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STUDENT EXHIBITION

JIANA MARTIN '26

The Ortlip Gallery, located in the Center of Fine Arts (CFA), will host its 36th Annual Juried Student Exhibition tonight at 6:30. The exhibit provides an opportunity for students to showcase their artwork and celebrate their accomplishments. A total of 53 pieces by 28 student artists were chosen by the jurors, Eric and Maria Holbein '09.

Many art mediums will be represented, including painting, drawing, ceramics, printmaking, photography, sculpture, digital illustration, digital animation and furniture design. Instead of a theme, the jurors picked pieces that represented the different styles, media and conceptual approaches. Nine awards will be handed out for outstanding artistic achievement.

Ian Campbell, the new Gallery Director, said "seeing the diversity of artistic styles and approaches that Houghton student-artists



Ortlip Gallery Show

COURTESY OF THE ORTLIP GALLERY

employment" has been a fun part of organizing the show. This is Campbell's first exhibit that he has fully organized as the director. The planning process has "been a bit of a juggling act," but Campbell received a lot of help, including that of his gallery assistants Evan Babbitt '25, Aria Larson '27 and Aubrey Armes '25.

Babbitt enjoyed seeing all the works submitted. "It is easy to forget that there are more than just art majors that make great work," he commented, "so it is always surprising to see what people have been working on in and out of classes."

In addition to being an assistant, he submitted three pieces, two abstracts and a self-portrait. He is excited

for opening night and recommends people attend or at least "poke your head in to see what is up the weeks following the opening."

Larson has two pieces in the show. It has been a slight challenge for her to balance being both an assistant and a student artist. However, she has enjoyed getting to see everyone's work, even those that don't

make it into the exhibit.

"A lot of the pieces that people submit to the show I've seen in progress or caught glimpses of up in the art building, which makes it really cool to see the finished product when it gets dropped off," Larson added.

She is looking forward to meeting the attendees because it is a great opportunity to engage with people from both the campus and the community.

"I also have to admit it's fun to have an event that showcases our projects as art students," Larson said, "and allows us to share our work with others."

Armes has four pieces in the show, three of which count as one piece, making it a triptych. She enjoyed working with Professor of Art Ted Murphy to frame her pieces and is grateful for his help. On opening night, she is excited "for all the artists to see their work hung in an inten-

See **EXHIBITION** page #2

Woman of Way-making

VICTORIA ARNDT '25

Tomorrow, the residence leaders of Gillette and Lambein are hosting "Women of Waymaking" in the Center of Fine Arts (CFA) Recital Hall from 1 to 3 p.m. Organized by Residence Assistants Chesnie Waddingham '26 and Hannah Dunmire '26, and Resident Director of Gillette and Lambien Morgan Neno, "Women of Waymaking" is created to give dorm residents a chance to rest, reset and reflect on who they are in Christ through a series of stations and worship. Additionally, the event provides Around the Table credit.



Friendsgiving RA Group Photo

COURTESY OF THE BOULDER

The goal of the afternoon is to encourage women to follow the path God has called them on while helping them refresh in a spiritual and social way after a long week.

"The event was inspired by the concept of exhaustion that most college students are running on at this point," Dunmire explained.

"They don't necessarily need another hype up event and instead may need more of a recharge while also wanting some social time," she added.

Waddingham agreed with this idea. "Events like this have been done in the past, specifically when Morgan Neno was a student here," she said. "It was exciting for us to bring that back to life,

and for us to put our own spin and ideas into it ... I believe this event is a perfect example of all the ways we can help solve, serve, and encourage one another in the incredible calling and plan God has for each of us."

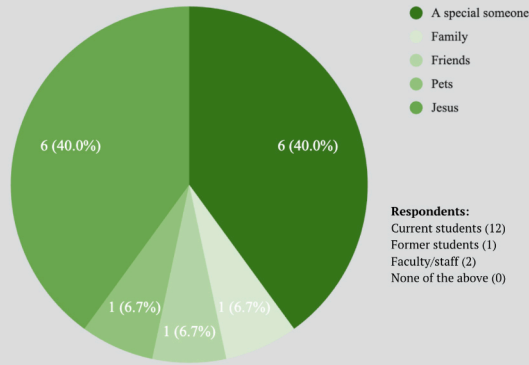
Planning "Women of Waymaking" has been fun for both, as they have watched their team

come together to shape the event. Dunmire enjoyed seeing how the team's strengths helped to plan the event more effectively. "Watching our team just continue to show the love of God as our cups that are filled by our residents can be outpoured back to them," she said.

Waddingham also expressed her excitement in seeing the progress of planning the event. "I have really enjoyed the brainstorming for this event," she said. "We got to talk about what we wanted to get out of the event, as well as what those attending might need to receive. It's a sweet thing to be reminded that we are not alone, and we can all get something out of an event like this. It's been a lot of fun, and I'm excited to have everything play out the day of the event!" ★

Question of the Week!

Who are you spending Valentine's Day with?



Weekly questions open to anyone affiliated with Houghton University.

Submitted Question: **Is it sinful to be addicted to caffeine (coffee, tea, etc.)?**



Also on the STAR website & HUB

Answers for 02/07

Fiendish

5	6	3	2	9	8	4	1	7
2	7	4	3	5	1	6	9	8
9	1	8	4	6	7	3	5	2
1	2	9	7	3	6	8	4	5
3	5	7	8	1	4	2	6	9
4	8	6	5	2	9	7	3	1
8	3	1	9	4	2	5	7	6
6	4	2	1	7	5	9	8	3
7	9	5	6	8	3	1	2	4

Easy

6	2	5	4	8	9	3	7	1
1	3	7	5	6	2	9	8	4
8	9	4	3	1	7	2	6	5
2	6	1	9	7	3	4	5	8
5	4	9	6	2	8	1	3	7
3	7	8	1	5	4	6	9	2
9	1	2	8	3	5	7	4	6
4	8	6	7	9	1	5	2	3
7	5	3	2	4	6	8	1	9

EXHIBITION from page #1

tional space.”

“It is so special to be able to share your hard work with your community, and it is a privilege to be able to celebrate with everyone,” Armes said.

Along with his assistants, Campbell is excited to share all of the student

artist’s work with everyone.

“Art-making is often made in isolation,” he said, “so I enjoy being able to publicly acknowledge the hard work and talent that went into the pieces on display.” ★

Puzzles

All sudokus provided by sudokuoftheday.com.

Difficulty: Diabolical

	7			5				
		3		2				9
5		2	7			4		
		4	1	5				
	9			8				1
				7	2	8		
		8			1	6		5
9				3		2		
			6				3	

Difficulty: Medium

	7	5		1				4
			7			3		
			5	3		8	1	
	8	2			5		3	
6								2
	9		6			4	7	
4	5		1	8				
		8			4			
2				6		8	4	

Difficulty: Easy

7					1	3		9
			4					
9	5	1					2	
2	7					9		
	4		2		8		7	
		9					4	2
	1					4	9	3
					6			
8		3	9					7

Creating in Times of Crisis



JONAN PILET

Last December, I had the privilege of giving a talk at Houghton University titled *Fiddling While Rome Burns: The Significance of Stories in a World on Fire*. It was an opportunity to wrestle with a question that plagues many writers, artists, and thinkers: does any of this matter? In the face of global crises, suffering, and uncertainty, why do we create? Why do we tell stories? Now, I have the opportunity to bring these thoughts to a new audience through the Houghton Star, and in doing so, I aim to give some hope to students who are trying to build meaningful lives in a world that often feels like it's unraveling.

The World is on Fire
The truth is, it's hard to ignore the weight of the world. Every day, we are bombarded with news of escalating conflicts, economic turmoil, environmental disasters, and political division. AI is advancing at breakneck speed, threatening job security. The coffee is weak. The world feels unstable, chaotic, and at times, downright terrifying. Meanwhile, life continues. I sit at my desk, trying to write a story—a story that may never be read by anyone but me. My son plays down the hall, unaware of the world's problems. I am not solving global conflicts. I am not fixing the economy. I am not even making the coffee stronger. I am just writing. And that, sometimes, feels like a failure.

The Guilt of Creation
I suspect many students here at Houghton feel a

“But I urge you—don’t stop creating. Don’t stop investing in the things that bring meaning to life, even if they seem small in the grand scheme of things. Because they aren’t small. They are acts of resistance against despair.”

similar tension. You are working hard toward a degree, preparing for a future that feels increasingly uncertain. You are investing in education, in creativity, in growth—but for what? What if the world you're preparing for doesn't look the way you expected? What if, in the grand scheme of things, your ef-

something more practical, more impactful? Why bother adorning the foyer of eternity when the walls themselves are crumbling? But then, I think about my wife, who—despite constantly browsing Zillow for better homes—still insists on repainting our guest room. Life doesn't stop. Creation doesn't stop. And maybe that, in itself, is a kind of resistance.

Creation as Defiance
C.S. Lewis, in *The Weight of Glory*, speaks directly to this dilemma. He acknowledges that "plausible reasons have never been lacking for putting off all merely cultural activities until some imminent danger has been averted or some crying injustice put right." And yet, humanity continues to create. We write stories. We paint. We compose music. Not as distractions, but as declarations.

I have come to believe that telling stories in the midst of crisis is not an act of indifference—it is an act of defiance. It is a way of saying that the world, with all its chaos and destruction, does not win. Stories connect us. They break through the isolation of our own minds and remind us that we are not

alone. They show us that others have walked through darkness before us and found their way. So, to the students of Houghton: I know many of you are carrying the weight of uncertainty. The future can feel overwhelming, and it may seem like the practical response is to put aside your creative passions, your dreams, and your hopes in order to focus on sheer survival. But I urge you—don't stop creating. Don't stop investing in the things that bring meaning to life, even if they seem small in the grand scheme of things. Because they aren't small. They are acts of resistance against despair. ★

Jonan Pilet is Houghton University's Visiting Creative Writer, where he teaches Fiction Writing, Screenwriting, and Independent Studies. In addition to his teaching role, Pilet works full-time as a journalist for Food Safety News, covering foodborne illness outbreaks, recalls, regulations, policy, and other topics related to food safety. He earned a bachelor's degree in Writing from Houghton University and a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Seattle Pacific University. His debut short story collection, Nomad, Nomad, was published in 2021.

“The truth is, it’s hard to ignore the weight of the world.”

orts seem small or insignificant? As a Christian writer, I struggle with another guilt. In the face of eternity, why do I write? Shouldn't I be doing

Have an opinion you want to share? **CONTACT** Rebecca.Dailey25@houghton.edu

SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor should be less than 600 words

SUBMIT TO star@houghton.edu

The mission of the Houghton STAR is to preserve and promote the values of dialogue, transparency and integrity that have been the ideals of Houghton University since its inception. This is done by serving as a medium for the expression of student thought and as a quality publication of significant campus news, Houghton area news, and events.

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The Houghton
STAR

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Columns

Will's Palindromes

Will Allen '24

VP for student life prepares his car for a drag race beginning in the Chamberlain parking lot. One of only four he's done here since the 90s:

Very rare Bill library rev

You're in the library trying to access the late great Black Mamba's book on the art of winning, and the Houghton Lib guides gives you an interesting choice:

Borrow Kobe's ebok "W", or rob

The ghost of Willard J. Houghton tells you of a time before Sarahs made up 20% of Houghton's female population:

Not Here were Saras ere were H-ton

When you're hoping a certain prof. hasn't really been looking at your forum posts:

Ger! No! Me-----der red 'em on reg!

Freshman year Will encouraging a friend to attend Spot:

OG Me: Spot tops 'em. Go!

A strangely worded promotion that still somehow helped convince you to come here:

Ad: At here HU, 4 RAs ar 4 "U" here'h. Ta Da!

Ralph from Fix-It-Felix joyously informs you about your under-compensated humanities professor's side hustle knocking over peoples' drinks as a distraction to pick their pockets:

Rekat tell: Aw Ya! Prof. Lips spil for pay! Wallet taker.



Artist of the Week

Aria Larson '27



Hi! My name is Aria Larson and I am a studio art major and an art business minor here at Houghton. My favorite art mediums are oil paint, watercolor and pastel, though honestly I enjoy so many different mediums and I love trying out new ones. The process of creating is what I find so special about art, that and also the way it teaches you to see the world around you. I like to work very realistically in my art, and I love the little things this draws my attention to. I have learned to notice so many of the beautiful details hidden in God's creation through art, and I hope to share that perspective with those around me through my work.

