



# DRAGON TALES

Issue III, April 2007

## An Evening of Cultural Mix

By: Mehnaz Chowdhury

On February the 9th, HS MSE put on a show like they've never done before. HS MSE students AND faculty both blew away the audience at the Cultural Diversity Festival with acts ranging from a skit performed by Key Club to Ms. Fazio singing in a band with Mr. Honor.

the MLK speech to show the importance of the revolution MLK brought to society.

The brilliant idea for this event came from Mr. Burgan who fused the Martin Luther King assembly and the Enrichment/Arts Festival that occurred over the past four years at HS MSE. The purpose of the festival was to emphasize the different cultures that are present at HS MSE. In addition, Mr. Burgan wanted to show that even though this school is a "math, science & engineering" school, it has an excellent, established humanities and arts program. Mr. Burgan mentioned before he began to read the first part of the infamous Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech, that he was extremely grateful for the way all the students and faculty members came together to make this event a success that, mirrored the idea of cultural diversity. Throughout the show, student members of the student government read off sections of



Two HS MSE students demonstrate a cultural dance

The show was not limited to just this speech: Mr. Piper and Ms. Donnelly surprised everyone when they popped up on stage to show off their singing skills with the Blues band in the back. Freshmen students put on a flamboyant fashion show with models representing countries such as: Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Jamaican, India, China and Egypt. The HS MSE step team amazed everyone as they finally showed off their upbeat moves and school spirit, with Ms. Cotter yelling on the side. "Mr. Dugan is cool, but you know who is hotter..."

Overall, everyone was quite pleased with the show and felt as though it was well worth their time. Mr. Burgan, is planning another similar event for the spring time, but nothing has been established yet.

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## HS MSE's First Senior Trip

By Lenny Diaz and Luis Gomez

On Friday January 19th, members of HS MSE's senior class of '07 went on the school's first ever senior trip to Pinegrove Ranch and Family Resort in Kerhonkson, New York. The students were accompanied by six chaperones: Mr. Dugan, Mr. Hershinson, Mr. Carey, Ms. Cotter, Ms. Wallner and Mr. Bonilla. There were many activities available to both students and teachers, including swimming in an indoor pool, miniature golf, billiards, air hockey, lazer tag, karaoke, an arcade, archery, basketball, dodge ball, handball, football, horseback riding, rock climbing and snow tubing. The price of the trip was \$230 per student and it included the bus ride, food, a room reservation and all activities excluding the arcade, billiards and air hockey, which required an extra fee. There were dances on both Friday and Saturday night, during which students were able to dance and mingle with students from the other high schools that were on their senior trips at Pinegrove also.

Here are some interviews of students and teachers that went on the trip:

### Students

What activities did participate in on the senior trip?

Andrew Excell: Dodge ball, Pool, Dance, Snow Tubing (BOOO!)

Estefany Angeles: Horseback riding, swimming and laser tag

Robert Taylor: Dodge ball, the dance, laser tag, outdoor and indoor tennis, a ton of pool, swimming, football and ping-pong

Pedro Vega Jr.: Everything

Antonio Upia: Swimming, snow tubing, dodge ball, billiards, ice hockey, dance, pranks, war vs. girls and laser tag

Luis Felix: Laser tag, room raiding, billiards, snow tubing, fighting with roomies and dancing

Felix A. Garcia: Laser tag, dancing in the hallway on You Tube

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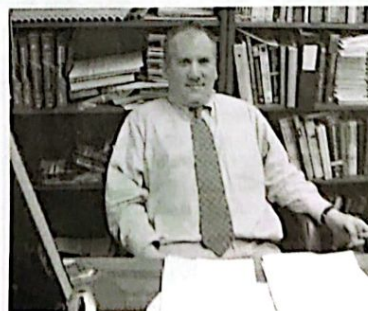
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Brain Teasers: Amos Goldstein

# Why do we take the AMC exam?

By Maha Salama

Every year we, HS MSE students, take an exam called the AMC (American Mathematics Competition). This exam, which occurs on a C-Day at HS MSE, was most recently taken on February 6, 2007. But is there a purpose to this exam? Some teachers say it benefits us because we are, after all, the High School for Math, Science and Engineering at City College. However, half the time we don't even get our scores back; it's like we never took the exam. So I decided to sit down with teachers of the Math department (Dr. Biester and Mr. Honner) to find out what exactly the AMC exam is, and the real reason we take this exam.

Interview with Gary P. Biester, AP Mathematics and Technology:

What is the AMC?

It is the American Mathematics Competition. Moreover, it is all of the competitions that lead up to the International Math Olympiad. The AMC are dedicated to the goal of strengthening the mathematical abilities of our nation's youth and also to identifying and providing further growth opportunities for our most mathematically talented youth.

What are the different kinds of AMC?

There is the AMC 8 for 8th graders, AMC 10 for freshman and sophomores, and AMC 12 for upper classman, aka juniors and seniors.

What is the next round of the AMC tournament?

AIME (American Invitational Mathematics Exam). It is a 15-question test in which you need to score about 120 on the AMC 10 or a 100 on the AMC 12. If neither happens, the top 5% advance. In this test all the answers are integers and free response from 1-999. This year the AIME was taken on March 13th.

And after the AIME exam?

The USAMO, United States of America Math Olympiad, for the entire country. It is the highest level before the International Competition.

Have any students from HS MSE made it to the AIME?

Ben Lipton, last year, almost made it to the USAMO. Last year 18 students from various grades qualified for the AIME.

Who creates the tests?

MAA, Mathematical Association of America.

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Why do you feel we take the AMC exam?

Our school has a large cross section of mathematically talented students....it is a valuable learning experience.

Interview with Patrick Honner, Math Teacher at HS MSE:

What is the AMC exam?

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The AMC is the American Mathematics Competition. It is the first in a series of exams which ultimately determines the United States Math Olympics team--the six top mathematics students in the country--who will represent the US in the International Mathematics Olympiad.

Why do we, HS MSE, take the exam?

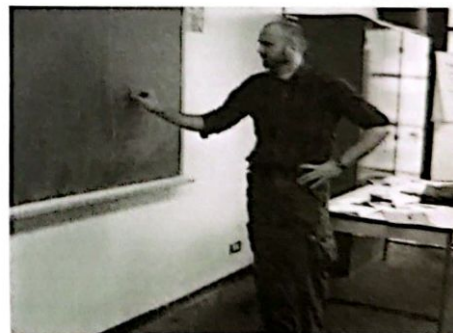
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As a school, we have a lot of talented mathematicians roaming our halls who take a lot of pride in their problem-solving ability--after all, we are the High School for Math, Science, and Engineering. The test is a great way for our students to compete with others from all around the country, and to test themselves against some very challenging and interesting problems.

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Has anyone from HS MSE ever gotten past the AIME exam?

The AIME is a very challenging exam: 15 questions, 3 hours, no calculators. No one from HS MSE has gotten past the AIME, yet, but we're not far off. To make the next round takes a good combined score on the AMC



Mr. Honner trains his mathletes for the AMC.

and AIME, and to achieve that takes a lot of skill and effort. Keep in mind, the school record on the AIME is 7!

What do you feel is the purpose of taking the AMC exam?

The AMC is an excellent contest--many of your readers know how much fun it can be to solve a good problem, and the AMC is full of them. So, first and foremost, we take the AMC because we enjoy it. The AMC is also a great way for students to distinguish themselves among their talented peers--a good score on the AMC is something to be proud of, something to put on a college application, and something to brag to your friends about--whether they are at MSE or one of the other fine city institutions. Good scores for our students also raise the profile of our school and let the city and country know that we at MSE are talented problem-solvers.

# Identity HS MSE Needs

By Adam Gomes

Identity; A word constantly thrown around our daily lives with little regard for its meaning. People say that we are always searching for our identity; trying to find out who we are. But do those who utter this word fully realize the complexities of it? Do they believe that an identity is just there to find? That if you look hard enough with both eyes it will appear magically? Or is it always evolving, changing only with one's personal experiences? Will it show up overnight and if not, how long does one have to wait? Will it come if one just waits for it? Or does it require some effort to find and, if so, how much and in what way? Do you even have to search for it, or is it already there?



What even defines an identity? Is it the superficial idea that your identity is revealed in the way you dress? How about those who have no control over what clothes they wear? For their sake should we look past one's clothes to avoid misconceptions? But how about those who dress a certain way to obtain a desired image and express something about themselves? If we look past their clothes is that not in a sense disregarding that person's self-expression? How do we discern to what extent a person's dress is a reflection of his/her personality - identity - and how do we protect ourselves from making these gaffes? There is no easy answer to that question, but perhaps the best solution is to know a person before passing judgment. Do not act on false pretenses unless they are proven true.

What other forces have an influence on our identity? Is it those that are uncontrollable, such as race and gender? There is no doubt a person's race has some effect on their life, even if it is due to a sole experience in which it has played a part. But is the extent of this effect universal or does it vary from person to person? Does race dictate a person's life, his actions and reactions, his experiences, his thoughts and emotions? Can you look at someone and say what they have been through? There are certain things that are specific to certain groups of people, such as the blues to blacks, but that doesn't mean that all share a common feeling towards it.

Is it not up to the person himself to define who he is as an African-American, a Latino, a person of Asian descent and so forth? Each individual decides how much that aspect of their life defines them, and it is not up to the observer. How would anyone even know if a person wants to be a "hyphenated" American? Should their background be interlinked with their American identity, and how do the two affect each other? Or is this decision solely based on the person himself?

People in America are becoming more and more assimilated with each passing day. The concoction of cultures, lifestyles, and ideas that make up our home makes it harder and harder to see the bottom of this melting pot. Every individual is becoming more difficult to define as he/she is exposed to so many different things. The vast number of aspects that can define one culture makes it impossible to fully know a person's identity by appearance. Misconceptions are rampant and the majority, if not all, of us are guilty of them. However, we must be aware of the dangers of this and try to stop ourselves when it occurs, lest we become a nation of invisible persons.

# Motivation to Dance

By Jeanette Moreland

HS MSE has had some issues when it comes to holding successful dances. The attendance for these dances seemed to be at a minimum, and recently the holiday dance was cancelled because not enough tickets were sold. But what is causing the failure of these dances? "The several functions we've had haven't been that top notch," says Drew Betterton, a junior, "so people have very little faith in the ability of the school to throw a successful dance, since we have a reputation for being disorganized."

Many students also believe that the dances are not well advertised. "We can't motivate people properly," says Rosenny Chavez. A lot of students also feel that there are logistical problems with the scheduling of the dance. "They start and end too early," says George Schriels, a sophomore. Many MSEers are also unmotivated to attend dances because they can't bring friends from other schools. So yes, there are problems, but the important thing we need to address is how we can fix them.

Unfortunately, there are certain rules and regulations that limit our ability to do everything we'd like. However, the school is taking steps to have more successful dances. Advertising is beginning to run more smoothly with the installation of the PA system (and Mr. Carey's dragon puppet). Student government has also taken action to make the dances more enjoyable for students. In a recent Yahoo Groups post by Kion Sawney, Junior Class Vice President, it was stated, "Student Government has bought tons of new lights and a fog machine, glow sticks, food, and a beach ball; and there will also be dance lessons at 7 o'clock headed by Ms. Wallner."

The future of HS MSE is already looking better, as on Friday, January 12, a successful dance was held in the NAC ballroom, which ran with slightly longer hours, from 6:00-9:30. The number of tickets purchased improved dramatically from the last sale. Because of the success of this dance, rumor has it that we may be able to bring friends to future dances, and host more events that appeal to the students. Hopefully events like these will help to draw in the school community.

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Do you have a strong opinion regarding school matters?  
Or thought on events taking places in New York City, or even the world at large?  
Submit an article to your school's newspaper! See Ms. Cotter of members of the Newspaper staff for details.

# Diversity in the Classroom

By Hohe Getachew

## Introduction

"Well, I believe that it was justified. He did it out of self-defense." Then all that can be heard in the classroom is the roar of objections to that statement. "No, no, no. But a tap on the edge of a car is not worth a person's life." "Plus, that was too many shots." What sounds like a verbal fight between classmates is actually the everyday current events portion of Mr. Hershinson's Participation in Government class. When listening to the talk I could not help but note the diverse opinions as well as the cultural diversity of the student body. I began to wonder whether the two are related. I started to wonder how a person's cultural background plays a role in their opinion of an issue and how this opinion contributes to class discussions. I hypothesized that they were directly related, but research consisting teacher interviews and questionnaires brought to light a new perspective.

I began to realize the two things, cultural diversity and diversity in opinions, are not directly related but rather independent of each other. Diverse opinions are not only found where there is cultural diversity. There was also a diversity of teacher opinions on this topic. I began to realize the two things, cultural diversity and diversity in opinions are not directly related but rather independent of each other. Diverse opinions are not only found where there is cultural diversity. There was also a diversity of teacher opinions on this topic.

## Class Discussions

After contemplating where to start in tackling such a broad topic I decided that teachers' opinions on class discussions would be the best place to begin. Humanities teachers Mr. Burgan, Assistant Principal of Humanities and Ms. Cotter, English teacher feel that class discussions are essential parts of the classroom learning environment. Both teachers think that exposure to different opinions and ideas are essential to the learning process. Mr. Burgan develops on this issue and says that a teacher should "capitalize" on this diversity. Ms. Cotter says that it makes one "reexamine one's thoughts" and it might even lead to one altering his or her view. Mr. Burgan agrees: "Most importantly, [students] come across a new idea and their opinion is likely to change." He says that a lack of dialogue leads to a lack of understanding. Open dialogue allows for students to express their differences and experiences.

In math and science classes discussions are not as common, which might account for the difference in opinion. Mr. Wang, a math teacher, feels that diversity does not play as a big role in the math classroom. Citing his previous experience in a mostly African-American and Hispanic populated school, Mr. Wang argues that the teachers socio-economic status plays a bigger role in the classroom environment than ethnicity, but it does not play a big role in the students' acceptance or rejection of the teacher. Biology teacher Mr. Keegan feels that discussions are often not run well enough, and believes that the ability to discuss a topic is a set of skills on its own. He feels that teachers should do more of the talking in a classroom because they are more experienced at it.

## Teacher Driven v. Student Driven

This leads me to my next topic of discussion: whether class discussions should be more student driven or teacher driven. Mr. Keegan says that in science class they should be teacher driven. In a science class most of the knowledge comes from the textbook, experiments, investigations or from the teacher, so the students should learn using these tools. For instance, when learning a mathematic theorem, there is not enough time for the student to discover the proof on their own, but a teacher can quickly and easily explain it. Mr. Wang agrees, "Discussions can not be 100% student driven." Ms. Cotter says that there must be a balance of both teacher and student; both should express their opinions on the topic of discussions. Mr. Burgan is of the opinion that they should be more student-driven.

## Cultural Diversity v. Diversity in Opinions

I could not help but wonder whether cultural diversity is actually important in a classroom or whether all that really matters is a diversity of opinions. Mr. Burgan believes that being surrounded by ethnically diverse people leads to more culturally aware students. Ms. Cotter does not see a

# Student Government Takes Action

By Amos Goldstein



UP STAIRWELL ONLY!  
USE DOWN STAIRWELL  
TO GO DOWNSTAIRS

One of the signs posted near the stairwell directing student traffic

One of the many jobs of the student government is to suggest ideas to fix problems within the school. Previously, there had been a problem with students entering and exiting Baskerville. The building has two staircases that go from the basement to the ground floor. However, because the "first" staircase is closer to the front door, the majority of the students used it to go to and from their classes, while the "second" or back staircase was rarely used. The student government found a solution to the problem. They made a proposal and sent it to the school leadership team. Although the proposal took two months to be accepted and put into action the plan is currently being implemented.

The plan, to designate the staircases as "up" and "down," has been met with mixed emotions from the students. Several students say that sometimes they must go out of their way even when the staircase is not crowded. An example is at the end of the day when everyone is leaving the building; the first staircase (the down) is not in use. Instead of using the front or back staircases, the students with classes in the basement go towards the back of the building, up the back or up staircase and across the hallway.

Students in favor of the new rule say that while they do have to go out of their way a bit, the reduced traffic is helpful and, overall, lessens the amount of time that it takes to get from class to class. In a poll of 132 students, 59 said they like the new system while 43 of the students said they do not like the new system and 30 had no opinion. It seems that the majority of the school feels that the student government has done a good job solving a problem that was causing lateness. However, students often still have trouble getting through and to the front door.

Teachers however seem to be in agreement about the helpfulness of the new system. When 10 teachers were polled, eight were in favor of the new system and two had no opinion. When asked about how this rule has affected the students' passing time to class, Ms. Cotter, a teacher who teaches all her classes in Baskerville, said, "I have noticed a considerable difference in the amount of time that it takes for students to change classes inside of Baskerville."

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# Highway to Heaven

By Nathaniel Sinckler and Julian Chin

Every year students transfer from different schools hoping for better opportunities and a chance to better their education. Nakiya Findley is one of the many students who capitalized on transferring high schools to better her academic and social opportunities. Nakiya is a 15-year-old incoming sophomore who lives in Queens, New York and likes to cook and read in her free time. To her, the high school transferring process was just like going from eighth grade to ninth grade. She was one of the few in her school to take the Specialized High School test and enter into a specialized high school. She is a promising student who shows lots of potential and dedication, and has displayed not only a level of dedication to her academics, but has been extremely outgoing and kind towards her fellow peers at HS MSE. Nakiya was asked various questions regarding what the high school transferring process was like and her reasoning for transferring:

Which school did you come from?  
Science Skills Center

What were some of the benefits of your former high school?  
There were no benefits educationally wise, but my old school had a really good track team I was on.

What was the downside of attending your former high school?  
The classes I was in were really slow and the students didn't really care about the work we had to do.

Has your commute from HS MSE been easier than the commute to your former high school?  
It's about the same. I have to get up a little earlier, but I don't really mind.

What caused you to transfer?  
My mother really didn't like my old school so even if I didn't get accepted here, I'd have to leave anyway... probably to a private school.  
How does the academic regiment of your old school compare or differ from the academic regiment at HS MSE?

The classes are a lot more specific here. They don't seem to dumb down the work. In my old school I was more like an assistant teacher in my classes than a student.

Do you feel that you have had any better success after transferring to HS MSE? If so, what are they?  
Yes, I'm a lot more challenged and enjoy the classes more here.

What has been the highlight during your first year of HS MSE?  
I can't answer that yet... we will have to wait and see.

What do you look forward to in your next two years at HS MSE?  
Getting really good grades and participating in a lot of the school activities.

Overall was it really worth transferring to HS MSE? Why or why not?  
Yes, I will have better opportunities in the future at this school. My old school, Science Skills Center, was primarily black, so coming to this school introduced me to a lot more races. The people in this school are also a lot nicer. In my old school the kids were all in cliques and didn't really socialize with everyone. The classes are very different as well. We have two different schedules (Block) and the classes are 90 minutes long. My old school only had one schedule with 45 minute classes. Overall this school is a lot better.

Nakiya Findley is a student that has experienced a lot through the high school transferring process. She believes that attending HS MSE will only better her future, an opportunity she could not receive from her original high school. Fortunately for her, and for all the other attending students at HS MSE, she has found the right high school. Like many students at HS MSE, Nakiya looks forward to having a successful academic career and having fun. Hopefully Nakiya will continue to enjoy her time at HS MSE and will still have the same optimistic mind set at the end of the year.



Nakiya Findley

## A New Teacher Welcomed

By Noah Brecker-Redd

Mr. D'Alessandro is the music teacher at HS MSE. It is his first year teaching at HS MSE and he is still becoming accustomed to the A-day B-day schedule. It is easy to tell that he is unaccustomed to the schedule when he says "But I told you this yesterday!" and then the class yells back "We didn't have you yesterday!" Mr. D'Alessandro, also known as Mr. D, excels at teaching students how to play instruments, most notably the piano, his favorite instrument. He also teaches guitar, flute and many other instruments that students wish to play. He has a Master's degree in Composition. He is still getting used to the smaller size of the student body at HS MSE because he came from Brooklyn Tech, where the size of the student body is very large. The smaller class size allows him to teach each student individually and improve their music understanding.

When I asked students about Mr. D they said he knew music and he seemed to be good at the piano. Jonathan Schwartz, a sophomore at HS MSE, said that Mr. D "knows music theory." LoVel James, also a sophomore, said that, "He is good at the piano." Overall, a lot of students respect his music understanding and his ability to play many different instruments.

Interview questions for Mr. D:  
How long have you been a teacher?  
11 years

Where did you teach before coming to HS MSE?  
Brooklyn Tech

What motivated you to become a teacher?  
I was motivated by many of the good teachers I had when I was in school. I don't have kids myself and I am interested in passing on knowledge to young people.

Where did you go to school?  
Brooklyn Tech and CCNY  
Where did you grow up?  
Canarsie, Brooklyn

If you were stranded on an island with an MP3 player with lifetime batteries,

what music would you want to listen to?  
Unchained Melody by the Righteous Brothers, and romantic Latin music

If you were stranded on an island and you could only have one instrument what would it be?  
The piano

What is your favorite song?  
Unchained Melody

What is your favorite song to play?  
Malaguena Ernesto Lecuana

Nas says that Hip Hop is dead. Do you agree?  
Yes, because anything Nas says must be true

How did you first become interested in music?  
I fell in love with the piano

Who is your music idol?  
Rod Stewart

Other than the piano what instruments do you like to play?  
The guitar

What type of music have you written?  
20th century experimental  
What type of music did you like to listen to when you were in high school?  
Pop and Latin music  
How has your musical taste changed since then?  
I have a greater appreciation for Jazz and classical music



Mr. D looks over as two students play the sax.

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# Are you a TRUE New Yorker?

By Ashléé Lyte

The population here at HS MSE is quite diverse, with its many cultures; European, Hispanic, Caribbean, Asian and African American. Students and faculty come from a wide range of historical backgrounds which makes our school so unique and allows everyone to learn a lot from one another. Many other high schools in New York City are not as culturally diverse as us. But the one thing that we all have in common is that we live in the wonderful place called New York City also known as the "Big Apple." No matter what background, no matter what culture we all have a common respect, love and devotion to New York City.

We all feel strongly about our backgrounds but how much do we really know about the place in which we reside, New York City. Several students at HS MSE participated in a survey to determine if they are true New Yorkers or not. Three students of every grade level had 10 seconds to answer questions an average New Yorker should know.

From our survey it was just as we thought. We hardly know the place we live in. Only one of three juniors was capable of getting all the answers correct. The sophomore class had an average of 3.5 of the 6 questions correct. The seniors and the freshmen came in with a depressing score of merely 3 of the 6 questions asked. This just shows that we need to look around and explore this big city we live in. As New Yorkers we need to open our eyes and take notice of what we have. With world issues today, there is a slight chance what's here today will be gone tomorrow. So next time when you just want to hang out with some friends, rather than going to see a movie, hop on the train and take a ride around New York City.

### Answers to Survey Questions:

1. 5 counties in NY
  - a. Kings

- b. Queens
- c. Richmond
- d. Bronx
- e. New York

2. Major bridges:
  - a. Brooklyn,
  - b. Manhattan,
  - c. G. Washington,
  - d. Williamsburg
  - e. Verrazano-Narrow
  - f. Triboro
  - g. Whitestone
  - h. Goethals
  - j. Bayonne
  - k. Throgs Neck
  - l. Queens-Boro

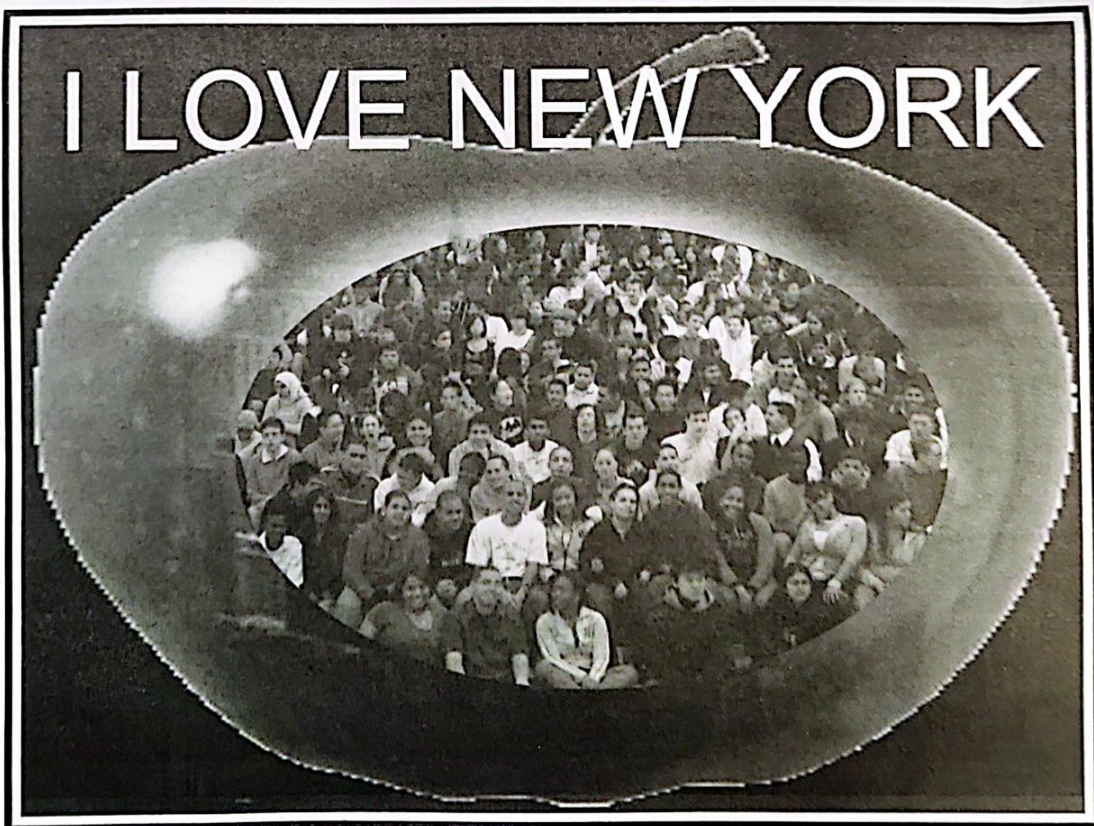
3. The largest park located in Bronx Pelham Bay Park

4. Which letters are not train lines?- X,I,T,U,K,O,Y,H,P,V.

5. Which is the largest museum in NYC? Metropolitan Museum of NY

6. Which states are considered tristate?
  - a. New York
  - b. New Jersey
  - c. Connecticut

<b>Survey Questions</b>	
1. Name 5 counties in New York.	
2. What are the Major Bridges?	
3. Which borough is the largest park located in?	
4. Which letters are not train lines?	
5. Which is the largest museum in New York City?	
6. Which states are considered tri-state?	



# Seniors

Continued from first page

## HS MSE's FIRST Senior Trip

Did you enjoy the trip in general?

AE: Yessir

EA: Yes, it was lots of fun to spend time with my friends for 3 days

RT: Yessir, everything was good. Indoor tennis and laser tag were pitiful though

PV: Yes

AU: Yes, a lot

LF: Hell Yea

FG: Yea

What did you enjoy the most?

AE: -----

EA: Swimming, because a lot of us did it

RT: The room - just having a room to ourselves with the guys was great

PV: Fighting, because it is fun

AU: Dodge ball, because I hit the teachers

LF: Fighting and dancing, because they were the most fun

FG: Breaking the rules because it was against the rules

What did you enjoy the least?

AE: Snow tubing

EA: Laser tag, because the place was too small

RT: Laser tag - Horrible, I've had more fun using my hand in the shape of a gun in my own living room

PV: Horseback riding, because it was boring and cold

AU: There was not enough snow for snow boarding

LF: Snow tubing, because after I tried it, it's not as good as what I thought it was

FG: Ugly ducklings, because they weren't swans

Were you excited to go?

AE: Yes

EA: Of course

RT: Yes, just getting away with the guys for a weekend sounded good

PV: Hell Yea

AU: Yes

LF: Yes because it was a weekend full of friends

FG: Yea

Was it everything you expected?

AE: No (needed snowboarding)

EA: The place wasn't, but in other aspects it was better

RT: Yea. It was great, a lot of good times

PV: Better

AU: No, because there wasn't enough snow

LF: More than what I expected

FG: Yea

If you had to change something, what would it be?

AE: More snow

EA: Make it longer

RT: I wouldn't have slept even though I was so tired

PV: Snowboarding

AU: Have more snow and a longer trip

LF: The time it lasted...it should have been longer

FG: I would have slept more

Was it worth the \$230?

AE: No sir

EA: I don't know

RT: Yea. You can't beat \$230 even if it was just a hotel room for 3 days. The room, the parties, everything we did as a school, the experience was priceless. Shout out to the roommates Chuey, Gabe, Omar and Gavin. "Hoodrats," most of the trip

PV: Nope, because there was no snowboarding

AU: No because there wasn't any snow

LF: Yes, because it was so much fun being with friends

FG: Yea

Teachers

Were you excited to chaperone the trip?

Mr. Dugan: Yes.

Mr. Carey: NO! Well, yes, but apprehensive. As an organizer I just wanted everything to run smoothly.

Ms. Wallner: Of Course!

Ms. Cotter: Yes, I was excited to be a part of the first senior trip!

Mr. Bonilla: Yes, it was the first senior trip.

Did you enjoy chaperoning the trip?

Mr. D: Yes, I was happy to see our seniors enjoy themselves.

Mr. C: Yes, seniors were well behaved and respectful.

Ms. W: Who would not like to spend an exiting weekend with a happy crowd like the HSMSE seniors!?

Ms. C: Yes, I enjoyed spending time with the seniors beyond the classroom environment.

Mr. B: Yes, it's always fun chaperoning.

What activities did you partake in on the senior trip?

Mr. D: Dodge ball, pool, rock climbing and air hockey.

Mr. C: Rock climbing, horseback riding, dodge ball and football.

Ms. W: Senior watching, eating, eating, eating and various other activities. ( And I just learned how to play poker!)

Ms. C: I went snow tubing, horseback riding, rock climbing and much more!

Mr. B: Outdoor dodge ball, when MSE took over the game, and also mini golf with Ms. Cotter, Ms. Wallner, and Mr. Carey

Was the trip everything you expected?

Mr. D: Yes.

Mr. C: Yes and no, I am glad the seniors enjoyed themselves but it was a shame there wasn't much snow so we could ski.

Ms. W: The organization was terrific (thanks P.C.) plus the place offered so much, so yes!

Ms. C: I honestly was not sure what to expect. But I think the trip was well organized and executed quite well.

Mr. B: Yes, as long as the students had a good time.

How did the students behave?

Mr. D: The students behaved well.

Mr. C: Apart from silliness (to be expected) all

were respectful and did keep to the rules.

Ms. W: Most of them were angels; some might go straight some where else!

Ms. C: They were great!

Mr. B: The students behaved well. They knew how to have a good time without getting carried away.

Are there any stories you would like to share?

Mr. D: No response.

Mr. C: No! What happens on senior trip stays on senior trip.

Ms. W: Yes! Come and ask me...

Ms. C: The performance of our student's karaoke night was outstanding!

Mr. B: It was awesome being part of the first ever MSE senior trip, and I would like to thank Mr. Carey and the seniors for giving me the opportunity to chaperone. Oh yea and I liked the fact that we had our own dining room to ourselves.

We had the pleasure of going on the senior trip, so we know which activities people actually did, and which activities were the most fun. The dances were fun for most people, although not everyone went. Those that did go had a great time and found that it was a perfect time to let loose and have fun. Most of the students went swimming and really enjoyed it because most people don't go swimming in the winter. Those that went horseback riding said that it was a great experience but that the horses moved too slowly. Karaoke on both nights was fun for the whole school because everyone was there to cheer on those who went up to sing. On the second night the whole school even joined in a chant after Rob Taylor performed "Ice Ice Baby" by Vanilla Ice. The football game was fun even though it was freezing outside, and everyone loved dodge ball.

The students especially liked dodge ball because they got to throw balls at chaperones like Mr. Dugan and Mr. Carey. Our school ended up winning at dodge ball because we are just that good. A few people participated in the archery and rock climbing, but not a vast majority. Everyone played billiards and air hockey, even though there was an extra fee, because it was a great way to kill time before an activity or before lunch or dinner. I believe the general opinion was that the lazer tag equipment wasn't great quality because it didn't keep score and sometimes people would shoot other people but nothing would happen. Despite this everyone made the most out of it. A lot of people went snow tubing but didn't really like it. They felt like sliding down a hill while sitting in a tube wasn't exciting and they would rather have been skiing, but there wasn't enough snow for it so the students and chaperons were disappointed. For the most part, students hung out in each others' rooms and were very respectful of the rules, though they managed to still have fun by doing things like running into peoples' rooms, playing music and dancing all around. There are other stories that won't be told though, because "what happens in Pinegrove stays in Pinegrove."

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# Juniors

## Juniors: Steppin' it up

Mariany Polanco

Although a year and a half away from graduating HS MSE's class of 2008 is already thinking ahead. The class had benefited from being HS MSE's third graduating class because they have witnessed the accounts the previous seniors are or have experienced. First of all, the junior class is beginning to prepare trips for both their junior and senior years ahead of time. Juniors are preparing events such as prom and trips in their junior year. They have organized various small committees in order to ensure all their plans are successful. They are even planning on selling their own T-shirts. (For further t-shirt information, contact the junior representatives President Jackson Brebnor and Vice President Kion Sawney.)

The following juniors were asked four questions on their thoughts about their plans. (Adina Bauman, Yannick Lopez, Malcolm Mack, Kion Sawney, Milan Medina, Smith Piyanan) However, their individual responses will remain anonymous.

1. How do you feel about all the plans that you have made this year?

"I am looking forward to things like the trip in April to Six Flags. It's exciting to know that our school is actually becoming a high school!"

"I feel good that our government is trying to unify the school with the t-shirt idea."

"I'm ecstatic that we are now working toward doing things that regular high schools get to do."

"All of the plans which the junior have developed for the year created a base for our senior year and create a culture not only in our grade but in our school. The set plans which President Jackson and myself (Kion) created in January of last year are halfway complete and all of our major goals for the year are underway."

"I think that all the plans have been beneficial and that they are all great."

"I feel all the plans are good and have been a big help to the junior class and school itself."

2. Do you feel they are going to happen?

"I'm not sure if they are going to happen due to the fact that our school has a knack for things not happening."

"I have doubts that it will happen, but I have great confidence that the student government will do as much as possible to make it happen."

"I feel that as long as us juniors stick together, work hard, and remain dedicated toward accomplishing our goals, we'll at least be able to follow through with some of our plans."

"I feel that all of our plans for the year will happen because, for the first time in our school, the junior class officials have relationship with the student governments, PTA, and school administration, which all share in the bettering of the school. As long as students are willing to show that they can be active in the government, things will happen."

"Most of the plans will happen, except maybe the junior trip."

"Yes. As you can see the juniors are steps ahead of the game. They are ready for the present, preparing for the future, and reflecting on the past."



Congratulations juniors, for achieving your goal of going on a class trip to Six Flags, and more importantly for gaining the support of the school in helping subsidize the cost, making the trip available to all students of junior class.

### 200 HOURS COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

All students wanting a HS MSE endorsed Diploma should keep a record of completed hours on the tracking sheet (this can be found on the HSMSE website under the guidance section).

Seniors who have completed their 200 community service hours should hand them in to Mr. Klein. If you have any questions about community service opportunities, please ask Ms. Fisher.



# Soph-Frosh

## A Year Like No Other

By Mariany Polanco

Sophomore year is a year quite like no other. We already had a year of high school and two and half more awaits us. This year is sometimes referred to as the hardest year in HS MSE. However, in the bright side we are already accustomed to the work load. We also pretty much know what to expect out of the year and what is expected of us as HS MSE students. Several students decided to speak on the expectations put on them as sophomores (academic wise) versus the reality of sophomore year.

People interviewed: Maraquelín Quezada, Amanda Fernandez, Sagirah Lewis, Wariana Contreras, Gloria Guerra, Stephanie Lara, Derek M.

These sophomores were asked many questions. It began with the simple question of what they expected sophomore year to be like. Many of them just responded by saying that they believed this year was going to be hard. Others said, "I thought sophomore year was going to be easy just like freshmen year". And last but not least one student just simply said sophomore year will be "no fun". They were then asked if their expectations were correct and if so why or why not? Many said it turned out to be more difficult or equally as hard as freshman year.

The questions and answers continued... (Individual responses will remain anonymous)

MP: How do you feel in comparison of last year?

Superior, more responsible.

I made it through freshman year I know what is expected of me.

Last year was much easier and more fun.

This year there way more pressure than last year.

I feel tired more often and stressed.

Last year was a lot easier.

MP: Academically do you feel you have reached your highest potential?

NOT AT ALL! I think I can do way better.

I have lots of homework which makes me feel overwhelmed and I get lazy.

Academically I've stayed the same basically above 90, but I think I can do better.

I have reached above a 90 average, but I know I could do a lot better in individual classes.

No I still have far to go.

MP: Are classes extremely hard pr are the students lacking effort?

Students lack effort.

Students lack effort.

I don't think student lack effort, its just hard to manage your time with all the work.

I think some classes are hard, but in other, students are not trying hard enough.

It's a little but of both but in some situations it's the class.

## The Big Change

By Maha Salama & Hector Burgos

According to Ms. Donnelly, the program chair and a teacher at HS MSE, the sophomore class, which was divided into four sections at the middle of last year, has now returned to five (the original number) sections at the start of this semester. Currently, at about 118, the sophomores are the largest class in the school. There are about 29 sophomores in each class at one time, and with 'the big change,' the number has decreased to about 23.

This decision was ultimately made by Mr. Dugan. Many teachers believe such a change is for the better because with fewer students they will be able to provide more individual attention. Thus more students can focus, which is practically our school motto.

The sophomores feel that the change is both good and bad. Many students feel that more sections are better for the students. More sections mean smaller classes and more independent attention for the students. It was also easier to divide up the sections because the students who take Spanish were placed in one section and the rest of the students were divided otherwise.

But some sophomores feel that this change is a bad one. Students feel they don't see some of their friends anymore. However, changes like these happen in schools and they are a part of the high school experience. Many students have raised the concern of the lab schedule: whether or not lab will take place every other P.E period or not. The current schedule is P.E. - P.E. - Lab.

Overall, this change has more pros than cons. We, along with many other students, support this change. It will be better to have class in a room that doesn't need extra chairs, and to not have to wait for help because there are 10 other students ahead of us. The school now has one less problem to worry about.



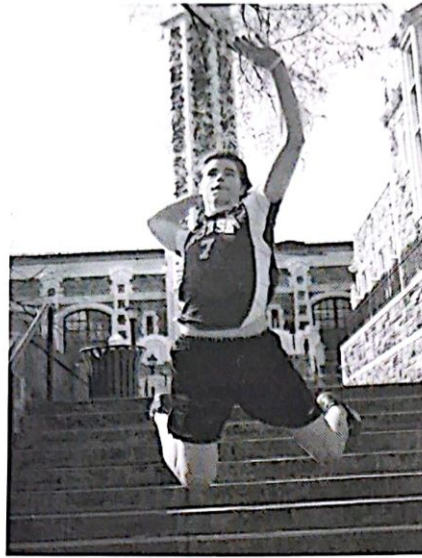
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Spring is here, and summer is right around the corner...  
Its time to start thinking about summer jobs or volunteer work!

If you are unsure about where to start your search, or what opportunities are available in NYC, see Ms. Robertson or Mr. Klein in the guidance offices.

# Boys' Volleyball - Undefeated...

By Ms. Calvo



Tyler Halpin-Healy practices his hits for an upcoming game outside of Baskerville.

The HS MSE boys' volleyball team is undefeated (3-0) heading into spring break. In the season opener against Frederick Douglass Academy, Erik Shagdar served up five aces and two kills. Michael Kravetz led the offense with four kills, while Antonio Upia held down the defense with three blocks.

The Dragons then handily beat APR behind the fantastic serving of James Hill. He racked up 15 service points and 11 aces, making him one of the PSAL leaders in both categories. In a well balanced attack, Kravetz assisted five other Dragons for two or more kills each.

In another great serving display, the Dragons then beat Central Park East Secondary. Erik Shagdar, once again, led the team with 11 aces and 12 service points and was helped out by Tyler Halpin-Healy who contributed seven aces and 11 service points. Shagdar is currently ranked fourth in the PSAL in aces.

## Looking Back on the NCAA season

By Manpreet Singh

The 2005-06 NCAA basketball season was great. J.J. Redick broke the ACC scoring record and Adam Morrison averaged the most points per game. Many people had predicted teams like Duke, LSU, and Gonzaga to win the Final Four. Duke was expected to win by expert picks because of its two star seniors, J.J. Redick and Sheldon Williams, but Joakim Noah and the Gators took the prize.

This season the Gators are still dominating with an overall record of 9-2, and are ranked #3 in the U.S. behind UCLA and North Carolina,

ranked 1 and 2 respectively. Teams like Ohio State, Alabama, Kansas, Arizona, and Duke are also contenders for the title. Ohio State, with its 7-foot freshman Greg Oden, who is redeveloping his skill after a hand injury, may cause problems for the other teams.

The Kansas Jayhawks have different players stepping up in different games to give them wins. They have four players averaging over 12 points per game. Alabama has also been playing great team ball led by Jermareo Davidson. Davidson hit the 1000-point mark on Dec 29 to win over Lipscomb, a player who has

worked on his game over the past three years, now averaging about 15 points per game and almost 10 rebounds per game. The Arizona Wildcats are also making a name for themselves behind the leadership of Marcus Williams and Ivan Radenovic, currently ranked at 7th place. Duke, led by Josh McRoberts and Greg Paulus, has remained very consistent, even after losing J.J. Reddick and Sheldon Williams, currently #5 in the country. There is still half of the season left to play and, as seen in last year's season, anything can happen.

## Baseball in the Winter: The 2006 MLB Winter Meetings

By Jermaine Francis

The MLB Winter Meetings, from December 4th through December 8th, are where baseball execs and lawyers meet in a hotel to discuss trades and player signings. During this short amount of time there was a lot of action. There were four trades and ten signings involving twenty-one players. Some of the notable transactions were: pitcher Barry Zito signed a seven-year contract with the San Francisco Giants; pitcher Ted Lilly signed a four-year contract with the Chicago Cubs; and star Japanese pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka - who was won in a very expensive bid by the Boston Red Sox - signed a six-year contract after the Winter Meetings. Based on the numerous actions during the Winter Meetings, we can tell that there will be many trades and signings during this baseball off-season.

### Want to play some sports!?

We have many different teams at HS MSE...

...including swimming, soccer, basketball, and volleyball.

Currently, Girl's Soccer and Boy's Volleyball are playing this spring!!!

Talk to Athletic Director Dean Hershinson for information about the coaches, captains, and tryouts for each team.

# The Real Kyzr, Yung Love, and Anasco

By Adina Bauman

All HS MSEers already know who Kyzr (Kenny Lewis), Yung Love (Lovel James) and Anasco (Pedro Vega) are. They are the music and life of HS MSE. Kyzr and Yung Love performed last year at the Winter Talent Show at Aaron Davis Hall, and Anasco was recently promoting his CD, which was crazy. All three of them have been rapping or singing for years now, but nobody knows about how they feel about their music. It was asked of them to pick the most meaningful song to them, and give a brief explanation of why its the most meaningful and what makes it is so important. Here are the Real Kyzr, Yung Love, and Anasco...

## Kyzr: "Why You Had to Leave"

Kyzr: My mother passed away 8 days after my birth and my father remarried almost immediately. I had a conflict; I wondered what my life would be like if my mother didn't die. I love my step-mother and my life, but I couldn't help wondering. In elementary school this caused me to be very angry, very easily all the time. Many of the students didn't know this about me so they would just think that I am being dramatic, which caused me to only get angrier. This was a song just to express this and get it off of my chest. As I got older, I realized that all I needed was for me to let it out. I realized this after having a conversation with my Pops.

### The Song's Lyrics:

Many people say I'm just being dramatic but you don't know what going on in my head so kill the static cause it hurts when you know that you're the first and the last and it's worse in ya past and you can't converse cause the conversation won't last cause you won't give 'em a chance and then there's the few that do or at least tries to but you can't get the words out cause ya heart denies you so you just keep it in and reminders keep seeping in and out the water but you weakening you tryna get out the water but you getting push to the deeper end and constant wondering got you plummeting was her death a good thing (you don't wanna say that) but if she didn't die would that be a good thing cause see the one I got is great and I'm glad but I miss the one I lost... I mean the one I mean the one I never had (damn)... (To see full song lyrics, look on CD)

## Yung Love: "I Miss You"

Yung Love: The song is about a girl who had a relationship with me, but we decided to end it for a little while to see how things go. Essentially, I begin to miss her so much and I can't stand seeing her with someone else. She begins to play games with me, but she goes too far. I end up changing my mind and I begin to hate her. I wrote this song because it's a situation that may have occurred in my life. It's a way to express how I feel, whether I feel crummy or harmed.

### The Song's Lyrics:

You persist and try to fill my head with lies.  
And we all know girl that there's no need to ask why.  
From my eyes I cry; you pushed our true love aside.  
Tried to hide your pride; your feelings tried to exercise.  
Though you knew we weren't fake, it's too late to shake away.  
Try to relate; wipe the points off the slate.  
'Cause my feelings escalate, coming really close to hate.  
And my hearts in the wake of the waves that you create.  
(To see full song lyrics, look in CD)

Are you a musician or artist?  
Would you like to see your work highlighted in the next newspaper issue?

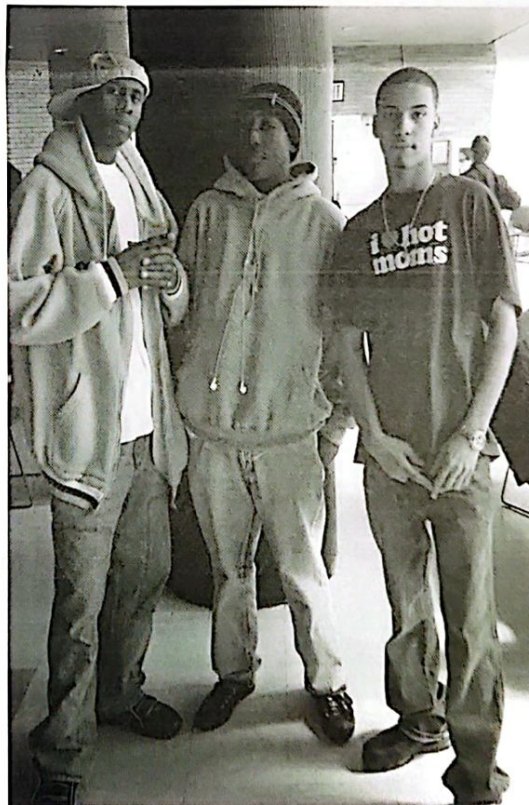
Drop of a copy of your work  
in the Newspaper Box in B2 or see Ms. Cotter  
with any potential questions.

## Anasco: "Prime Time"

Anasco: I wrote this song after I took a three month break from writing. It was in response to a lot of haters around me at the time so I rapped in a real cocky tone. I don't really feel that highly about myself but I strongly dislike haters, so I wrote a song to reflect that anger that I had. Boasting is the way I relieve my anger. It is a very boastful song, but it is one of the first songs I recorded so it means something to me.

### The Song's Lyrics:

People keep on asking me what's wrong  
It's the pain that I'm going through I'm spitting in these songs  
All the \$%^& that bothers me I'm talking really reckless  
On my expression of anger but u got to respect it  
If there's drama I wreck \$%^& that's why I walk with the ice grill  
I take breaks but I am nice still  
I'm more than off the hook my rhymes cause people to be off the hook  
My influence can easily cause a jux...  
(Chorus)  
I'm in the world all alone in the zone  
Thoughts run through my dome that's how I come up with a song  
That's how I write my street poems  
Leave me the hell alone it's in my own thoughts where I roam  
Holmes in my mind I am gone  
So my thoughts go on paper and it turns to a song, Smash it's on  
That's how I write street poems  
Leave me the hell alone it's in my own thoughts where I roam



Kyzr, Yung Love, and Anasco - up and coming artists of the 21st century.

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## No stench, but quite bland

By Eli Amzallag

I would have liked to inform you that *Notes on a Scandal* is a must-see. And with Judi Dench and Cate Blanchett playing the leads, how could it not be? Credit goes to Zoë Heller, who wrote the book upon which the film is based and who obviously seized every opportunity to fill it up with trite material. Some of the dialogue (Patrick Marber, *Closer*) sounds very realistic and the narrator toys with the audience a bit, but the increasingly silly plot turns kill the whole show.

A new member of a school faculty has an illicit relationship with one of the students. One of her colleagues, secretly in love with her, catches the affair in action and uses it as a blackmailing device. You'd think such a plot would carry at least some punch, even though it's been done to death already. But it shies away from the provocative and, instead, goes for the same old formula. And not even Philip Glass's overbearing score might help you stay awake as the story "progresses."



The performances are, as any moviegoer would expect from such a cast, uniformly excellent. Bill Nighy is especially convincing here, but he would have done better to invest his talent in a different film. *All-American Girl: The Mary Kay Letourneau Story* featured the same premise and was not as well-acted, but was a far more interesting attempt at tackling such a subject. And, just so you know, that was a made-for-television job.

Grade: C

Rated R for language and some aberrant sexual content. 92 minutes. A Fox Searchlight Pictures Release.

## Land of the Dead, Dying, and Infertile

By Eli Amzallag



Clive Owen plays a regular guy in a desolate future who is suddenly called on by his ex, Julianne Moore, to save the future of the human race. If you can get past the underdeveloped premise, the plot moves convincingly enough and Cuarón sure knows how to make an audience go along with what he has to offer. Each shot is composed with such care, it's almost impossible not to get what he's saying or foreshadowing. And a few action sequences are incredibly exciting and amazing technical feats.

Where *Children of Men* fails is in establishing a convincing catalyst for the plot. True, the movie is based on a novel and the screenwriters had little room to change the basic narrative. But if they wanted to make a great film and not just a rough draft of one, they would have thrown P.D. James' book out the window and come up with their own world of infertile women. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, that is commonly called a rip-off. But if Woody Allen was able to do it with *Match Point* and earn critical acclaim, so can other writers.

He gave us a hilarious and thoughtful road trip film (*Y tu mamá también*). He turned what was becoming a read-along film series into actual cinema (*Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*). And, years before these two, he delivered a solid fairy-tale (*A Little Princess*). Alfonso Cuarón is the most versatile director out there today, save for Tim Burton. The problem is he's not too good a writer. He's not awful. But he should drop the pen and stick with looking through the lens, for now anyway.

Grade: B

Rated R for strong violence, language, some drug use and brief nudity. 109 minutes. A Universal Pictures Release.

# A Twisted De-light

By Eli Amzallag

Unless you are familiar with James Ellroy's writing, and I'll admit this is the only of his novels that I've read thus far, you might pick up *My Dark Places* expecting a son's affectionate portrayal of his murdered mother. But that's not what you'll get. This memoir is far more complex. Ellroy grapples with something much more meaningful to him than his mother Jean's murder. He struggles to make sense out of his own identity. He suggests that the heinous El Monte crime set him in the direction he would go in for the rest of his life.

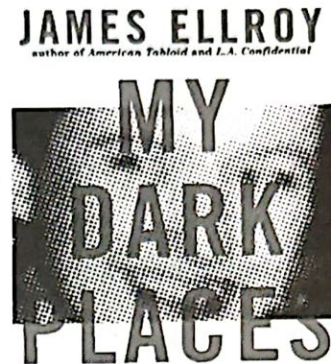
After running through the initial investigation into his mother's death with as much skill as Truman Capote in *In Cold Blood*, Ellroy goes on to describe his early obsession with the Black Dahlia and unsolved murder cases in general. He tells us of living with his father. He tells us of reading crime novels and stealing many books and other items from stores all over town. He recounts his drug addiction and his inability to figure out what he wanted to do for the rest of his life during that time period. Everything about the writing is so honest and conversational, it feels like Ellroy is talking right to you. He does not leave out anything that might lead you to think he's a lowlife. He lets you judge him any way you want to.

He concludes the coming-of-age portion with the publication of his first novel. Then he goes back to El Monte in 1995, at his wife's urge, to reopen the Jean Ellroy case and investigate it himself. He comes to plenty of dead ends and it often seems like there will be no closure, something he begins to despise. But to say that he does not maintain interest (and incite plenty of laughter and chills) would be to disregard what distinguishes this novel from something like Tobias Wolff's memoir, *This Boy's Life*, which was a bore almost all the way through. Whereas Wolff always seemed to be holding something back and trying to make himself look like a perfectly innocent child. Ellroy gives a warts-and-all, I'm-not-here-to-gripe cathartic

cliffhanger. It's one heck of a ride and worth getting on.

Grade: A-

This book contains strong language, graphic descriptions of violence and its aftermath, sexual content, drug use, and some thematic elements that may disturb readers. 427 pages. A Vintage Books Release.



"Both a harrowing autobiography and a disturbingly fixated love story...blunt, graphic, and oddly exhilarating."  
—San Francisco Chronicle

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## The Best and Worst of 2006 Films in Review

By Eli Amzallag

Every year the studios release a bunch of garbage with a few gems inside. I feel that I have seen most of those gems, enough at least to select ten good ones from the bunch. Even if they're not the best, I highly recommend all of them. The films I list under honorable mention are also very high quality examples of cinema and cover a wide range of genres for whatever mood you're in. They'll get you through the early year movie doldrums.

### The Best of 2006

#### 1. The Proposition

A flat-out brilliant western, this Australian flick, the victim of an early release, was overlooked when it hit theaters earlier this year. Guy Pearce, in a pitch-perfect understated performance, stars as an outlaw who tries to kill his older brother to save his younger brother. Don't expect it to win many awards, though I've seen very little cinematography as stunning as this film's.

#### 2. Pan's Labyrinth

You could not ask for a more sublime on-screen fairy tale. Director Guillermo del Toro, that guy who made *Hellboy*, has blended reality and fantasy, against the backdrop of the Spanish Civil War, even more successfully than *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*. Don't miss it in theaters. It deserves, at the very least, to be seen on the big screen.

#### 3. Babel

When the credits rolled at the end, only one word was floating across my mind: Wow. The writer-director team, Guillermo Arriaga and Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, have told this type of story before, only with different characters and not bouncing all over the world. It turns out this one is the most ambitious and rewarding of their collaborations yet, even if *21 Grams* accomplishes more of what it set out to do.

#### 4. United 93

This movie is not for everyone. I heard many had trouble watching it, as did I. But, as a tribute to the heroes on that flight, it is as close as anyone may ever get to honoring them properly. Director Paul Greengrass shot this like a documentary, which is the reason the film creates a discomfiting you-are-there effect. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but, eventually, you should watch this.

#### 5. Half Nelson

This one was the kind that got better and better the more I thought about it. A drug-addicted history teacher develops a (platonic) relationship with one of his students. As the teacher, Ryan Gosling gives a spellbinding performance. Like Forest Whitaker, he deserves to finally take home the gold.

*Continued on page 16*

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# Entre La Espada y La Pared

By Aury Garcia

"Mi hija me haces el favor de leer me esta carta que llegó en el correo hoy."

"La estoy leyendo mama pero no sé como traducirla porque es difícil para mi traducir las palabras del inglés al español."

"Pues yo no sé que inglés te están enseñando en la escuela si no sabes traducir una simple carta."

## Nuestra Realidad

Este es el caso de millones de inmigrantes en los Estados Unidos. La realidad es que muchos hispanos, como mi mamá, dependen de sus hijos para todo lo que tenga relación con el inglés: aplicaciones de trabajo, cartas del correo, en el supermercado, y en muchos otros lugares. Nuestros padres vienen de lugares como la República Dominicana, Colombia, México, y el Ecuador adonde el español es el idioma principal. La historia de la mayoría de inmigrantes es igual. Vienen a los Estados Unidos buscando una vida mejor. Quieren que nosotros, sus hijos, tengamos la oportunidad de ir a la escuela para convertirnos en profesionales y ellos mismos quieren la oportunidad de obtener mejores trabajos.

Claro, todo esto nos pone a nosotros, hijos de inmigrantes, en una situación no muy deseable. Estamos forzados a crecer en dos mundos muy diferentes. En la casa hablamos el español porque es lo único que nuestros padres entienden y en la escuela hablamos en inglés con los maestros y



nuestros amigos. En la casa comemos platillos como tamales, mangú, arroz con habichuela, y pasteles en hoja pero como americanos comemos "pizza", "hot dogs", y "hamburgers". Nosotros los hispanos en algunos casos no estamos en un nivel económico como otras familias en los Estados Unidos. Debido a eso, cuando nosotros queremos estar al día con la moda no podemos porque el dinero no alcanza. Las reglas familiares en los Estados Unidos son diferentes a las reglas familiares en la casa de inmigrantes hispanos. Nosotros los hijos entonces nos confundimos en algún lugar donde el mundo americano e hispano cruzan.

## Mi Historia

En mi caso, tengo que ayudar a mi mamá con casi todo porque ella no entiende el inglés muy bien. Cuando le leo las cartas que llegan en el correo ella se pone muy irritada porque a veces no sé como explicarle lo que dice la carta. Siempre dice que no me están enseñando nada en la escuela cuando en realidad el problema está en que estoy hablando más inglés que mi lenguaje nativo que es el español. A veces no sé como comunicarle las cosas porque se me olvida como decir "esa" palabra en español entonces me encuentro diciendo cosas como "mami me das water." Mi mamá después me mira con una expresión y sé que no entendió lo que le dije. Yo después tengo que corregir mi error y traducir la palabra al español, claro que después de algunas equivocaciones mi mamá finalmente me pregunta que quiere decir "water." Entonces esto se convierte en una clase de inglés y español.

En otras ocasiones, como por ejemplo de trabajo, nuestros padres requieren de nuestra ayuda. Mi mamá siempre busca mi ayuda cuando

tiene que llenar una aplicación de trabajo. A veces tengo que llenársela yo o decirle paso por paso que debe poner y adonde. Yo me molesto porque eso dura mucho y yo no tengo paciencia para eso. Pero ni modo porque cuando yo quiero algo ella tiene que tener el dinero y para que eso sea posible yo tengo que ayudarla a que consiga un trabajo mejor. Mientras otros niños americanos hacen actividades que le beneficiarán en el futuro, nosotros, hijos de inmigrantes, estamos en la casa ayudando a nuestros padres con sus diligencias diarias.

## La Historia de una estudiante anónimo de HS MSE

Un aspecto importante de la adolescencia es establecer una relación amorosa. Muchos padres tratan de evadir el tema pero siempre ocurre especialmente en familias hispanas. En algunas familias americanas les celebran el "Sweet 16" a sus hijos. Esto marca el primer paso a las responsabilidades de ser adultos y con eso viene el derecho de tener novio o novia. En familias hispanas los padres temen que sus hijos dejen la escuela por enamorarse a temprana edad.

La historia de una estudiante hispana en HSMSE es muy parecida a esto. Sus padres no quieren que ella se enamore ahora porque ellos temen que ella deje la escuela. Siempre le dicen que cuando uno se enamora deja todos los sueños y la meta de ser profesional atrás. Padres hispanos tiene miedo de que sus hijos tengan la desgracia de una vida dura con hijos a temprana edad. Siempre miran el lado oscuro de enamorarse. "El amor es sordo, mudo, y ciego," es la filosofía de muchos padres hispanos, como el de esta estudiante, y se lo hacen saber a sus hijos porque



ellos piensan que tienen mucha más experiencia que nosotros. Los padres de la estudiante anónima de HS MSE quieren que ella se haga toda una profesional antes de enamorarse. No quieren que su hija tenga muchos obstáculos para conseguir trabajo y para obtener un sueldo razonable. Lo que pasa con esto es que nosotros somos la esperanza de nuestros padres y eso nos pone mucha presión.

Tienen miedo de dejar que nos equivoquemos y tienen miedo que la misma historia se repita, dice esta estudiante. Padres hispanos buscan enseñarnos a ser personas con una inclinación al estudio.

Ellos piensan que el amor es mucho para nosotros balancear con la escuela. Padres hispanos tienen miedo a darle a sus hijos la oportunidad de formar sus propias opiniones por su propio merito. Esta estudiante piensa que padres hispanos deben darles una oportunidad a sus hijos para que ellos crezcan independientes con sus propios pensamientos. "No pueden creer que ellos van a estar ahí en todas las situaciones que se nos presenten," dice esta estudiante. La idea clave esta en que al final de el día todos somos humanos y vamos a cometer errores pero lo bueno de esto es que podemos aprender de nuestros malos pasos y nuestros padres van a estar ahí para guiarnos.

## La Buena Noticia

Aunque parezca irritable nuestros padres quieren lo mejor para nosotros y solo están haciendo su trabajo de ser padres. Estudiantes hispanos como mucho de nosotros apreciamos más lo que tenemos y valoramos todas las oportunidades que se nos presentan. Los padres hispanos se están mejorando cada día más. Ahora van a la escuela para aprender un poco el idioma. Tratan de buscar trabajos mejores para darnos una vida decente. Algunos como mi mamá hasta se hacen ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos. El futuro cada vez se pone más claro y más prometedor para nosotros los hispanos. Nuestros problemas están siendo escuchados. Todos vamos hacer parte de un mundo igual de prometedor. La lección de todo esto es que nunca se dejen vencer y que tomen cada oportunidad porque ser hispano no es una desgracia sino una bendición porque tenemos mucho que enseñarle no sola a América sino al mundo entero.

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# Diversity in the Classroom

Continued from page 4

direct link between cultural diversity and diversity in opinions, but what is more important is a range in opinions. What is more important than ethnic diversity, says Mr. Keegan, is the diversity in people's experiences. This he believes plays a bigger role in a person's views.

Mr. Wang feels that cultural diversity and diversity in opinions do occur together often, but this does not lead to automatic integration of the students does not change. He says that even in a diverse classroom, people of similar ethnic backgrounds are likely to sit next to each other.

Having grown up in the metropolis I wanted to know what teachers have to say about suburbs. Is diversity in opinions less common? Mr. Wang says that it matters which suburb one speaks about. Important factors on this topic would be how far away the suburb is from a city and what the actual city is. Suburban students "at times might be less tolerant, because they are not exposed to such diversity," says Ms. Cotter. "Diversity allows you to appreciate such things...it leads to diverse conversations."

## Limits on Discussion

All four teachers who were interviewed agree that students should feel free to discuss most topics, keeping a few important factors in mind. The topic of discussion should be relevant to the class. For example, Mr. Keegan says that politics is not as relevant in a biology class as in a social science class. Ms. Cotter agrees saying that some topics that are relevant in a humanities classroom might not be in a math class. Mr. Burgan says that students should be free to express themselves as long as they maintain mutual respect. Mr. Keegan says too often "we hold too much of our thought and feeling inside" that people should be free to express themselves and that often "we hold too much of our feelings inside." Mr. Burgan says that it is a "case by case situation." The classroom or a particular class might not be the appropriate forum for the discussion of an issue. Sensitive issues, he says, can only be introduced by the teacher if it is part of the curriculum, such as religion in World History and topics encountered in Health classrooms. Mr. Wang feels that every topic has an appropriate time and place and that at anytime anyone has the right to not answer. Mr. Keegan adds that everyone has the right to privacy, and if someone does not want to answer a question he or she has that right.

Diversity



Senior class is in session.

To finish off, I asked each interviewee to say a few words about this topic. Mr. Wang mentioned the divide between the sciences and humanities. He said that there are "two different ways to solve a problem... the humanities deals with issues that are not solved." The sciences on the other hand, he says, are about how life can be broken down procedurally. Mr. Keegan says that "the humanities lend themselves to discussion," while science is more objective and does not leave as much room for discussion. "Discussing what we perceive or how we solve a problem, yes; but the discussions tend to convey objective facts, more than subjective opinions."

Mr. Burgan emphasized his belief in diversity and brought up the recent cultural show. He called it a celebration of our diversity. He enjoyed witnessing the collaborative effort of the students, staff and parents. He said that it speaks best to our diversity here at HS MSE.

The diversity found in the opinions of the teachers can be seen in these four interviews. Although it is not a complete representation of the various teaching styles and ideas out there, this does give a hint as to the role of diversity in the classroom. From this research I have come to realize that diversity is more than different cultures. As part of my research many teachers received a survey from me on this topic. In response to an open-ended question, one teacher responded, "Diversity in my opinion is a concoction of various people, who have different experiences, backgrounds and traditions. It is a wonderful think because people get to broaden their horizons." I could not have put it better myself. This has been a constant learning process for me and I feel that every teacher and student has his/her own unique opinion based on their own experiences. Cultural diversity is a factor in the overall diversity in a classroom, but not solely responsible for varying opinions.

As a final note I would like to thank those teachers that took the time to fill out the surveys that were placed in the teachers' mailboxes. If there are other teachers who still have the surveys they can give them to the schools newspaper. I would appreciate their feedback.

The Newspaper Staff would like to extend our sincere gratitude and thanks to all who supplied pictures for this edition and our last issue. A special thanks goes out to:

Philip Bacalan and Lenny Diaz  
Mr. Henning and his Photography class  
Ms. Boylan and her Yearbook crew

If anyone has pictures they would like to see in future Newspaper issues, please send them to Ms. Cotter for approval. Thanks!

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# Nas's New Album

By Rabab Sadman

As we all know Nas's album *Hip Hop Is Dead* has released. I have personally listened to the whole album and feel that it is a great album. The whole album is just what can be expected from Nas. Every song has that signature flow except for "Who Killed It?". Where Nas takes a different path and does something we've never seen from him. Nas goes strong with his idea of hip hop in its current form and shows how he feels on the current status.

Nas has made every song very lyrical but he didn't forget something for the clubs. The only song that would seem notable as the "club-banger" would be "Playa on Playa". Snoop Dogg is a guest appearance and lays a solid verse. The

best song on the album would be "Hustlers" in my opinion. It has a great beat with straight sick verses from Nas and The Game. Other songs that would be appropriate for the title would be, "Money Over B\*\*\*\*\*", "Blunt Ashes", and "Carry On Tradition".

In the album Nas speaks about why hip hop is dead. As well he talks about new and young rappers and why they should not talk trash about his age and experience. Nas makes it clear that age and experience is what hip hop needs, everything has become commercial and garbage nowadays. "I got an exam to see if y'all pass it, let's see who could quote a Daddy Kane line the fastest". This quote is from "Carry On Tradition",

which is a solid song where Nas talks about the death of Hip-hop and other aspects.

The last song on the album is undoubtedly a great ending to such a ground-breaking album. "Hopeful" (an A Capella) the whole flow and subject of the song is just any true rap-lovers dream. So without spoiling too much, let's say that the album is worth buying, not illegally downloading, but buying. Best album of 2006 without any doubt whatsoever. If there are any real rap-lovers in HSMSE, support the best rapper ever, yes the best rapper there ever was, Nas!

*Continued from page 13*  
**"The Best and Worst of 2006"**

**6. The Good Shepherd**

I don't care if it's flawed. I don't care if some performances are wooden. I don't care if Angelina Jolie was miscast. I had a lot of fun watching this one. Some might find it sluggish and, make no mistake, this is no *Casino Royale* or *Mission: Impossible 3*. This is a very different kind of spy movie, one that explores the beginning of the CIA. To dismiss this movie because of its flaws or its pacing would be to overlook De Niro's magnificent direction. He's there in every scene. You can sense it.

**7. The Descent**

Of all things, I never thought I would see the day that I'd like a new horror movie enough to rank it with the classic *Halloween*. And, though I can't say it was frightening to me, here it is on my list. Even with so many movies today featuring violence, *The Descent*, a story about six women who get stuck in a cave with flesh-eating creatures, manages to be genuinely stomach-turning. Not for people who suffer from claustrophobia.

**8. Letters from Iwo Jima**

After the disappointing *Flags of Our Fathers* I was getting a bit worried that Eastwood was losing his touch. It turns out he's got a few more warehouses of ammo. I can only speak for myself obviously, but he made my day with this film about the Battle of Iwo Jima, told from the Japanese point of view. This ought to go down in history as one of the great war movies.

**9. Over the Hedge**

I'm simply not a Pixar person. Is the animation here nearly as good as *The Incredibles* or *Cars*? Absolutely not. Does this movie have more substance, originality, and fun than both of those combined? You betcha. And it generates plenty of excitement with a bunch of animals taking revenge on the humans that have destroyed their homes. It's filled with corny jokes, but they're corny enough to induce non-stop laughter.

**10. Fateless**

If you're searching for the most profound film about genocide since *Schindler's List*, prepare yourself for a film version of *Night*. This suspenseful, poignant, and ultimately beautiful Hungarian film about the Holocaust should not be missed because of its limited release. Though not based on Elie Weisel's Nobel Peace Prize winner, it will leave you as troubled and affected.

**Honorable Mention**

*Apocalypto*, *Blood Diamond*, *Cars*, *Casino Royale*, *The Departed*, *The Devil Wears Prada*, *Down in the Valley*, *The Illusionist*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Inside Man*, *The Last King of Scotland*, *M: I - 3*, *The Queen*, *Stranger than Fiction*, *Talladega Nights*, *Thank You for Smoking*, *V for Vendetta*, *World Trade Center*

**Disappointments**

*Children of Men*, *Flags of Our Fathers*, *The Good German*, *Lady in the Water*, *Miami Vice*, *Monster House*, *Notes on a Scandal*, *Pirates of the Caribbean II*, *Superman Returns*, *Volver*, *X-Men 3*

**The Worst, The Bottom of the Barrel**

There are awful films and then there is *Night Watch*, something so atrocious it should not even be labeled a part of cinema in any way. Under no circumstances should you see *Night Watch*, a "film" that broke box office records in Russia, its country of origin. If someone puts a gun to your head telling you to do so, take the bullet. The others here are quite awful and I wouldn't recommend them either, but the aforementioned piece of convoluted trash may be the worst movie of the past decade, if not all time. It was raved about for its editing, but there's much more to a film than cool editing like plot coherence, acting, and signs of actual thought. There's a sequel that brought in more cash than its predecessor. I don't know how bad it is, but, unless the makers started from scratch and did away with the nonsense of the first, every existent print should be burned.

**Other Bad Ones**

*Borat*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Happy Feet*, *John Tucker Must Die*, *Lady in the Water*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *The Night Listener*, *Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles*, *Running Scared*



# Futura 2000

By Yanick Lopez and Rabab

Futura 2000 may be one of the most prominent graffiti artists in the world. Futura 2000, who was born in 1955, began to spray paint at the age of fifteen around New York City. Growing up in Manhattan as a teenager in the 70's, Futura was sure to be exposed to the graffiti culture. But he was not no-name in the business; still he was and is one of the best. Futura 2000 started his career as a graffiti artist spray painting the trains, store gates and other parts of the community. His favorite train line was the I train line, and he has done many works around the 137th street stop, a few blocks from HSMSE. Futura's graffiti crews include SI, 3YB, CIA, and Interpol. Although this was done illegally, Futura expresses that this was an act done to become noticed in society, as well as a form of self expression. Well, Futura has done just that, being renounced one of the most famous graffiti artists of all time. This fame that Futura has, has allowed him to venture off to new grounds such as clothing and exhibits

Everything that has been produced or has come out of the Futura name has originated from one thing, his art. Futura 2000 created a clothing line named Futura Laboratories. This clothing brand incorporates many of Futura's characters. These clothes include Futura's signature globe, along with his character Atmos. The brand is full of many colors that incorporate this similar theme of using his character through out the clothing. Futura also incorporates his signature design into everyday life by adding his characters to everyday pictures and creating a piece of art. He has been able to create book bags, pillows, sweaters and many other merchandise with his brand. Most of his merchandise is very limited. It is very unlikely to see Futura Laboratories clothing in the U.S. Many of the clothing dealers are located outside of the U.S. Although this brand is fairly new it has gained a lot of recognition in the urban street wear scene. Futura has also been able to gain respect from the sneaker culture, with his collaborations with sneaker companies.



Futura Characters

Futura 2000 has had a great relationship with Nike for a while and they have made several collaborations. Futura has designed a Nike Dunk SB Low, inspired by himself. He designed the layout of the shoe and chose the colors (White Grey and Navy). Another Nike sneaker Futura has worked on is the Air Force One Stash/Futura, where you can see Stash's signature on one side, and Futura's on the other. The undisputed best design that Futura has shelled out with Nike is in the U.N.K.L.E. project. Futura designed a Dunk High and a Dunk Low, but the Dunk High is what is very well-known and sought after. Nowadays the sneaker costs about \$475 and is any teenage sneakerhead's dream to own. The sneaker is filled with Futura's well-known designs and characters. One being the famous Atmos character and the cool globe-looking figures all around. At first glance the design may seem to be simply paint splatter, but after close examination people see that it is a work of art. Futura's rarest collaboration with Nike would have to be the FLOMs. There are only 24 pairs in the world and are worth about \$4000-\$8000+. Enough said.

His art has moved on from the walls to the clothing and sneakers teenagers and even some adults wear. Futura will always be an iconic figure in fashion and art for all his accomplishments and the talent he brings.

# Who's Nigo?

By Yannick Lopez

In the modern day "A Bathing Ape" has become well-known among the youth and in the urban street wear, but man don't know the man behind the brand. The founder and creator of this extravagant Japan-based brand is Nigo. Nigo is not only a fashion designer but he is also a DJ, producer, drummer and memorabilia collector. At 35 years old, he not only has this unique and sought after clothesline, but he also has 11 retail stores, a café, salon, a wrestling federation, TV show and his own music company.

All of Nigo's success came from his clothing brand, which originated in 1993 with a friend, Shin. The name and inspiration for "A bathing Ape" comes from the film Planet of the Apes, and the Japanese phrase, "bathing in lukewarm water," which expresses how comfortable life is for the Japanese youth these days. Nigo became interested in fashion at age 12 when he received a pair of Levi jeans and Adidas Superstar sneakers. But Nigo didn't really get into fashion until he was about 18 years old. At 18 Nigo was into Run DMC because of their sense of fashion and because of their music. Around this time Nigo started to DJ, and he and Shin began to build their clothing empire. They would make about 30 shirts and only sell half, giving their friend the rest. This was a very key element for a Japanese underground brand, because the followers of the underground movement loved exclusivity.

After a while "A Bathing Ape" became more mainstream, collaborating with Pepsi, Kaw, Futura and other famous urban street brands. This introduction to the world led to the opening of his Busy Work Shops, where he sells his merchandise. At this time he was also writing for a clothing magazine called Popeye. Working as an editor was his main job and he sold clothes just for fun. Nigo began to sell most of his merchandise and "A Bathing Ape" began to expand. This was the beginning of Nigo's empire.

Nigo has since gone to expand his "A Bathing Ape" clothing brand, creating Baby Milo, Apee, Bapy, and Bape, which are all prominent street, wear brands. Nigo has also collaborated with Pharrell to make the clothing brands BBC and Ice Cream. With Nigo's help, Pharrell's brand has been able to prosper and a massive fan base has been created. Nigo has not only been able to establish his own brand, but he has also influenced many up-and-coming clothing brands with his signature full camouflage, fill zip-up and vibrant colored hoodies. Nigo has been able to take his clothing brand and create a diverse. He has recently opened a new store in Japan to sell kids' apparel; he also helped organize the Fendi party in Japan. He helped decorate the party and also created the part gift, which was key chain collaboration between Bape and Fendi.

Nigo is a prominent fashion designer and on top of that, he is also an avid collector. Nigo collects car, Star Wars memorabilia and has the fifth biggest collection of Planet of the Apes memorabilia. Nigo is one of the greatest designers and entrepreneurs of the 20th and 21st centuries. He has worked with great designers such as Fendi and Louis Vuitton to establish himself in the high fashion scene. Nigo has is one of the most famous urban wear designers because he stayed true to the roots of his brand. Nigo has been imitated by many but duplicated by none.



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# Maya Mignonette

By Adina Bauman

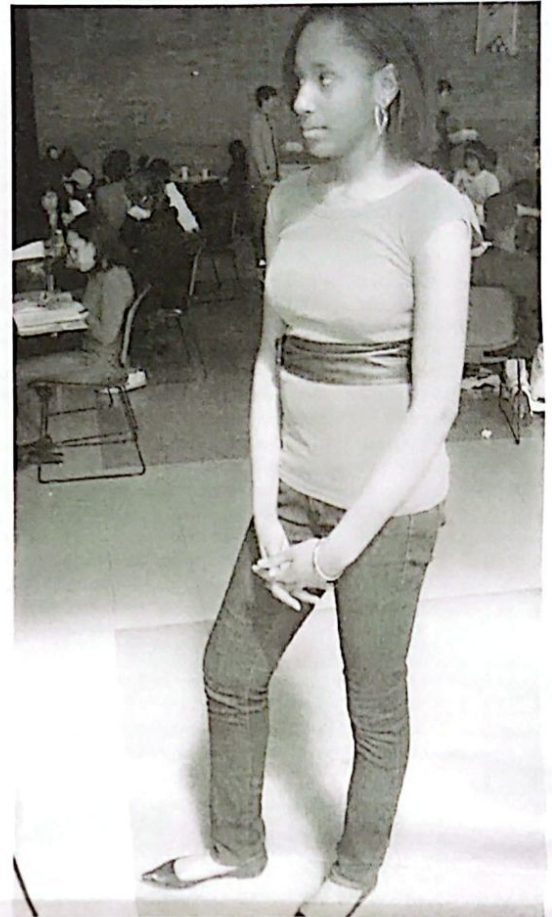
In today's society, art is part of everyday life, even at HS MSE. Maya Perry, known in the art world as Maya Mignonette, is a junior here at HS MSE. Maya has been drawing since her early childhood. The reason she started drawing is sort of funny; she was simply bored. Great things have come from this boredom. Maya recently had an art exhibit at the 110 Gallery in Brooklyn. Maya claims that the exhibit was "successful," and says that she "received a lot of support" from fans. She also acknowledged that it was an interesting experience to have her own exhibit.

Maya's drawings are abstract, emphasizing lines, colors, geometric forms, etc. She draws things mostly related to nature (trees, flowers, etc.). Maya draws using multiple colored charcoal, and her pieces range from being done in one color, to many bright colors. Her originals sell for \$150; copies for \$20. Here is a sampling of some of Maya Mignonette drawings that were included in her exhibit:

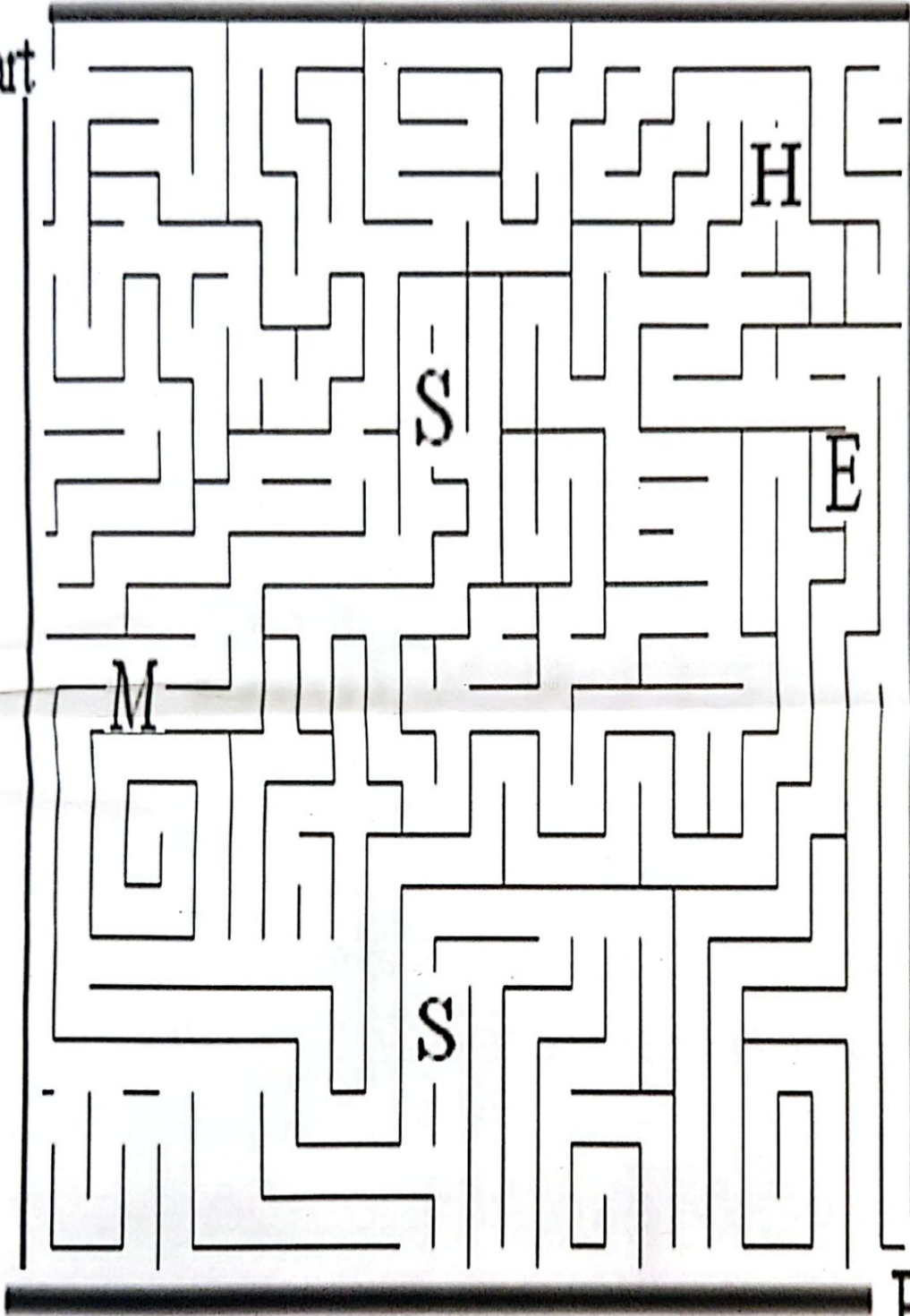
- 1) A Blue Paradise
- 2) A Blue Flower
- 3) Mixed Emotions
- 4) Silver Tear Drops
- 5) Split

Unfortunately Maya's exhibit is over, but if anyone would like to see exhibits by other artists the address for the gallery is: 1110 Gallery  
1110 Fulton St.  
Brooklyn, NY

Look on the school bulletin board in Baskerville to see a color collage of Maya's work. And see some of her images in black and white below.



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**Instructions:**  
Go from start to the end by going through the letters "H,S,M,S,E" in order.

By Amos Goldstein

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