

**THEATRE**  
News, p. #1-2

**SOCCER**  
News, p. #1-2

**DRONES**  
News, p. #2

**INSPIRATION**  
Opinions, p. #3

**AOTW**  
Columns, p. #4

## Houghton's Lyric Theatre Prepares for *Pirates of Penzance*

Jacqueline Johnson ('23)  
Members of Lyric Theatre are excitedly preparing for this spring's production of Arthur Sullivan and Willam Gilbert's *Pirates of Penzance*. Performances will occur from March 31 through April 2 in Houghton's Wesley Chapel.

Directed by Professor Amanda Cox, *Pirates of Penzance* is a comedic opera that offers up a phenomenal cast who are sure to put on a wonderful performance. It follows the story of a young pirate apprentice (Michael McLure ('22)), and the hilarious miscommunications that ensue as his apprenticeship is completed, with ample song and dance along the way.

Professor Cox notes her excitement for the



Students rehearsing for *Pirates of Penzance*.  
COURTESY OF GRACE DETTRICK

show, saying, "I have had such a wonderful time directing *Pirates* so far. It is a hilarious and zany show, and the students have leaned right into that. Our cast is so, so funny! The lyrics and script are so cleverly written, the music is fantastic, and the story is

wild. I know our audiences will have a delightful time. I am so very proud of the hard work, skill, and courage of our students as they throw themselves fully into their characters and tell this rollicking tale!"

The cast is impressive, with the Pirate King

played by Caleb Durant ('22), Samuel by Ethan Carr, Frederic by Michael McLure ('22), Ruth by Bekah Scharf, ('21) Mabel by Rachel McVeigh ('23), Kate by Bridget Sobolewski ('23), Isabel by Emily Quick ('23), and many more talented cast members.

Those involved in the production team include chorus master Rachel Logee, pianist Andrew Reith, conductor Jack Smith, stage manager Madge Chroniger, choreographer Linette Taylor ('23), and Cody Johnson ('24) (who will also be portraying the Major General for two out of four performances) on set design.

Caleb Durant ('22) says how much he has loved working with Professor Cox and the rest of the cast. "She [Professor Cox] creates an atmosphere of safety and acceptance that makes it possible for us to be vulnerable and creative."

Josey Ikker ('24), who plays Edith, also expresses excitement towards the upcoming show saying, "I love al-

See **THEATRE** page #2

## Women's Soccer Team Welcomes New Head Coach

Sarah Burton ('23)

In February of 2022, Houghton College announced that Esther Webb was to become Houghton's sixth Women's Head Soccer Coach, filling the role formerly held by Nikki Elsaesser. Webb grew up in Houghton and graduated from the college in 2016, going on to coach at a few other Christian colleges before coming back to Houghton this year.

The search process for filling any position at the college level is an extensive and time-consuming process. At

Houghton College, it is important to find faculty and staff that reflect the values of the college as well as expertise in the given positions. In an email, Dr. Karen Torraca, who was the Chair of the Search Committee, explained the inner workings of the search process. It begins with a nation-wide position posting, followed by application reviews, then two interviews, one online and the other in-person. During this, the search committee narrows down candidates after each point of the process to just one, which they submit to the President to approve.

During the in-person interview, the candidates for the position come to campus and interact with various members, such as a rep-

resentative from Student Life, other faculty and staff, and the President. This part of the search process includes the student body of the campus, allowing the search committee to receive an impression of how well the candidate would fit into the campus body. Torraca mentioned how important these interactions are because the final candidate is selected and sent to the President for approval "based on input from the search committee and from all those participating in the in-person interviews."

Alliah Fluent ('25) recalled these interactions, saying "Throughout this search process, I felt like the opinion of the team was important to the search team and I felt our opinions on the

candidates were heard and taken into consideration... I am excited for the future of this team with coach Esther leading us." Her hopes for the team include Webb creating strong offensive and defensive teams, using the unique skills that each player brings onto the field.

Torraca gave feedback about the selection process for Webb, saying "The search committee came to a unanimous decision on Esther Webb. [She] is a great fit for Houghton with respect to her faith. Since she knows and understands Houghton well, she will be able to recruit well and build a strong team." On behalf of the entire search



New Head Coach Esther Webb. committee, Torraca is confident in the potential of Webb as the new Women's Head Soccer coach.

In a memo sent from President Lewis to the Houghton College Community on February 15th, he expressed as much enthusiastic confidence in Webb as Tor-

See **SOCCER** page #2

## Houghton College Offers Drone Pilot Training

Seth Hodgkins ('23)

Houghton College and Aquiline Drones have started a five-year partnership to offer an online drone pilot training program, Flight to the Future. Taking this course will teach students about drone technology and prepare them to take the exam required to become a licensed drone pilot under the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The course will be instructed asynchronously by Carmen McKell, the Director of the Center for Data Science Analytics. When asked who should take this course, she explained that “anyone can take this course who has the desire to learn about drone technology,” but also noted that the course is par-

ticularly helpful for “working professionals looking to enhance their skill set” and “high school students seeking early college credit.”

There are limitless applications of drones in business today. Since 2016 when the FAA granted numerous exemptions for companies to operate drones, the drone services market has grown drastically and is expected to continue to grow another 24% by 2026 according to businesswire.com. McKell listed just some of the uses: “In construction to track building projects, in oil and gas to inspect pipelines, security for homes and businesses, military intelligence gathering, real estate, and con-

servation research like whale monitoring, wildfire impact assessment, and disease monitoring in trees.” She also added that, “having a drone license is critical for starting your own business or starting a career in [these fields],” and “there’s never been a better time to get started in the growing field of drone technology.”

A drone pilot certification is also a fitting addition to the toolbox of a data scientist, if that’s the career you’re working towards. “Data science plays a key role in [the drone industry],” McKell explained. “Drones and their associated software generate an enormous amount of data. In addition to taking aerial photos

and videos, drones can collect information about everything from the health of crops to thermal leaks in buildings.” This raw information can be used by a data scientist to find new insights for decision making.

Jake Crawford, Houghton’s Content Marketing Specialist, is a great example of the value a drone license holds in a professional career. He has enrolled in the program for a license that he can “utilize in a way that could be advantageous to Houghton, freelance work, and [his] own personal projects.” He was first recommended to get a drone license in a meeting, saying “once we had access to the resources, I was given the ability

to take the class.” Crawford continued on to explain the usefulness of drones in marketing and filmmaking. “They’re incredibly helpful to enhance the scope of your environment by giving you a point of view that you would never be able to experience without the technology that a drone possesses.”

Regardless of the career you’re pursuing, having a drone license is a valuable asset in this digitally-driven world. If you are interested in drone technology, or want to learn the necessary skills to pass the pilot exam, consider taking the Flight to the Future drone pilot training course.★



Elise Koelbl ('22)

I have always found history to be fascinating. So many different cultures and worlds have existed on the same planet as we do in our own current time period. Even going back a few decades, the world was a completely different place than it is today. Our history is filled with so many heroes and adventures, protagonists and antagonists, empires and cultures that I’m surprised I don’t see people talk about the stories of old with more passion. There are so many fans of fictional stories, such as Harry Potter and Chronicles of Narnia, who love to invest in a good engaging plot. I almost wonder if people stop to consider that this

## Inspiration in Historic Icons

earth has fascinating stories and people of its own to tell about.

One of the stories that draws me in just as much as that of Harry Potter or Prince Caspian is the story of Christa McAuliffe. For those that don’t know, Christa was selected out of thousands of teachers for NASA’s Teacher in Space program, the first of what would have been many “citizens in space” programs. By the 1980s, space launches had drastically faded from the public’s attention since their peak in the late 60s, leading NASA to decide to allow citizens to fly in space in order to gain publicity. Out of 11,000 applicants, Christa stood

*She did things simply because she wanted to. The thing that inspires me the most about her is her drive and fearlessness. She didn’t let her past define who she wanted to be.*

teachers and students of America gain a passion for learning. Unfortunately what was supposed to be a joyous adventure for Christa ended with catastrophe; she perished along with the six other astronauts on board the Challenger. In just seventy-three seconds, she was gone. The

ing. She was the kind of person that celebrated others with a homemade batch of cookies, pushed her students forward by writing college recommendation letters even moments before the launch, and without hesitation, and always became a listening ear to those that needed it most. Though she lived almost two decades before I was born, she taught me the value of living each moment to the fullest.

While looking to the stars, there is another person that took flight in the hearts of many-- Amelia Earhart. I’m sure many people are familiar with her story, as Amelia Earhart was the first woman ever to cross the Atlantic by airplane. She achieved many great feats in her humble plane as she performed dangerous feats and crossed a variety of landscapes. She did all this with a strong will and passion to push herself to do more than what was already done. One of the things that stands out to me about Amelia Earhart is that she didn’t start with an easy, wholesome childhood but rather her life had a rocky start. Her

father lost his job and as a result, turned to drinking. His addiction to alcohol became so bad that eventually, Amelia’s parents had to divorce. Even though Amelia Earhart had such a painful childhood characterized in many ways by her difficult relationship with her parents, she never lost her drive and passion to overcome obstacles. The thing that strikes me the most is that Amelia Earhart was fearless. She wasn’t afraid of what people thought of her and wasn’t afraid to challenge how things were at the time. She did things simply because she wanted to. The thing that inspires me the most about her is her drive and fearlessness. She didn’t let her past define who she wanted to be.

What is it that makes history itself so inspiring? Why look to figures of the past? It’s true our world has changed since the times of long ago. Some people alive today experienced realities that are now incredibly foreign to us; but that doesn’t mean that we can’t experience them in a different way. If we’re willing to listen, there are so many people whose lives can tell stories just as exciting as fiction, if not better. If you need inspiration and guidance on how to live your future, look to the past. History is still alive and it’s waiting for you to add your chapter to its ever-expanding story.★

*Elise Koelbl is a Senior majoring in writing and art.*

*The Challenger disaster struck the lives of many with grief, but though the excursion ended in death, Christa unknowingly left a legacy of inspiration for the world with her passion for living.*

out as the best teacher for the job. She showed an unrivaled passion for teaching as well as abundant kindness for others. Not only would she help NASA gain publicity, but she could also help the

Challenger disaster struck the lives of many with grief, but though the excursion ended in death, Christa unknowingly left a legacy of inspiration for the world with her passion for liv-

Have an opinion you want to share?

CONTACT christian.welker24@houghton.edu

## SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 600 words

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### THEATRE from page #1

most everything about this musical; working with Professor Cox is always a joy. She knows how to present new ideas to others in rehearsal and she makes sure everyone is involved stage-wise. Pirates of Penzance is definitely a show worth checking out with grand operatic and comedic fun.”

This show contains a lot of laughter and entertainment, and many are sure to enjoy this show on which the cast and crew has worked hard.★

### SOCCER from page #1

raca, saying “her playing experience, knowledge of the game and coaching experience—combined with her passion for sports ministry and her love for and

knowledge of Houghton, uniquely qualifies her for this opportunity.” He concluded the memo by calling for congratulations and welcoming her back to the community.

When asked about how she felt about the new Head Coach, Chloe Shaw ('25) stated “I was unsure how I felt about coach Nikki leaving... but I am looking forward to working with coach Esther and really excited to start working with this group of girls again.” Shaw’s aspirations for this upcoming season include “accomplishing a winning record.” With this kind of optimism, the Women’s Soccer Team is ready for their next season, with Webb at the helm.★

## Review: 33rd Annual Juried Student Exhibition

Zach McKay ('22)

The reception for the 33rd Annual Juried Student Exhibition was held on Friday, March 11. The jurors were Amanda and Brian Oglesbee, a local artist couple whose work was displayed in the Ortlip Gallery this past Fall 2021. The work displayed in this year’s Juried Show was incredibly varied, spanning medium and scale.

This year’s Best in Show piece was wandering soul, i remember everything, a gouache portrait dip-tych by Mary Hannah Kennedy ('22). The first-place piece was The Shrill, a non-objective oil painting by Sarah Mertzluft ('22). The second-place piece was Even the Weeds, a watercolor landscape by Ellie Kettinger. The

third-place piece was Quarantine Big Dude, an organic sculptural piece by Alyssa Lyon ('23). The Roselyn Danner Memorial Honorable Mention Awards were given to Kimberly Brocht ('22) for Index and Rebecca Haro ('24) for Hannah. Jessie-Fay Abbott ('22) received the President’s Choice Award for Glass Portrait. The two Juror’s Choice Awards were presented to Brocht for her cyanotypes, Untitled, and Zach McKay ('22) for his watercolor painting, CAT.

This year, the jurors also introduced a few new awards. Hayden Williamson’s ('23) ceramic piece, Hugo, was given the Whitley Lewis Choice Award and the Noah Hodgkins Memorial Award was

bestowed to Fortezza Albornoz, a large conté landscape drawing by Kennedy ('22).

According to gallery assistant Sarah Mertzluft ('22), this year’s student show had 83 submissions, “more than the juried show has seen in years.” Because of this, the jurors were forced to be highly selective, but they were impressed by the range and quality of Houghton College students and their artwork. The Juried Show will remain open in the Ortlip Gallery until April 2nd. It will be followed by the 2022 Senior Show, which will open to the public on April 11.★

## Music Review

### *Contrasts and Way Over in Beulah Lan'*

Rachel Huchthausen (\*23)

During the weekend before break, the Greatbatch School of Music presented two concerts: *Contrasts and Way Over in Beulah Lan'*. The Wind Ensemble's *Contrasts*, on February 19, was just that—a collection of contrasts between periods and composers, as well as selections of works by the same composer that have contrasting styles. The program included works such as selections from Percy Grainger's famous *Lincolnshire Posy*, William Still's *Folk Suite* based on African-American Spirituals, and, most aptly, contemporary composer Leslie Gilbreath's *Oppositional Elements*.

Most interesting to me was the Wind Ensemble's foray into electroacoustic works by Alex Sharp. Her *Depth* blends electronic sound from the depths of the ocean with the brass and reed instruments. Sharp's *Tight Squeeze* is described as a mash-up of Techno, Latin Bebop, and the Twelve-tone music of Arnold Schoenberg. If you haven't listened to twelve-tone music before, you should give Schoenberg's *Suite for Piano* a try. You likely won't thank me, but you would understand why I was skeptical of the combination. I should not have been worried. The Wind Ensemble's performance was a delightful, foot-tapping rendition of Sharp's great work.

On February 20, the College Choir presented their concert, *Way Over in Beulah Lan': Spiritual Arrangements*

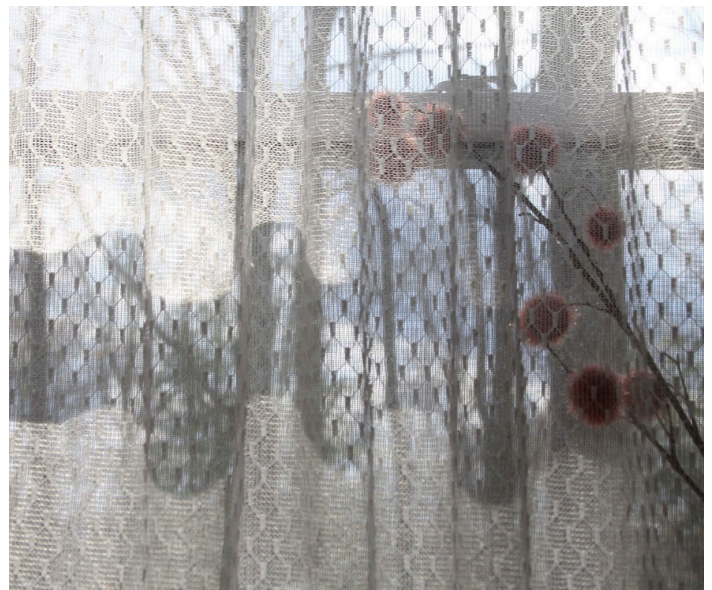
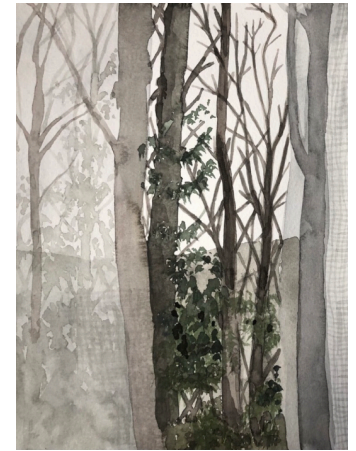
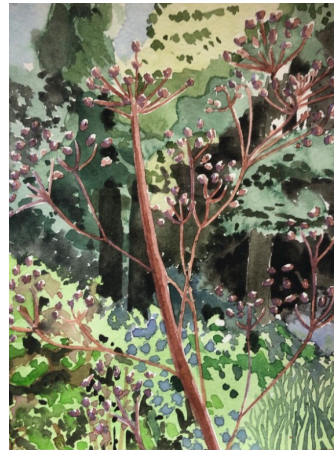
*Old and New*, a collection of spirituals arranged by various composers. These men and women—such as R. Nathaniel Dett, Florence Price, Moses Hogan, and Rosephanye Powell—who notated the tunes and words passed down by oral tradition. These Spirituals ranged from the melancholy stillness of Dett's *Deep River* (also presented by the Wind Ensemble in Still's *Folk Suite*) to the lively insistence of Hogan's *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel*, to the joy of Powell's *Good News!*. The title piece, Stacy Gibbs's *Way Over in Beulah Lan'*, was conducted by graduate student Rachel Logee. As a whole, these works expressed both longing for heaven and the present "troubles of the world."

Audience members expressed how apt this program was for celebrating Black History Month and how expressive the choir and the soloists Josey Ikker, Lydia Rech, Adeline Roeske, Caleb Durant, and Michael McLure were. President Lewis was also in attendance. He also expressed how timely the concert was, writing that, "The concert was easily one of my favorite Houghton experiences thus far," and that "The performance of negro spirituals that are so central to the African American story during this year's celebration of Black History month was very special."

Thank you, Wind Ensemble and College Choir for a great weekend of music making!

## Artist of the Week

### Ellie Kettinger



### About the Artist

Ellie Kettinger is a senior Art major with an Education minor. In her senior year she has especially enjoyed watercolor and photography but also loves portrait drawing, ceramics and printmaking. She will be graduating in May and is looking forward to seeing where her love for art takes her.