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2024 SENIOR ART SHOW

REBECCA DAILEY ('25)

This Friday, on April 12, the 2024 Senior Art Show will open in the Ortlip Gallery in the Center for the Arts. Thirteen senior art students will be showcasing their work in tonight's gallery, including Tamara Edwards ('24), Aubree Niles ('24), Hannah Smith ('24) and Savannah Stitt ('24). Various art pieces such as paintings, sculptures and photography will be displayed throughout the gallery for viewer appreciation.

Professor John Rhett is the Senior Art faculty advisor and instructor for Senior seminar and Studio. His main goal is making sure the students exhibit a maturity within the medium of their choice.

"We are creative beings, God is the Heavenly creator," Professor Rhett stated. "There is a need to create with these gifts gracefully through challenges and be grateful for them."

A few seniors took time out of their busy schedules to speak about their work and the gallery.

Smith explained her process around her work, "A big part about it is being balanced and coming to your artwork with a peaceful mind and not cluttered with everything you have to do ... I like to think of it as forever honing my craft. I am a tinkerer. I like to play with different mediums. I'm not afraid of losing art and not doing it because I've been doing it my whole life."

Niles has been working in art since childhood. It has been her way of expressing herself even when words cannot.

"Looking back to my work from freshman year," Niles stated, "I am blown away by the development of quality and sincerity in my work. I started college with little education on art and had this horrible opinion that abstract art wasn't art ... I quickly learned that abstraction (well, good abstraction) is difficult. I am so thankful that I

was taught the importance of abstract work. It reveals something true, raw, and honest about the artist.

Edwards transferred to Houghton in the Fall of 2022.

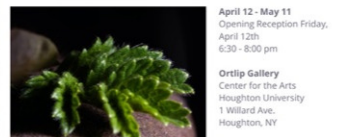
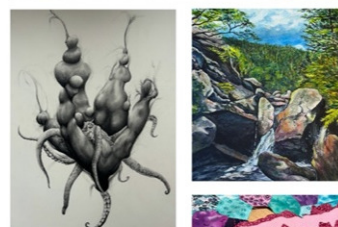
"I learned the importance of process," Edwards explained, "art develops with time and a support group who challenges me in the quest to understand art not as an individual activity. Individual as an artist but built in community and communication."

Stitt reflects on her growth as an artist and in life.

"I have learned that a huge part of growing as an artist involves time, and within that time, experience," Stitt explained that "Some things are only learned through the process of doing something over and over. And other times, I have grown as an artist because I am growing as a person and

Senior Art
Exhibition
2024
Houghton
University

Alexandria Brown
Aubree Cole
Tamara Edwards
Chris McCoy
Aubree Niles
Sarah Rietz
Sarah Rocha
Hannah Roeske
Brittney Schwind
Hannah Smith
Savannah Stitt
Jason Stutz
Devin Tullar



April 12 - May 11
Opening Reception Friday,
April 12th
6:30 - 8:00 pm
Ortlip Gallery
Center for the Arts
Houghton University
1 Willard Ave.,
Houghton, NY

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See **ART SHOW** page #2

Senior Art Show Poster

Feature: Andrew Walton

ANNA CATHERMAN ('24)

Dr. Andrew Walton has been in school for 21 years. During his undergraduate years at Houghton College, he took a gap year to "go be a ski bum in Colorado." After his freshman year as a politics major, he was adrift. But once he came back, he "never left school again." He ended up switching his major after falling in love with the Old Testament of the Bible.

Upon graduation, Walton immediately entered Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He toyed with a career in ministry, but ultimately felt led to scholarship. Walton enjoys studying the language and Israelite culture. He went straight



Faculty Present Research at Faculty Scholarship Day photo

COURTESY OF MARCOM

from his Master's program at Gordon-Conwell to Harvard, where he completed his Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible.

Coming back to Houghton from Harvard was a transition that Walton welcomed.

"I wanted to be in a college that cared about students," Walton said.

Besides teaching Old Testament courses, Wal-

ton is also involved in research. The area he's been focusing on is the idea of challenging God. Last semester, he shared a Faculty Lecture entitled "The Paradox of the Pious Person: When Challenging God is the Most Faithful Course of Action." He explained that there are many instances in the Old Testament where the Israelites are "talking back

to God." Abraham begs for Sodom and Gomorrah to be spared, David laments in the Psalms and Jacob wrestles with God. It's a longstanding tradition, and one that comes up frequently in his classes.

While many Christians view doubts as a major weakness, Walton has a different take on it. He says that ignoring wrestling and doubts is

unhealthy for Christians. But at the same time, resisting God in any way is "a delicate and dangerous conversation." Therein lies the paradox of his work, and one he discusses regularly with students. He reads a lot about it too.

Walton reads so much that he was recently named the Willard J. Houghton Library's Faculty Model Reader for 2024. Walton posed with Abraham's Silence by J. Richard Middleton, one of the many books he's read on challenging God. It's the best book he's read recently, and he doesn't read much for leisure.

"I try to read for fun and then I think 'I have better things to read,'" Walton commented.

Walton no longer skis. He finds the western New York slopes to be boring compared to the cliffs he used to jump off in Colorado.

See **WALTON** page #2

Discipleship, not Gender Roles

DR. KRISTINA LACELLE-
PETERSON

In a culture obsessed with gender differences and gender roles, it's good to consider how absent these themes are in Scripture. When we look at the Bible, we find the authors virtually unconcerned with how to be a man of God or a woman of God; they consistently invite us simply to be faithful to God. In other words, Scripture pictures us as humans before God, in creation, fall, redemption, as well as in the invitation to participate in God's work in this world. Biblical writers are apparently uninterested in how a woman develops faithfulness to God as a woman or how a man does it as a man. For followers of Christ, discipleship is discipleship.

But Christians have often read their gender assumptions into the Bible. For instance, some Christians claim that God placed humans in a hierarchy right from the start with men in charge. One reason they think this is their assumption that God is male and therefore men, being more like God, have the responsibility to lead and direct. However, God is not male since God is spirit; God is supremely personal without being limited by the markers that define animal life. In addition, men are not more like God, since Genesis 1 tells us that all humans are made in God's own image and commissioned together to do God's work. They are to be fruitful and multiply; they are to have dominion. No one is the boss, while the other follows. No one protects and provides while the other is passive. We see hierarchy introduced only after the Fall, where domination and subjugation are clearly expressions of the brokenness of humanity after sin has entered the system. Hierarchy interrupts the delightful mutuality of God's design and also seems to suggest that God likes order more than the flourishing of the people involved. This, of course, is a questionable assumption given God's deep love for all of us and God's consistent desire for the just treatment of all.

Another unhelpful habit in considering God's design is to suggest that men and women complement each other and need each other to reflect God. Scholars differ in how they interpret the phrase "image of God" (in terms of capacities, relationality, or function) but generally affirm that all

humans are formed in God's image equally. What it does not say is that men and women together mirror God's image. In other words, just because male and female are both made in God's image, it does not follow that the statement can be turned around to mean that it is in our maleness and femaleness that we reflect God. That kind of thinking results in some deeply problematic theological positions.

First, with regard to people, if the marriage of a man and a woman is thought to most fully represent God that would mean that huge swaths of the human race would be somehow less in God's image, given that they are single or not in heterosexual relationships. Being made in God's image is fundamental to our being, and our marital or relational status cannot affect it in any way. Besides, as the biblical scholar NT Wright has observed, our maleness/femaleness is what we share with the created order, not with God. We are like many of the plant and animal kingdoms where male and female bodies are necessary for reproduction. Though some Christians want to spiritualize these categories, the Bible doesn't.

Furthermore, to say men and women most fully display the image of God together, implies that God is a composite of male and female, with men and women each reflecting one 'side' of God. It makes God like the yin and yang, the complementary male and female "energies" of Eastern thought, pasted together. This dualism regarding God's essence is not biblical. God is I AM—being itself, the source of being, the One who simply is. It would be better to say that God, having no body, transcends the categories of male and female, since these things are linked to earthly life and specifically to reproduction. Even talking about 'masculine' and 'feminine' traits in God is a projection of our ideas of masculinity and femininity onto God. God encompasses all human traits, regardless of whether we have labeled them masculine or feminine.

In the second creation narrative, the animals are paraded before the human and are disqualified on the basis of their inferiority. In contrast, the woman is not inferior but corresponds to him and therefore is someone who can offer an antidote to his aloneness. She is not his little helper, however, since the word 'help' here is most often used for God in Scripture, offering the help that the other needs to thrive. Significantly, Adam rejoices, not that God has

made someone who is different from him to complement him (or follow his lead or do his dishes), but someone who is bone of my bone. She is my very body, he rhapsodizes, someone who shares my fundamental essence—being human.

When we come to the New Testament, we find Jesus calling women and men to be disciples on the same basis—there is not a different set of expectations for female and male disciples. In fact, when Jesus is asked to endorse gender roles or gender valuation, he refuses to do so. For instance, he refuses to devalue women as he was expected to in his culture on the basis of their purported sexual danger. Consider the story in Luke 7 where he welcomes the touch of a woman who washes his feet, though the religious folks present can only see her sexual impropriety. And in the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10) he refuses to press Mary into the expected gender tasks. Instead, he affirms her choice to sit at his feet, learning like only male disciples generally did in that culture. And when a woman cries out in the crowd, "blessed is the womb that bore you," he says, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" (Luke 11:27). It is discipleship by which people are valued in Jesus' kingdom, not following gender expectations. When his family members show up, he asks, "Who are my mother and brothers?" Looking at those around him he continues, "Here are my mother and brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" (Mark 3:33-35). He is not disrespecting his own mother, rather inviting all those around him and by extension all of us, to be part of his family on the basis of obedience. Whatever differences may exist between men and women (and that's a huge topic that cannot be addressed here) the call for Christians is not to figure out how a woman is to act or how a man is to act, but how each of us lives into the call of Jesus to lay down our lives for the other and to wash each other's feet. If there are differences presumably they would come out naturally; we don't have to force the issue.

Paul, too, celebrates women's (along with men's) faithfulness to promote the good news, even calling many women his co-laborers in the

Gospel—see especially Romans 16. Some, he notes, risked their lives for him and the sake of evangelism. When he lists gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 there is no segregation of gifts on the basis of sex.

So, if Scripture is not terribly concerned with gender roles and norms, why is the church so caught up in promoting them? People seem to fall back on them because cultural expectations are comfortable and feel 'right' in any given moment in history; it's just easier to go with the grain. If we have heard them justified with Bible verses (taken out of context) they even feel Christian, but we have to remember that our ideas of femininity and masculinity are not biblical. They are products of our culture in this time and place. For instance, the Bible does not require men to provide and protect the people in his family. In Scripture, we have plenty of examples of women's bodies being used to protect men, for better or worse, and the passage most often trotted out to describe the ideal wife (Proverbs 31) depicts a woman providing for her family. In addition, the texts of Scripture were originally addressed to people primarily in agricultural societies where everyone's work is necessary; men, women and even children work hard to keep the family economy going. The man as 'provider' seems particularly linked to cash economies and to middle class status; in 19th century America, for instance, having a wife who "stayed home" became a symbol of male success, (that is, masculinity). But that doesn't make it Christian and arguably that cannot be a sign of Christian faithfulness, since it would mean that poor, working class families where everyone has to earn money, would be less pleasing to God.

The Wesleyan tradition has stood for the equality of all people and for each person's responsibility before God. When it comes to the community of the redeemed, we stand shoulder to shoulder because we are all sinful humans who have been addressed by the grace and love of God. In Scripture, God is said to give gifts and then invite people to use them for God's glory, without the question about gender roles entering into the equation. Simply, don't bury your talents in the ground! With regard to marriage, we take seriously the call to

"Submit to one another out of reverence to Christ" (Eph 5:21) and believe that it is what we are called to model in our families, in our churches and in the society, rather than cultural ideals of manhood and womanhood. In fact, all the instructions about how Christians should interact—encouraging one another, putting each other's needs above our own, bearing each other's burdens, etc.—apply to both people in a marriage. When it comes to parenting, then, both partners are to love their children unconditionally, as far as humanly possible, and both are to model for their children what it means to be a follower of Christ and what it means to lay down one's life for the other.

Part of the grand adventure of being Christian is living into the full personhood that God created us for. Scripture does not ask us to wedge ourselves into a box of cultural (or church or family) expectations about how a woman should act or how a man should act, but invites us to ask how do I live a life that most fully uses the gifts and passions that God has placed in me? How do I bring my whole self to my relationships and not hide or diminish myself in order to adhere to gender roles or rules? Let's remember that God doesn't ask us to tamp down our individuality in order to follow cultural patterns, but invites us to develop our full, unique selves. Let's live into the lovely diversity with which God has created us.★

ART SHOW *from page #1*

that informs and influences my art."

Rhett shared his excitement about seeing the students' work be displayed and the growth they have shown.

"The show is a time of celebration," Rhett stated. "They've been students their entire lives sitting in class and doing assignments. This is their chance to start taking ownership of who they are as artists."★

WALTON *from page #1*

"Mountains are just puny and tiny [here]," Walton claimed. "It just wasn't the same thing."

Now, Walton spends his free time watching Houghton's sporting events and just being with his wife and four children.★

Chapel can be Worth Your Time



WILL ALLEN ('24)

Have you ever felt like attending chapel is a chore that you get little out of? Do you find yourself stressed or preoccupied during worship and distracted during the sermon? I sure have, and I have an idea or two about why this is and how we can get more out of chapel.

Ah, junior year, when my first class on MWF was chapel. Oh, the dreams I dreamed of productive mornings... but after evenings (and nights) of intentional procrastination, in which no homework was done, I would wake at nine and languidly spend an hour preparing myself for the day. The stress would hit me at ten as I worked feverishly to complete my many German assignments. And in order to get everything done, I had to study for Frau Meilaender's dreaded bi-weekly "vocabletest" (if you know, you know) in chapel.

Cut, Copy, Paste, and that's

most of my junior year. I got the chapel credit, and I passed the tests, but I remained stressed and tired, and I sure can't tell you what "washing-machine" is in German or many other words for that matter. In short, my time became contaminated, and as a result, I was stressed and learned nothing. And that makes for a pretty hollow college experience. Ideally, I'd want to be not stressed and to have learned a lot, but because I refused to focus on one thing, I got the worst of both worlds.

By the grace of God, I passed German, and this year, I decided to not do homework in chapel. Instead, I've used some chapel skips to finish assignments, and doing so has helped me focus in chapel. I'm glad to say that it's been a much more fruitful experience, not because I remember the message of every sermon but because putting aside my homework and its accompanying stress has helped

"Focusing on God can take some focus. It may be a yolk, but the yolk is light, and the burden is easy. It fits us and refreshes us more than we could ever on our own."

come internal stressors affecting my focus. My own doubts, worries, and feelings of inadequacy tempt me to use chapel as a pick-me-up. When I look to chapel to fill me up with comforting emotions, my soul acts like a vacuum that takes everything and judges it as useful only if it makes me feel good. The focus shifts from praising God to comforting myself, thus making the methods I use to do so idols that I worship shadows that bear only the connotation of

and steal my focus away from the real purpose of worship, which is honoring God.

So what should I do? Should I give up on good feelings? Well, this situation reminds me of something Jesus once said. "If you grasp and cling to life on your terms, you'll lose it, but if you let that life go, you'll get life on God's terms" (Luke 17:33 The Message). So the way I see it, if we're just willing to let go of our desires and focus on the goodness of God, we'll receive the comfort we were ignoring God to get in the first place.

Whenever I find myself needlessly criticizing the worship because I don't like the song or phasing out during the message because I think it's boring, I just remind myself that chapel is not about me getting my desires gratified. It's not about us. It's a chance to encounter Emmanuel - God With Us, if we trust Him enough to let go of our stressors and focus on Him. When we offer God space in our lives, God enters that space and fills it with His presence. And God's presence assures us that we are loved unconditionally, giving us real rest from the stresses we face. And in turn, this assurance helps me trust God enough to tune back in.

I think this quote from The Message sums it up nicely.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Mathew 11:28-30.

Chapel can become an unforced weekly rhythm of rest that reminds us that we are God's Beloved Children. If we give God a little bit of space and a little bit of focus, we can find in Chapel an emotional security from which we can face the rest of the day.

So, in summary, if you want to get something out of chapel, put away your phone or homework and focus on God, not on your own needs. You'll get so much more than you would if you were distracted by your responsibilities or only focusing on whether your experience is satisfying.

Focusing on God can take some focus. It may be a yolk, but the yolk is light, and the burden is easy. It fits us and refreshes us more than we could ever on our own. Perhaps according to the Community Covenant, chapel is technically a forced rhythm, but we all know that it's oh-so-easy to hit the "scan and scam". I think missing chapel isn't so much a punishable offense as it is a missed opportunity to let God reassure us that He loves us no matter what. And on the flip side, going to chapel does not make us righteous, but it might be a real opportunity to recover our lives as individuals and as a community in Christ. ★

Will Allen is a senior studying history and music. Around campus, you may find him messing around in a practice room, playing frisbee on the quad, or scooting around on his longboard. Fun fact: he had his appendix removed exactly 12 years ago to the very day this article will be published.

Have an opinion
you want to share?

CONTACT
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SPEAK OUT!

Letters to the editor
should be less than 600 words

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The Houghton
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Culture Review

Americans are Weird: A Cultural Comparison

Limat Takele ('27)

Americans are weird. From their weird ways of measuring things to their habit of smiling at strangers, engaging in small talk, acting entitled, and not putting taxes on price tags—plus the confusing array of coins—there is a lot that is different here. Like the way they measure things here—why can't they just use the metric system or Celsius like the rest of the world? And the coins—why do they have so many? Why are dimes smaller than pennies and nickels? Why are the bathroom stall doors so short, and why are there gaps between them? Why are taxes not included in the price? Americans are just weird.

Adapting to a new culture is never easy. I knew that I was going to struggle with many things when I came here, but greeting people was not one of them. Back in Ethiopia, saying hello is a big deal. It is not just a quick thing. It is a whole ritual, showing respect and connection.

But here in America, greetings are so casual. They say, "How are you?" but they do not really mean it. It is just a way of saying hello. It is like they do not care about really talking to you. In Ethiopia, when you ask, "How are you?"

you mean it. You are ready to have a real conversation, to connect. And you have to know that you have at least 20 minutes free before you ask someone how they are doing because they might want to share everything that is going on in their life. Ethiopians go through the whole family tree—they ask about your day, your mom, your dad, your siblings, and even about a distant cousin you have never met in your life.

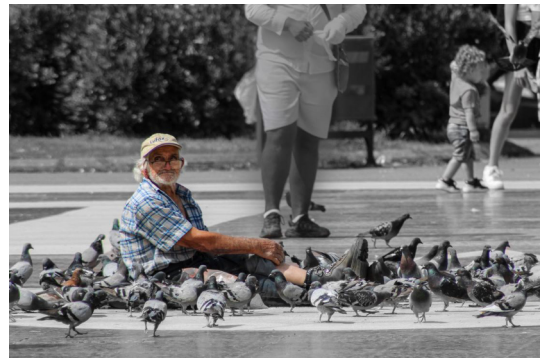
It is weird how different it is here. Saying hello should mean something, shouldn't it? It is a small thing, but it shows a significant difference in how we communicate. It makes me miss home, where greetings are more than just words—they are a way of showing you care.

Americans are weird, from the way they interact with each other to the way they handle everyday things. It has taken some getting used to, that is for sure. But hey, maybe one day I will get the hang of it and be as weird as the Americans, or maybe I will make the Americans around me less weird.★



Artist of the Week

Alexandria Brown ('24)



Alexandria Brown is a senior graduating this year with a double major in communication and studio art. She has managed to survive Prof. Murphy's wrath about how she hasn't taken a single painting class while at Houghton, sticking mainly to her passions of photography and ceramics. When she isn't in the studio she is an avid reader and always has music playing in the background. She loves to embrace organic forms and flowing shapes in her art, letting inspiration spark often in the middle of a project.