdy Guerin Catholic audience for random ideas – a dinosaur, a Quidditch ball and smelly underarms. A team of three Lebanon High School students used those ideas to create a series of improvisational skits while another team member guessed the specifics of each crazy scenario they portrayed. Think of it as Pictionary on comic steroids. The results were hilarious, and Lebanon scored enough points to nearly close the lead enjoyed by the Guerin Catholic team during the first week of ComedySportz High School League competition.



Oscar Otero, Tristan Zavaleta and Sadie Burrows

The competition is linked to the ComedySportz theater in Indianapolis. This year the theater group has worked with eleven Central Indiana high school teams. The teams train at the downtown location in the fall, learning improv skills, listening and observational skills and how to think on their feet. In the spring, the teams compete in a series of weekly battles officiated by a ComedySportz ensemble member who is just as funny as the students. This particular week, ref Patrick McDaniel (the Charlie Sheen look-alike), devilishly pitted the Guerin Catholic team and the Lebanon team against one another.



The student-run Guerin Catholic group has participated for ten years under the guidance of Mike Panasuk, who also recently directed the winter play *Almost, Maine*. Panasuk believes that both theater and comedy can teach students valuable lessons. “The hope is that they learn the value of hard work and effort,” Panasuk said. “Being in a play or a comedy show is a commitment, not only to yourself but to others who have invested their time in preparing, and it teaches that sometimes you must venture out of your comfort zone and take some risks.” Team Captain Therese Miller said the most difficult thing about improv comedy is practicing. “Improv is one of those things that, even if you're good at it, practice is absolutely necessary because you can't just memorize lines or notes like in music or theater. You have to practice making things up on the spot and, more importantly, making them fun for the audience to watch. Miller added that she sees God through comedy. “I see God through comedy and really anything that makes me smile. I believe that my skills at improv are a gift from God, and I am so blessed to share my gift with everyone else.”



Jacob Pottratz

Upcoming ComedySportz competitions featuring Guerin Catholic are: March 5 at Fishers, March 25 at Westfield, March 30 against Westfield at Guerin and April 16 against Greenfield at Guerin. Competitions begin at 7 pm.

