

Letter from the Headmaster

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Students, and Friends,

Our yearly Open House invites parents and caregivers to experience a “taste” of their student’s life as emerging artist-scholars. I watched last month as these adults anxiously awaited the opportunity to learn as much as possible about the “mystery” of the time students spend at school. As most parents of adolescents know, the answers about what they did during those long hours are often “OK,” “boring,” “whack,” “fine” or even “why?” Parents and caregivers want and need to know more about those daily eight-and-more hours in the lives of their students.

I witnessed the interest of these adults in arts classes where parents actively participated. Some even danced. I watched them focus in academic classes. In one humanities class, parents voted along with their students in a mock legislative amendment session. Some seemed surprised to hear students’ conviction when arguing for the ratification of the equal marriage amendment.

“We have devoted a great deal of time exploring opportunities and strategies that help us know our students well...”

In this short time, these adults were anxious to understand as much as possible about their student’s school experience. These adults, who have spent so much more time with their students than we ever have, were still eager to make sure they were not missing important information about their child’s life. One parent shared (in Spanish) her curiosity about why her son was so enthusiastic about going to school each day. She wanted to make sure BAA wasn’t all “fun”. In the cafeteria when she was trying to eat lunch with her son (who had wandered off to be with his friends) she expressed how impressed she was with seriousness she saw in the academic classes. She had to work beyond her old sense that “seriousness of purpose” had to be paired with an “unpleasant” experience for students.

The concern and interest of these adult caregivers adds meaning to our job as educators. We also have to be mindful about knowing our students well. What do we know about the “mystery” of the hours students spend away from BAA? Research suggests (bell hooks) that students who are known well are more likely to achieve and succeed in schools. We have devoted a great deal of time exploring opportunities and strategies that help us know our students well, including who they are, and what their strengths and challenges are.

One method for knowing students is our Advisory structure, an intentional time and space for teachers and students. Advisory is also designed for students in the same major to get to know each other across different grade levels. Advisory encourages teachers/advisors to build trust, mutual understanding, and shared values. The goal is to create a safe space for students to explore and express their individuality while building awareness of their place as aspiring artists-scholars in the BAA community. Through Advisory we learn about our students as individuals while fostering group relationships that help shape the quality of a student’s experience at BAA.

Advisory places our shared values of Diversity with Respect front and center. In Advisory we learn about our students, who they are, what they bring, and what they need. Advisory builds community. Those 15 minutes, 4 times a week, give us a taste of our students’ larger lives. They bridge what we know about them as artist-scholars in school with what their parents and caregivers know about them as adolescents and family members at home.

Sincerely,



Carmen Torres
Co-Headmaster

Important Dates

Wednesday, November 1
Spanish Exhibitions

November 1-4
BAA Theatre Dept. presents:
Macbeth (see page 2)

Saturday, November 4
SATs at designated locations
Test begins at 8 am

Monday, November 6
Governing Council Mtg., 4 pm

Wednesday, November 8
Term 1 Ends

MCAS Math Retest (Part 1)
Senior Project Finalist Night
5:30 -7 pm

Parent/Caregiver Council Mtg.
6 - 7:30 pm, Assembly Hall

Thursday, November 9
NO SCHOOL
MCAS Math Retest (Part 2)

Friday, November 10
Veteren’s Day, NO SCHOOL

Monday, November 13
Term 2 Begins

Wednesday, November 15
EARLY RELEASE at 12:30 pm
MCAS English Retest (Part 1)

Thursday, November 16
MCAS English Retest (Part 2)

Friday, November 17
MCAS English Retest (Part 3)

Tuesday, November 21
EARLY RELEASE at 12:30 pm
Narrative Conferences
1:30 - 8:30 pm (See page 2)

Wednesday, November 22
Early Release at 11:00 am
from MassArt

Thanksgiving Break begins

November 23 & 24
No School
Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, November 28
Honor Roll/Shared Values
Assembly, Term 1 @ 12:30 pm
Music & Dance Majors
Town Meeting

Wednesday, November 29
Honor Roll/Shared Values
Assembly, Term 1 @ 12:30 pm
VA & Theatre Majors

Thursday, November 30
Middle School Theatre Workshop

Saturday, December 2
SATs at designated locations
Test begins at 8 am

**Calendar events are
subject to change.
Please call to confirm
times and dates.*



VA Sophomore, David Wang and his father work with clay during Open House on October 5, 2006

Open House

BAA would like to thank all of the families who came to Open House on October 5th to spend a day at school with their student. Parents participated in academic, dance, music, theatre and visual arts classes. Your participation made the day a success and we hope to see you all again next year!

Parents/Caregivers Reminder

Family Narrative Conferences will be held on Tuesday, November 21st from 1:30 to 8:00 pm. All parents/caregivers and students, grades 9-12, are required to attend. This is an opportunity for parent/caregivers, students, and the student's advisor to discuss the student's progress.

Parents/Caregivers, your child's advisor will call to schedule a time for you to come in. ***Please be on time and if you must cancel for an emergency notify the school or your child's advisor directly so staff will not be kept waiting for you.*** Thank you for your continued engagement in your child's school life.

Dana Brayton Scholarship Fund

Our deepest condolences to the family of senior dance student Adriane Brayton, whose father, Dana Brayton passed away suddenly over the summer. Dana was a composer and music professor at Boston Conservatory.

To honor Dana's love of music and the arts and the family's love of BAA, the Braytons have begun a scholarship fund for a BAA student to attend The Boston Conservatory. For more information, please contact Rick Tagliaferri at 617-635-6543.



Henry (Buddy) Paull Shattuck Award Winner

The Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award, presented by the Boston Municipal Research Bureau, honors city employees who have made outstanding contributions to public service by demonstrating unusual competence, exceptional initiative, and a cooperative attitude in the workplace and the community. Buddy Paull, building supervisor and founding staff member, has been at BAA for 9 years and in the Boston Public Schools for 22 years. Congratulations, Buddy!

Soul Element on Tour

BAA's Soul Element group recently performed in Oakland, California. Ten young men, under the direction of theatre teacher, Juanita Rodrigues, and accompanied by Danny Wilcox and John Adekoje, performed for five public school audiences in the Oakland Unified School district, one public school in San Francisco, and a public performance at Mills College. The students developed the play's script out of their personal experiences by working with a counselor and playwright over a period of several months. Each performance is followed by an engaging Q & A with audience members. This group was recently featured on the What Kids Can Do website and can be viewed at www.whatkidscando.org. The feature includes a video and interview with creator Juanita Rodrigues.

A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS Boston Arts Academy newsletter

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Shared Leadership at BAA

We are pleased to announce that on October 6th, 2006, Carmen Torres was named Co-Headmaster of Boston Arts Academy, sharing the position with Linda Nathan. This appointment was made with the full support of the school's Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Torres has served as the Assistant Headmaster of the Boston Arts Academy since its inception, and during that time, she has distinguished herself as a leader, educator, and administrator. Her strength lies in developing a climate for learning that helps teachers develop strategies that foster excellence and achievement for all students, regardless of their backgrounds. As the person primarily responsible for the recruitment and selection of students, oversight of the curriculum, and day-to-day operation of the school, Carmen is, for all intents and purposes, the "face" of BAA for students, staff, and parents. Congratulations to Ms. Torres!

Carlomagno Pedro Martinez

During the week of October 2nd, Mexican folk artist Carlomagno Pedro Martinez, taught and worked with 10th grade Visual Art students at BAA. This residency was funded by a generous grant from the Clowes Foundation. Mr. Martinez is known in Mexico and beyond as a sculptor of figures and *calaveras* (skeletons) in the burnished black clay for which his village is famous. The work is inspired by old Zapotec legends told by his grandparents. In these stories fantasy mixes with reality and *nahuals*, which are people transformed into animals, do astounding and sometimes wicked feats. Students in Spanish classes joined Visual Arts students for a rich cultural exchange. The works of Carlomagno Pedro Martinez will be shown in the Sandra and Philip Gordon Gallery on December 12, 2006.



Carlomagno works on a sculpture while Visual Art students watch intently.

Boston Arts Academy Presents: *Macbeth*

Setting the story of old-tyranny, greed, ambition and power-into a stark, postmodern world, director Rosalind Thomas-Clark uses a futuristic lens to provide a new interpretation. Making connections to present-day world politics, Ms. Thomas-Clark asks us "What defines a tyrant?" The language is old, but young urban witches cackle and shriek timelessly while prophesizing the downfall of deluded, power-hungry Macbeth. This production is an accessible vehicle for Shakespeare and a startlingly beautiful visual treat that promises to surprise, mesmerize and provoke.

Performances in the Black Box Theatre (3rd floor)

Thursday, November 2, 2006: 7:00 p.m.*

Friday, November 3, 2006: 7:00 p.m.*

Saturday, November 4, 2006: 7:00 p.m.*

*Call for ASL Interpreted showtimes

Tickets

\$5.00 (\$3.00 students/ seniors)

Box Office: 617-635-6470 x515

Email: theaterboxoffice@bostonartsacademy.org

Radio Golf Actors Visit

Veteran stage actors, Hassan El-Amin and Eugene Lee, who are starring as Harmon and Sterling in the Huntington Theatre's production of *Radio Golf*, reflected on their profession with an engaged audience of theatre students and staff on Wednesday, Oct 10, 2006.

Radio Golf, written by the late August Wilson, is the final play of the landmark ten-play cycle that chronicles the African-American experience through the 20th century. In a master class format, actors talked about their careers and shared their strategies for success, tips for successful auditions and how they balance their personal lives with the demands of acting professionally. This rich dialogue concluded with two short student performances for the actors.

Thanks to Amanda Rota and Naheem Garcia at the Huntington Theatre for helping create real-world connections for our students.

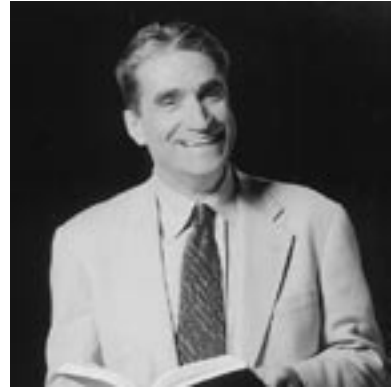
2007 Benefit Gala to be held at Wimberly Theatre

Boston Arts Academy is honored to announce that Robert Pinsky, former Poet Laureate of the United States and Pulitzer Prize nominee, will be the recipient of the school's 5th annual Apollo Award at the 2007 Benefit Gala set for May 21 at the Wimberly Theatre, Boston Center for the Arts. A long-time friend to the Academy, Mr. Pinsky and his graduate students from Boston University regularly work with BAA students to capture and preserve their views of the world through creative writing.

We are further pleased to announce that BAA trustees, Ann Carter and Richard Rudman, have signed on as the 2007 Chairs of this extraordinary event. Their leadership will provide us the direction and inspiration to make this critical fundraiser the most successful ever.

For further information on participating as a corporate or individual sponsor of this exciting evening, please contact:

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Poet Laureate, Robert Pinsky

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