In 2002 D Magazine rated what it called Dallas' Top 20 private high schools. St. Mark's fared well in the evaluation, thriving on college admission statistics, rigorous academics and fruitful sports teams. However, the elitist Dallas magazine took some harsh blows at the Fine Arts Department.

"I just think they were uninformed," responds Department Chair Jacque Gavin. "Our department is anything but lacking. With a wide variety of programs and opportunities for students, St. Mark's is in a good position for students with an interest in the Arts."

"The scope and breadth of our Fine Arts is unique," she continues. "In especially two areas we stand above all other ISAS schools.

These "two areas", Gavin says, are our industrial arts and film studies programs. "We are the only ones with this type of Industrial arts program," she says proudly. "And no other [Dallas area] school has [a film program] from sixth grade to twelfth grade."

Still, many people involved with the arts programs at St. Mark's are not quite as satisfied. Hockaday senior Katie Dearing says that her greatest qualm with Fine Arts is "the chauvinistic attitude of those who run coffee-house."

Senior Jacob Navarette, currently directing God's Favorite for credit in a directing class of the Fine Arts Department as "anelastic, with room for expansion." Academic programs, Navarette says, are not the program.

"There is little to no room to expand beyond the classroom without sacrificing creative integrity and desire," said Navarette. "If students were allowed to do more without administrative hurdles, then the arts department would greatly benefit from the amount of highly creative students."

"Not all students' feelings on the department are this critical," Junior Adam Black says simply, "In general, I'm in favor of arts."

In part as a response to the D Magazine article, senior Bobby Kaufman and a group of other community arts students set out to create the first St. Mark's Fine Arts Committee. "I certainly was offended after reading their remarks on the department. I along with others take part in plays and productions three trimesters a year, and it was as if the article was saying that my work was futile," Kaufman said.

Kaufman does not accept the remarks of D Magazine as valid. "Our fine arts are far from weak. Our students and faculty are superb, and we cannot improve those aspects of the department," Kaufman says. He cites academy award winning actor Tommy Lee Jones, Hollywood star Luke Wilson and hit-singer Rhett Miller as products of the long-time good standing of the department.

Still, Kaufman acknowledges that something has been missing from fine arts. Between sports and arts events, Kaufman thinks, the average student would rather watch a basketball game than attend a band concert. "What we can improve is the aura and reputation that [the Fine Arts] have on campus."

Rod Blaydes, resident director for all three annual St. Mark's Hockaday main stage theatrical productions, agrees. "This is a boy's school," he says. "The strong influence of athletics overshadows the arts."

The Fine Arts Committee is determined to take care of this problem. To make the community more aware of fine arts activities, they advertise events with posters, flyers, word of mouth and videos. Their first challenge, promoting and selling tickets for last year's St. Mark's Film Festival, proved a success. More tickets were sold and seats filled than anyone expected. They hope to repeat this success in November with the Parent's Association organized Upper School Talent Show.

Reactions to the committee have been positive across the board. Gavin feels that the FAC is "a great student-led initiative." Navarette agrees. "The committee is really doing its job. If the school begins to respect the committee, then the committee will be able to further the artistic atmosphere at St. Mark's," says Navarette.
Welcome To The Dollhouse

Here ye my fellow Marksmen, lend me your ears. A new day has commenced in The Marksmen. Hughes and Sloman now reign supreme and are the biggest duo since Haggard and Elton. This will mark no promises, only that we will have no rendezvous with a Rafael painting ala Liz Trice, Goyas however are open. The school year has had its dastardly start, whoa whoa whoa.

Shame to all those that missed Freddy vs. Jason, this summer’s Oscar pick. A rendezvous will commence with Josh Tan as everybody’s favorite deranged hockey goalie and Sir Arthur Douglas portraying Sir Kreuger. All bets are off since the donnybrook will transpire atop the St. Mark’s bell tower. Winner receives complimentary tye-dye compliments of Ken Owens.

With a new school year comes change we do not like change. A new chaplain has been put in office and has thus far appointed his brother as Rearmy General and reigns some new-school fire and brimstone in the old school chapel. With talk of Leaptops, carpetbaggers, and rendezvous with Atame Atame! We expect a very patl chapel year.

Fine arts personage Jacque Gavin has officially declared kabuki interpretations of Blithe Spirit out of bounds and has pulled the reigns in on another acting savant Montgomery Sutton at a Japanese influenced production. After an attempt at juggling while watching obscure Asian cinema, Montgomery was buried alive by a group of angry villagers after a viewing of The Ballad of Narayama. Mr. Imamura was present for the burial and was told to step on the villagers with glee.

Strike up the band and herald the trumpets, bring on the dancing gifts, for the grandiose return of Matt Lahrman. After one year hiatus with Dominican monks in Romania, we are happy that he has finally returned to us. We are told that although he took a vow of silence, he was able to drop in on the Casey-Oypna wedding while he was piddling around town. It was said that he gave them a water polo ball as a wedding present with an expression. It was a gentleman and a scholar Matt.

Gabe Coren will be the underling for the year as will he making him do our little whims for us, and we will make sure to treat him NOT as an equal. Although he will continue to write his brilliant essays on our enemies, and tomfooleries, but Tom Jones we will not be. No ballyhoo will dominate this article, we will use the swizzle stick of life and pass through our Starbuxistic appetites and right on to true BEEF or ART status.

The Sultan of Seniors, Kingsley Deslotour will be vacationing at Crawford ranch for the next two weeks where he shall be counseled by a crew of former marksmen including Richard Crawford, Stanton Huffman, and Billy Madsen. Our school’s rendezvous foresees seven years of fame, bad karma, and more films directed by Kevin Costner; as Kane Hochster shall usurp the throne of dolomite and unleash his furious anger all those who attempt to make the yearbook edgy as last year’s and you will know his name is Kane when he makes the year book conservative and lays his vengeance upon thee.

Aspiring lawyers Mason Depasse and Jordan Wolf have taken up the gauntlet in our school’s defense as DUP’s copyright infringement was protested by the Belgian beer company of the same name. In Belgium’s defense, Ken Starr was hired and was completely overwhelmed by the gruesome two-some’s lightning fast speech.

The Senior class trip was a complete success. We were very happy to share with each other and leave each other gifts on the doorstep to the new year. The Senior class felt like they were lending each other socks and the shirts off our backs for lack of a better expression. It was a purely serene experience without one lag, we all left a little piece of ourselves there with the trip.

The arts for the fall and winter look particularly enticing with a new production of a Barbara classic, we are told that she may be making a guest appearance. Much of the negotiations have already taken place, although Big B will not commit as of yet. We are hoping that Babbs won’t turn into a giant monster and destroy our fair little community.

In summation, we foresee a rather productive year. Our artistic endeavors shall only rise. We only see absences of one thing: isms. There will be no racism, sexism, Marxism, classicism, prisms, nationalism, schism, capitalism, polytheism, atheism, delusion, Penelope Crazier, ambiguism, rationalism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, ptdileism, hypnosis, pragmatism, but DUPism is on the fly, because in the opinion of these authors isms are no good. Good right to all, we will see you again next issue. Keep those Freudian slips in Czech, because we will only be writing all these true and DUP.

Work on Fall Production, Blithe Spirit Underway

By Jason Sanford ’06

Work on the Fall Upper School Play, Blithe Spirit, is well underway.

A comedy written by Noel Coward, Blithe Spirit is the story of remarried author, Charles, who hires a crazy, unwrithing old woman, Madame Arcati, to provide inspiration for a character. His plan backfires as Arcati performs a séance and thrusts the ghost of his dead wife, Elvira, upon Charles’ home.

Most difficult for Charles, though, is the fact that only he can see or hear Elvira. Still more problems arise in this “improbable farce” when Charles’ new wife endorses to exercise Elvira. Noel Coward (1899-1973) was a popular child star, playwright, singer/songwriter, and screenwriter over the course of his life. Blithe Spirit, from 1941, is one of his most famous and popular plays.

Rod Blaydes directs two casts of this forties comedy extravaganz, continuing the “double-casting” method that he began two years ago with Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap. The casts include four St. Mark’s students (Nathanial Bilhartz, Jeff Fijolek, Jon Gaulding and Montgomery Sutton) and ten Hongkadya students.

Blithe Spirit will be performed in the St. Mark’s blackbox on Oct. 29 and 30 at 7:30 pm and Nov. 1 and 2 at 2:30 pm and 7:30 pm.

Theater Review
Student Directed Stage Door a Success

By Alex Renn ’06

Staff Writer

Though the first play of the school year performed only twice, the unusually short run of Stage Door is no cause for alarm. The production, written by Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman, was performed in Hockaday’s Clements Hall and pleasantly surprised both those in the audience and on the stage.

Junior Katie Lalano, who portrayed Kaye Hamilton in the production, enjoyed her work in the play. “It was really fun getting to work with really great people...I was really sad when it ended,” she stated.

Stage Door, which starred juniors Montgomery Sutton, Nathaniel Bilhartz and Jeff Fijolek alongside seniors Kenny Hughes and John Stewart, performed only twice: a short run, even for student productions.

“Instead of focusing on one character I work with every single character as I help the actors figure out their parts,” states Lalano. She adds, however, that it was not for lack of devotion or ability. The time constraints placed upon the production, a barely three week rehearsal period, was shorter than that of many professional productions.

The story takes place in the early half of the twentieth century and observes the problems of a group of actresses staying in the same home and trying to make ends meet. Sophomore Kit Garton charmed in the lead role as a troubled stage actress while Bilhartz and Sutton vied for her character’s heart. The end to the play was “very exciting,” says Hoak, “all of our work finally paid off.”

Upcoming Talent Show

By Kenny Hughes ’04

Staff Writer

The Fine Arts Committee, in conjunction with Miranda Lind and Marilyn Kaufman, mothers of junior Jonathan Lind and senior Bobby Kaufman, respectively, plans to host the First Annual St. Mark’s Upper School Talent Show.

Entitled “St. Mark’s Center Stage 2003,” the event will allow Upper School students to exhibit their talent to the rest of the school.

The evening will feature a plethora of performances from the vast spectrum of the fine arts. Students are invited to act out scenes from dramatic or musical theatre, sing, do improv or stand-up comedy, play music or exhibit any other talent deemed appropriate by the FAC for the evening.

Lind hopes that Center Stage 2003 will be an excellent way to “put under the spotlight the true talent we have at this school.”

Lind and Kaufman anticipate lots of student participation and encourage students who do not wish to perform on stage to assist backstage with lights, sound, costumes, etc.

Students are asked to audition for spot in the talent show so there will be variety in the performances. Auditions are scheduled for Oct. 1 at 7 p.m. and Oct. 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., while the talent show itself will be held on Friday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m.

Mrs. Kaufman foresees St. Mark’s Center Stage to be a highly successful Upper School event where “everybody can have fun and see the abundance of talent at St. Mark’s.”