

## As The Time Ticks

*What can you get done if you were able to slow time?*

Kelly Li  
Staff Writer

Old computer parts are often thrown away, added to landfills, a piece of metal that once had so much potential, turned into another piece of trash. In seventh grade, Sheza Saiyed started her journey as an entrepreneur by creating Techlery, a business that turns tech pieces into jewelry. Saiyed was working on a Tech Challenge in seventh grade when a business opportunity slowly crept up on her. She was tasked to build a robot with materials such as jumper wires, which look like thin pieces of colorful rope, ranging in colors from white to purple. Those thin wires would be the spark that started her business. “I wrapped them around my wrist and they kind of

looked like bracelets, and I [started thinking that] I could make a lot of different types of jewelry using different and colorful electronic components,” Saiyed explains. A simple wire turned into a bracelet quickly gained popularity among her friends which created the basis for Techlery. As her pieces gained popularity, she made more designs. “I made a bracelet and then I experimented with necklaces, earrings, and finger rings. I even made anklets.” The designs she made created more opportunities for her to become a larger business. She eventually had enough traction to start her own Kickstarter. “My father told me about Kickstarter because he had a Kickstarter project and he [told me], ‘you



should make one,’ but I was hesitant. The first one I [made] was in eighth grade and I had just started making jewelry. I made the campaign really quickly because I was so excited to post it and publish it, [so I could] get funding, but I overlooked how much time and effort it takes to create a good profile and a good campaign. I set a really high goal of \$500, but I only made \$200 which is still good, but I didn’t reach the goal” says Saiyed. After Saiyed’s first Kickstarter, her second and third ones went more smoothly. The proceeds from her second went towards the American Red Cross for California fire relief. Her third Kickstarter was extremely successful as she spent the summer creating a furnished campaign” Creating a more furnished campaign opened the door to bringing her project to the next level. She adds, “I had a whole background and story about the theme of this whole project, the purpose of this project, how it relates to E waste, and what I’m trying to do here: spread awareness about E waste

by using recycled electronic components.” Over the span of two months, Saiyed raised \$1,400, gaining sixty backers from ten different countries. One of Saiyed’s models is fellow American High School senior, Isha Kansal who has seen Saiyed work on Techlery for years. Kansal explains, “[Techlery] gave her exposure, confidence, and experience in business. I think that it’s super cool she had this passion project from such an early age.” Saiyed’s drive to continually work on this project paved a large path for her entrepreneur part of her future. Saiyed’s long-time friend Nell Brodtkin has been there for Techlery since day one and helped Saiyed on the Tech Challenge that inspired Techlery. Broadtkin says, “When she started Techlery, it sparked her creativity and interests in the interaction of STEM and arts. I noticed she became very determined to create change and do something meaningful. I think she’s inspired by the culture of innovation and engineering in the Bay Area.” The creation of Techlery

gave Saiyed a sneak peek into the world of entrepreneurship. She explains, “I am majoring in engineering, I recently committed, but I do plan on going into entrepreneurship. This whole jewelry thing [demonstrates that] I’m a very hands-on person and engineering was just a part of it.” Techlery helped solidify her desired career path while allowing her to explore her creativity and passions. Kansal (12) adds, “I definitely think that if you’re passionate about something, you should spend your time doing it. Not just for college apps, but for the fact that you have a genuine interest in it; investing time in doing something you love is always worthwhile.” Saiyed started this project out of passion, and she was able to turn that passion into a viable business. Her efforts to continually work on Techlery have opened many doors for her, not only in the past but in the future. It heavily influenced her career path and turned her passions into a business that has the power to change how we recycle technology.

TECH FASHION



“I would take tiny capacitors and I would take chains from Michaels and I would bend the capacitors and cut excess wires and put them on the chain to make bracelets and anklets.” - Sheza Saiyed (12).  
You can find her work on [www.techlery.com](http://www.techlery.com).

# Letter From the Editors

**Shreya Daschoudhary**  
Editor-in-Chief

Dear Eagles,

This is the last Letter from the Editor I'll be writing to you all. As ominous as that sounds, you can all rest easy, it's not because I'm entangled in an espionage plot that went downhill, forcing me to change my identity and leave immediately for Nepal (Blackadder, anyone?). Anyhow, next month will be a special issue; not only will it feature a special centerspread showing the Class of 2022's plans after graduation and senior commentaries from the Eagle Era's graduating editors, but the 2022-23 editorial team will be taking over the publication, and the senior editors will return to our original positions as staff writers. In other words, this is the final time I'll be writing to you as the head of the newspaper—and honestly, it's a bittersweet feeling.

Journalism has been deeply intertwined with my life since my sopho-

more year, and now as I go off into college, I'm not sure if that'll still be the case. Or at least, even if I do join another newspaper staff in the future, I doubt we'll be as close-knit as our journalism family is now. Honestly, it feels like a part of me is...missing, in a way. As much as I used to resent the fact that our school isn't on the same level as Mission or Irvington when it comes to some of our extracurriculars, I've grown to appreciate how much more we value inclusion and fostering a collaborative atmosphere rather than just solely performance. While I have no doubt that precedent will continue to be upheld, I'm honestly nervous for college. I don't like feeling like the small fish in a huge pond, and considering I'm going to a large UC school, part of me is worried that I'll end up being miserable.

Then again, I'm still excited; partly for college, but mostly for a four month summer break. I know post-AP exams are the time to mentally check out, but I'd be lying if I said my brain didn't go on vacation as soon as the first semester ended. Speaking of AP exams, to me, it's amazing that

for almost everyone taking exams this year, it'll be their first time taking them in-person.

Needless to say, these past few years have been a time of new experiences, not only because of the whole pandemic thing, but in general. From leading the paper, to being a colorguard captain, to the president of a club, I never would've expected myself to be able to take charge of anything, and I'm glad I pushed myself out of my comfort zone. As I pass the Era's torch down to the next set of editors, I'm looking forward to taking everything I've learned throughout high school as I embark on the next stage of my journey.

**Sorren Chaudhury**  
Projects Editor

Hello my lovelies,

April has come and gone, and with that comes all the stress of the end of the year. For many people, April means studying for AP tests and finals, but for me it means one thing: Your Lie in April.

For those who don't know, Your Lie in April is a manga and anime focused on middle school musicians. I try to watch it every year but

this year, however, I decided to read the manga from the school library instead, mostly because of CAASPP testing, but also because I love the library. After about three weeks of going in and checking out three volumes at a time, I finished the manga, and it is just as heart-wrenching as the anime minus all of the piano competition music. Everytime I consume this story I fall in love with the characters and my life again. It's a great whirlwind of emotions that I experience on my own usually.

Fun fact, I forgot the last volume of the manga in my locker over spring break, so I decided to read it during my first period USH class today, April 26th. As I finished the manga and read Kaori's letter to Kousei I cried as expected, but all of a sudden I was back in the real world, bawling in history class. I would have been relatively okay if I didn't call former President John F. Kennedy hot in the beginning of the period, however that's literally how he won the election so I'm not wrong. That being said, emotions are a lot.

April is a magical time to me, because it's still cold and windy but everything is brighter somehow. The trees

grow their leaves back and flowers start to bloom and I start to love the world around me when I walk to school. April is a time of change and mess. Summer is close enough for you to taste but not quite here, everything is lively and free. April is a time of emotion, whether it's stress or freedom or just pure bliss, and just like April, I become a whirlwind of emotions.

I may just be going through some sort of crisis because I'm seventeen, but I think we as teenagers should start to express our emotions more. We're young and relatively dumb, this is peak time to feel everything all at once. Go and tell your crush you like them, or don't, but just feel it all in you. Laugh and cry and enjoy being young, we are still kids. We should be living every moment to the fullest even if it's not our last, because we will never be teenagers again. Be young and stupid, you deserve it. Don't be afraid to feel everything as it comes to you and truly be you in every moment.

Have fun,  
Sorren Chaudhury



## Insight Education College Admissions Counseling, Test Prep & Tutoring

### SAT Summer Classes

| SAT Advantage Session 1: June 13 - July 8 (Cupertino) |               |                  |
|---|---------------|------------------|
| Pre-Diagnostic Test                                   | Mon (6/13)    | 9:00am - 12:15pm |
| Class Days (8 days)                                   | Mon, Wed, Fri | 9:00am - 3:45pm  |
| Test Review Days                                      | 6/27 & 7/8    | 9:00am - 4:45pm  |
| SAT Summer Boot Camp 1: June 11 - Aug 13 (Cupertino)  |               |                  |
| Saturdays (10 Days)                                   |               | 9:00am - 5:30pm  |
| SAT Summer Boot Camp 2: July 5 - Aug 4 (Cupertino)    |               |                  |
| Tue & Thu (10 Days)                                   |               | 9:00am - 5:30pm  |
| SAT August Boot Camp: August 1 - 12 (Cupertino)       |               |                  |
| Mon - Fri (10 Days)                                   |               | 9:00am - 5:30pm  |

### ACT Boot Camps

| ACT Summer Boot Camp 1: June 14 - July 14 (Cupertino) |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Tue & Thu (10 Days)                                   | 9:00am - 6:15pm  |
| ACT Summer Boot Camp 2: June 14 - July 14 (Online)    |                  |
| Tue & Thu (10 Days)                                   | 9:00am - 12:15pm |
| ACT Summer Boot Camp 3: June 13 - June 24 (Cupertino) |                  |
| Mon - Fri (10 Days)                                   | 9:00am - 6:15pm  |
| ACT Summer Boot Camp 4: June 18 - Aug 20 (Cupertino)  |                  |
| Saturdays (10 Days)                                   | 9:00am - 6:15pm  |

### High School & College Admissions Counseling

- ✔ **College Admissions Insight for Seniors:** Building College List, College Essays, Scholarships, Common Application Essays, College Applications, Letter of Recommendation & Financial Aid
- ✔ **High School & College Admissions Planning & Guidance:** Covering entire academic profile for 8th - 12th grade students
- ✔ **Extracurricular Activities & Volunteering:** Choose, prioritize, and stand out on your college application!



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# Ingredients to a Gourmet Recipe

## *The dish is ready, Chef Erin!*

**Karyle Agno**  
Staff Writer

The final batch of plates have arrived. Chef assistants scramble to piece together the last perfect dish. Some sweat as they panic to top finishing touches. The pressure is overwhelming. A striking presence unexpectedly fills the kitchen's atmosphere, Chef Erin has arrived.

In order to reach the top, you start from the bottom. Erin Richardson (12) aspired to be a chef from a young age. She recalls that because of her great grandmother, "Cooking has been something that is family oriented to me. [Everyone] loves food, but I love making food with people and getting the happiness that people get from it."

Her relationship with her great-grandmother sparked her love for cooking. Erin explains that despite the generational gap between the two of them, "It's a way for her and I to connect. [Now] she's learning recipes from me, instead of me from her. So it kind of closes that gap between two generations."

For Erin, recipes bring



*Erin's parents have always supported and encouraged her career decisions. A moment that has stuck with her is, "[My dad] has always told me that no matter what you want to do in life, I want to see you enjoy what you do. He loves whenever I come home after making some [food], because he goes, 'Oh, that's so cool.' And all the time he tells me, 'I will never know how to cook as good as you do.' And that's always been so special to me."*

generations together. "Somebody that is like a little sibling to me, [on] his mother's birthday, we made a cake together. I got to teach them how to do that. Not only have I been taught these things, but I'm also teaching these things to other generations, recipes that last a lifetime. Birthdays are always gonna happen and so everybody's always gonna want cake. Christmas is always gonna happen and so everybody wants cookies. I always loved how food is always found in every culture."

Through her culinary

journey, a lot of people have supported and encouraged the career path she chose. One of her biggest supporters and significant other, Angel Banuelos (12), is proud of Erin and her passion. "Not a lot of people know so early on what they want to do or [have] any idea." For Richardson and Banuelos, cooking is one of the many activities they enjoy doing together. A favorite memory that Banuelos has with Richardson was, "The first meal [of Erin's that] I ever tried. and it was really good. I said 'Wow, I



don't have to eat meat the whole time. I can actually have vegetables that I can eat.' And I was getting thoughts of where this could go. For example, I can make stuff for her and she can make stuff for me, then we could switch off and give each other feedback. I never thought that her influence would make me want to cook."

Other than Banuelos, Ruben Mejia Patao (12) is a close friend of Richardson who shares a similar passion for the culinary arts. A precious memory Patao shares with Richardson was, "[In culinary class] we were cooking together

a garlic cream slash pesto pepperoni pizza. Erin and I really worked well together and we were able to get our pizza in 10-15 minutes before the time we needed. Whenever Erin and I work together, we're always really efficient and no one really was ever left out or does more than the other."

For someone that dreamt of becoming a chef from a young age, there are many obstacles that Richardson will face in the future. Patao and Banuelos have been the few people to keep her chin up.

Banuelos suggests, "Don't let others control what you think. We all know what's



*Erin describes her go-to meal for breakfast, "It's very simple and very filling. I like the call this a breakfast tostada. I take a tortilla and fry it in some vegetable oil. Then I put refried beans, that I've heated up, on the tostada. Then I add a meat. Here I've put leftover tri-tip on the tostada. Typically I put bacon but whatever meat you want works. On top of that, I put a fried or poached egg. Whatever way you like your eggs works. Then I top the tostada with sour cream and avocado with some salt and pepper. One of these tostada should be filling enough but sometimes two is better than one."*

# Too Much - Or Not Enough?

## A look into Hana Balderrama's journey through hobbies

Nicole Wu  
 Staff Writer

The lights dim. The curtain falls, and a ballet dancer takes her position on the stage. After a coin toss, a soccer player takes the kickoff. On the command of a long whistle, a swimmer steps onto the starting platform. Grabbing a pencil and paper, an artist begins her sketch. Hana Balderrama's (10) life is nothing short of hobbies, but how many is too many or not enough?

dial back and reevaluate the cost and benefit. "My mother put me in ballet in kindergarten, and I stopped in second grade. When I was in second grade, I had to practice every week for a Nutcracker performance. My mother was tired of taking me to rehearsals and taking me to dance things [during] crazy hours of the day. After the Nutcracker, my mother asked me if I really wanted to continue. I told her I was into it but not enough to keep doing this." Ms. Baxter adds that

Even though her middle school did not have a school soccer team, Balderrama's mother recommended she join a soccer team outside of school. However, Balderrama was not sure whether she was ready to jump into something different. "I was a little scared. I think the convenience of having a soccer team at the school in elementary school made me feel like 'if the soccer team isn't at the school, then what's the point?' It's an easy way for me to say I don't

even tried to get me to try out," Roberts comments. Aside from sports-related hobbies, drawing has been a creative outlet for Balderrama. Balderrama initially started drawing because her mother was fond of drawing and found a sense of peace in doing so. "When I was little, my mom would take me to museums all the time, and she would just sit there with me and sketch. I would sketch with her too, and it was a very fun activity we had. I really enjoyed that, so when I started going to this private elementary school, there was an art class there. My mom enrolled me in it."

When Balderrama left the private school in third grade, she stopped taking art classes there as well. However, she continues to draw up until now. Ms. Baxter reveals that her own passion for art is Balderrama's main reason for continuing.

"She said she really just kept doing it for me because she knew how much I enjoyed it and how much it meant to me. I always say make me something, and so she does it because I ask her to."

Throughout Balderrama's journey with multiple hobbies, it is the hobbies where she learns

something new and different everyday that pique her interest and keep her attention. "With soccer, it's always new. You're always learning something, and you're always going up against another team. I think that the nature of 'you never know what's going to happen next' keeps me interested because I get bored very easily," remarks Balderrama.

Taking this into account, Mr. Elam believes there isn't an ideal number or limit to the amount of hobbies for Balderrama to take on. "I think that her being flexible and whatever sounds intellectually stimulating to her next, she should jump to. If that means she has a five hobby rotation, and she's improving at those, then awesome! I think that it's whatever it takes to keep her brain active in doing things...Finding new patterns in life is a good way to keep your brain growing," concludes Mr. Elam.

Based on her experiences, Balderrama wants to have a couple hobbies to fill time without being burned out. "I think when hobbies start to affect your learning and something important to you, then I think you're stretching yourself a little too much."



Soccer was not only a way for Balderrama to stay active, but it was also an opportunity for her to meet new people and get a sense of belonging. "I enjoyed the people. It was a really nice community to have. I got automatic friends because I was always hanging out with them, and I kind of had to make friends with them. It was nice to have a separate group of friends where you always had something in common with them: soccer," reflects Balderrama.

From an early age, hobbies have been an essential part in keeping Balderrama busy and staying productive in her downtime. They help her have a well-rounded life and unwind from the day. "When I was younger, I was a very active kid who couldn't sit still, so my parents always tried to find an outlet for that. I think hobbies are really good to have because it lets you get away from school or stress. It helps me better understand what I like and what I don't like. " While having multiple hobbies keeps Balderrama engaged, too much can become overwhelming. One of her cutoff points is when the hobby begins to interfere with school. Dance was one such example where Balderrama realized she needed to

the increased seriousness in dance contributed to Balderrama's lost of interest towards ballet. "The dance studio wanted her to participate in these dance competitions, and you had to pay a lot of money to be able to do it. It also required travel, and she wasn't interested in dance enough." While Balderrama's passion for dance faded, she took upon another sport, soccer. Soccer initially started as encouragement from her mother, but it was self-interest that continued Balderrama's passion for this sport. "I joined soccer at around second grade. It was a soccer team that was not really as competitive... I was a little bit of an aggressive kid, so it was a good outlet to get my aggressiveness out in a sport," explains Balderrama.

want to do soccer anymore because I'm too lazy or too scared to go out for a team on my own." Aniya Badal (10), who is close friends with Balderrama, sees the spark of passion she has for soccer and understands her reluctance in trying out for American High School's soccer team. "I think she still enjoys soccer, but she doesn't have as much of a motive to do it. She likes kicking things. She said that she was too nervous to try out for the school soccer team," says Badal. Jenna Roberts (10), who has known Balderrama since eighth grade, has also noticed her enthusiasm towards soccer. "She gets excited whenever she talks about soccer... She has used volleyball as a soccer ball, and she really enjoys playing. She's



Looking back at her many fields of interest, Balderrama emphasizes that as she opened the door to new experiences, it influenced how she split her time among several activities. "I don't stick with my hobbies really well. Once it gets old, and I lose interest, I drop them. I haven't been able to stick with hobbies that much which is why it was really good for me to have multiple hobbies. However, once I got older into high school, it's more difficult, and I have to juggle a lot more things," she expands.

# I've Never Been a Natural

## Reva Gokhale on her journey of music, her feelings of insecurity, and her perseverance

Sahana Narayan  
Staff Writer

You're seven. You're given your first piano. Your first basketball. Your first set of color pencils. You start to play, to run, to draw. You spend years and years sacrificing for this one passion of yours. You amass trophies and awards, compliments and validation. Until one day, you come to the realization: you're never going to be the best at what you do.

It's a realization many people struggle with, but an even bigger question follows: how do you move forward?

Reva Gokhale (11) never really moved forward. She adapted. She switched gears with her passions, and she learnt an important lesson of loving something not for some idealistic future, or for validation, but for yourself.

Gokhale's passion for music started the same way most people's musical hobby starts: their first instrument. "When I was in pre-school, my aunt got me this adorable pink piano. And it had all these cool buttons and stuff, and you could add reverb to the keys. I used to play it all the time. I learned 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' and 'Happy Birthday,' all those songs. My next birthday, when I was in kindergarten or first grade, my parents got me this giant piano, and then I went to piano lessons. And I think that's what

really got me into music because it was just fun. It started out really fun."

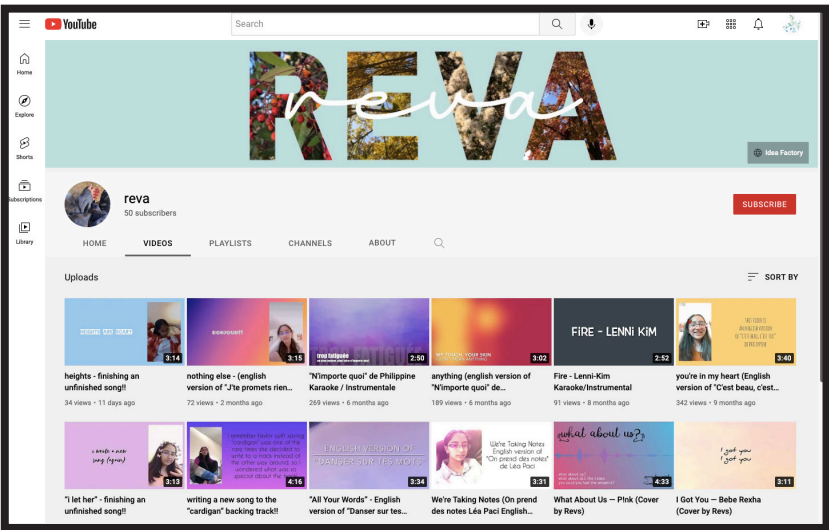
Though piano was her first love, Gokhale continued to pursue music in different forms. "When I was seven, my parents sent me to Hindustani class, which is a type of Indian classical music. I had so many happy memories there, and I started to really gain an appreciation for mixing music styles. I was really learning to love music for myself."

Vaidehi Karve (11), who met Gokhale in Hindustani, says, "I remember she was really good at singing. When we were creating our melodies, she was able to do it easily, even though it was something new we learnt."

Gokhale attributes that passion for music to the support she received from her teachers as well. "All my music teachers have been a great support for me and have taught me how to not only sing or play, but more importantly, love what I do."

She can understand the unpleasant experiences that come with learning under less than supportive teachers. She recalls, "Every time my dad sent me to a coding class, it was a male teacher. There was always this subtle condescension when you ask a question; they don't answer it properly. It's so annoying."

Gokhale also felt extreme pressure in her STEM classes. "I thought it was just me. I thought it was just me and my Asian



Picture of youtube channel: “And in approximately a month, I finally convinced myself to upload the English cover that I made on YouTube. It was very nerve racking. But it was also really exciting because I really enjoyed the process. It doesn’t feel like working when you enjoy it.” - Reva Gokhale(11)

parents. That was giving me all this pressure to perform better than everyone else in the class. And that just wasn't happening with things like coding. And then I started falling behind in math. And then there was all this pressure that made me think that maybe I'm just not smart enough. Maybe I have no business being here," she says.

Music felt like an escape for Gokhale from these feelings of doubt and insecurity. "I was good at music. And I like being good at things. It's a natural feeling."

But Gokhale was forced to reevaluate her feeling of security in music when she was forced to look back on her years in Hindustani.

"I spent nine years learning Hindustani. But I still felt like I wasn't good enough. When we started learning theory, and I couldn't understand it, I started feeling worse and worse. I realized that this wasn't what I signed up for in the first place. So I quit."

But when asked whether that point was the end to Gokhale's pursuit of music, she offered a surprising answer. "I left Hindustani because I wanted it to be something I enjoyed. And it stopped feeling that way after a while. But I was never going to quit music."

"Music has always been a field where I've been able to pursue something to my full potential," she explains.

Gokhale would soon create a YouTube channel for music, and her first post would be a translated cover of a French song, a far cry from the traditional Hindustani vocals she learnt prior.

Gokhale shares, "I slowly started getting into French pop and French rap. There's this one song called 'Minuit,' which means midnight, from this one singer called Lenni-Kim. I thought the song was really cool, and I really wished that my friends could listen to it, but none of my friends knew French. So I realized I could just translate it into American English, so I translated it."

"And in approximately a month, I finally convinced myself to upload the English cover that I made on YouTube. It was very nerve racking. But it was also really exciting because I really enjoyed the process. It doesn't feel like working when you enjoy it," Gokhale comments.

Gokhale would continue to post French cov-

ers, but also included some covers of artists like Taylor Swift and Bebe Rexha. Her most watched video to date is the product of her most ambitious work yet: writing a new song to Taylor Swift's "cardigan."

Gokhale recalls, "I found the instrumental for cardigan, and I was kind of getting a different feel from the music because there were some hidden melodies in the tracks that I thought were really pretty that could be used in another way. So I thought, 'What if I just made a new song with those melodies?' It became a really fun project for me to do."

Karve mentions, "What she is doing with these new songs reminded me of the melodies we used to create in Hindustani as well. It was something she was always good at."

Gokhale does not plan to stop her projects anytime soon. "I have this giant 100-page Google Doc where I translate the lyrics of French songs I like, and I hope to regularly update all kinds of covers on my channel."

When reflecting on her journey of music, she shares, "I had to learn not to question myself. I had to learn to really believe in myself. Even though Hindustani didn't work out, I simply asked myself one important question: 'How do I keep doing what I love?'"



# PAINTING BOLD STROKES

## SHARON TAHK'S VISION OF HUMANITY AND HER FUTURE

Anika Aggarwal  
Staff Writer

It's Sharon's first birthday. In a Korean ceremony called doljabi, friends and family gather around cheering. Objects representing the child's future, some string, a sports racket, a pencil, a crayon, are placed in front of Sharon for her to decide her path. Her parents tell her to aim for riches, hoping she will reach for the money. She selects a crayon.

Obviously, the ceremony is only a lively tradition, not something that determines the child's path forever. But it is a stroke of luck knowing now that Sharon Tahk (12) is an aspiring young artist and activist, with plans to go to art school after graduating this year.

"I like to talk about deep topics like mental health, government issues, societal issues. The negative parts about people. I portray a lot of (this is gonna sound so edgy) hatred towards humans. I love my friends and family, but something about humans kind of interests me" she shares.



Sharon Tahk (12)

Sharon is currently taking AP Studio Art. Mrs. Olson has been teaching Art 1, Art 2, AP Art History, and AP Studio Art for 19 years at American and is Sharon's art teacher. Mrs. Olson describes Sharon's focus in art.

"Her concentration is all about things that are normalized that should not be. As much as it's artwork for artwork's sake, and

as much as it is creative expression, her work is also activism" she details.

"It's very strong, it's graphic, it's vibrant. Sometimes it's brutal, because of the things she's usually trying to depict. She uses a lot of really bright colors, she uses a lot of contrast, and there's usually a focal point, and then a background, so it's not an all over painting. They do tend to have

a narrative to them or a narrative behind them. It's expressionistic with the brushstrokes. It started off more graphic and solid, like Andy Warhol, and then it's gotten more and more expressionistic, and much more sort of action painting. You can see a lot

friends and often work together in class, trying to learn from each other.

"She tends to go towards dark subject matters. I try to do the same because it's more fun to do, you have



Sharon (left) shares her insight into Sharanya's (right) painting.

more movement, vitality, and rhythm in the pieces, which is great. That's what we'd like to see, is getting better over time. Although she did start out very good."

Sharanya Vangeepuram (11) is taking AP Studio Art this year with Sharon and plans on pursuing 3-D animation. Sharanya and Sharon are good

more range to work with. I think she's just really good at getting what she wants in terms of horror. When I do it, it doesn't evoke that sort of emotion. I always try to go towards what she's working on, but I use vibrant colors. she uses dark. Her work makes you feel what she wants you to feel" Sharanya describes.

Ms. Olson recalls one of Sharon's brutal works, ti-

tled “Beauty at Any Price”, which depicts the hidden costs of cosmetic surgeries.

“She finished a piece that was showing somebody who was recovering from surgery. It was a commentary on normalizing giving kids plastic surgery when they graduated high school, or when they turned 18. They get their noses done, or they get a double eyelid instead of a monolid. That’s something I’ve heard about for years, so it’s interesting to see that as a painting.”

Sharon is not afraid to share her ideas or provide insight to help people in her class, as explained by Mrs. Olson.

“She has a lot of really good leadership qualities. The downside of a lot of AP Studio people is that they’re so vulnerable when they’re doing their painting, that they’re not always great at expressing themselves verbally. Sharon, on the other hand, is great at expressing herself verbally. She’s really useful in spotting compositional errors or helping other people to see the whole picture in-

stead of just that one little small part that they’ve been focusing on. She’s really constructive. She has good ideas. She’s not shy.”

Sharanya expresses her admiration of Sharon and her approach to creating works of art.

“She doesn’t start un-

til she knows what she’s doing. She thoroughly thinks about her pieces before she starts.”

Sharon’s artistic traits can be seen not only from her paintings, but in her noticeable wardrobe and fashion. Mrs. Olson praises her unique flair.

“She’s got a great personal style too. I don’t know how many times she’s come in looking fabulous that I’ve yelled at her because she’s gonna get paint on her clothes. She never does.”

Sharon has plans to attend Art Center College of Design in Pasadena and hopes to major in illustration and further her abilities. Erin Tahk (8)

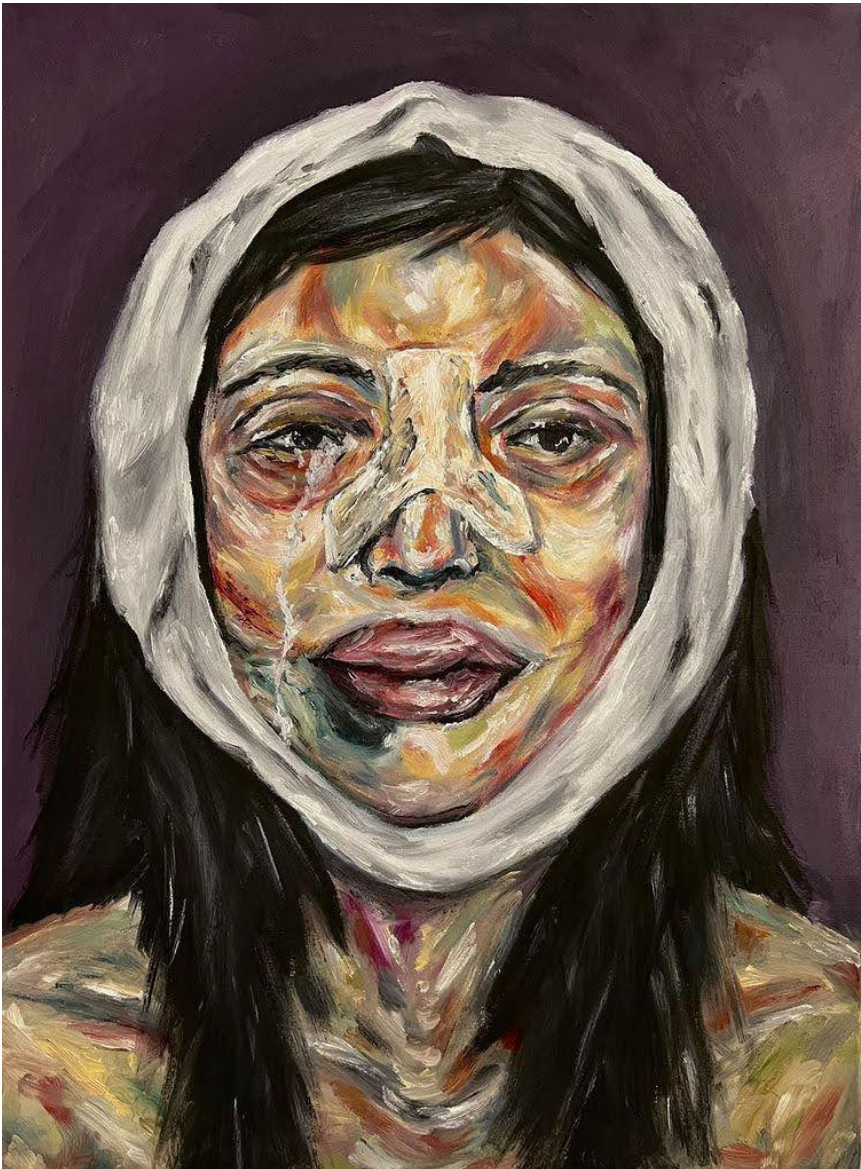
to study in Pasadena.

“I will miss my sister when she goes to college since I wouldn’t be used to being the only child in the house. I plan on texting her from time to time to keep in touch with her, but not too much since it might distract her from college” Erin shares.

Sharanya adds her predictions for Sharon’s future career, along



Sharon pins her work “Good Grades Get You Everything” (oil paint, micron pen, acrylics (multi-media) 4-25-2022) to the wall of the art room.



Beauty at Any Price 2-18-2022, Oil Paint



is Sharon’s younger sister who currently goes to Thornton Junior High School. She likes doing arts and crafts with Sharon and finds her helpful. Erin looks up to Sharon and also plans on pursuing art in the future. Erin says how she will miss her older sister as she moves

with her well wishes.

“I think she will do really well (in college). She has that sense where she knows what she’s doing. You see that confidence when she paints. Every stroke is deliberately placed.”

# A Blend of Passions

## How art and dance come together to bring out Hansa Atreya's creative side

Japneet Kaur

Staff Writer

When you think of art, you think of drawing. Or painting. Although those are considered the most prevalent forms of art, for Hansa Atreya (11), art encompasses so much more than that. To her, art is a form of expression, a safe and welcoming place for her to go to at the end of a long day.

Atreya has been a creative person from the very beginning, engaging in multiple different forms of art. “Even as a preschooler, she dabbled in a lot of arts and crafts activities. She began reading very early and would use art to communicate her imagination,” reveals her dad, Mohan Atreya.

However, Atreya reveals that her genuine interest in art and dedication to improving her skills were spurred a little later on. “I was getting into a lot of things like Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, and a lot of other series with beautiful art,” she relays. “I wanted to make my own.”

Although her passion developed slowly, she reveals a particular moment that still stands out to her today. “We went on a family trip to Europe around 2015-2016 and we ended up at the Louvre Museum in Paris,” she describes. “I actually went in expecting to be quite bored, but I was actually really surprised by the other art pieces that were there. They were all really beautiful, and some were so huge and detailed in ways I’d never thought paintings could be. I was really inspired.”

Expressing herself through her paintings is something that comes natural to Atreya. She describes her favorite art creation from this year—a digital piece titled, Time’s Up. “It symbolizes the inevitability of everything,” she de-

scribes. “The clock’s almost at 12:00. Time’s almost up.”

She gets into the personal meaning behind the piece. “I was remembering my great grandparents who passed away several years

ago. You can’t get back time with people. You only have so much time and you don’t really know when it’s going to run out. Sometimes you can feel it hanging over your head that you don’t have enough time left.”

category of “art,” however. In fact, Atreya, who has also been learning Bharatanatyam from a very young age, sees dance as another outlet to express herself. “I don’t know how many



Atreya’s piece “Time’s Up” was created this year on the app Procreate. The meaning behind the piece is very personal to Atreya, and the piece holds a special place in her heart. “I wanted to make it look chaotic,” she describes. “You can see the markings on the clock are kind of breaking apart and glitching and there’s not a lot of uniformity to the background. It’s all kind of swirling together because I guess when you start panicking, you can’t really focus on anything.”

ago. You can’t get back time with people. You only have so much time and you don’t really know when it’s going to run out. Sometimes you can feel it hanging over your head that you don’t have enough time left.”

She describes the meaning of the shadows and how they relate to her own experiences. “We’d gone to visit my great grandmother the winter before she died. The whole visit, I was just struck by how ill and old she looked,” she discloses. “I spent so much more time trying to talk to her during that visit. I knew that it wasn’t going to bring back any of the lost time but I couldn’t help but try to spend as much time with her as I could. I guess the shadows are kind of a way of showing that you’re blinded by the inevitability. It’s hanging over you and you can’t really see or process anything else except for the fact that ‘oh my god, I’m almost out of time.’”

Drawing and painting are not all that fits into Atreya’s

years Hansa has been learning Bharatanatyam on her own, but I do know that we’ve been dancing together for the past 4 years,” her classmate Sanjana Ganesan (12) discloses. “After all of these years in the same class, I still can’t name a single time she’s shown up unprepared. Bharatanatyam is a large commitment that takes up a lot of a person’s time and energy, so to have continued with it for that long without any lapses of motivation is near impossible if you don’t personally enjoy the art.”

Another one of Atreya’s classmates, Vanya Singh (10), also believes Atreya’s true passion is clearly visible. “I have always noticed how dedicated Hansa is to dance. Every week I see how well prepared she is and she is truly passionate about Bharatanatyam.”

The dance’s connection to Atreya’s culture is one of the biggest reasons why it holds such a special place in her heart. “The dance tells stories rooted

in Indian culture and from Hindu mythology,” she reveals. “It’s a connection to that shared cultural heritage and all those stories.”

She reveals that despite their differences, both drawing and dance hold a similar significance in her life. “The overlap between the performing arts and visual arts lies in the person doing the art, more so than the arts themselves. The mental worldbuilding I have to do to solidify what I’m trying to express and that freedom from stresses like ‘Oh no, I have homework due tomorrow!’ pulls the dance and art together for me.”

She does, however, believe that the two have their unique differences, which hold their own distinctive importance. “My love for Bharatnatyam is very closely related to my

desire to keep in touch with my heritage and is very important to me because it gives me a connection to that. There’s so many parts of my heritage that I know I’m missing out on, but I’ll always have a tangible tie to it through my dance,” she expresses. “My art, on the other hand, is very distinctly western style. I’ve grown up exposed almost entirely to the modern, USA-centralized media that makes up a lot of pop culture, and the way I draw reflects that.”

At the end of the day, however, the two stem from the same place. “I just express myself differently—different parts of myself through my art, and different parts through Bharatanatyam,” Atreya concludes. “In the end, I guess it’s all about the connection and the freedom of expression.”



Performing is an integral part of Bharatnatyam. The picture above depicts a performance of the piece “Vidai Meethil” for MahaShivarathi at Fremont Hindu Temple. “I consider Bharatnatyam to be an art,” Atreya asserts. “Usually when people think of art, they think of visual arts, like drawing or painting. But dance is a performing art. It’s just a different way of telling stories and passing them on.”

# Strumming Stress Away

*How Amogh Maheswari finds relief through music*

**Arjun Vaidya**  
Staff Writer

Homework is never ending, AP exams are around the corner; studying is your entire life. In the unceasing hamster wheel that is high school academics, stress is a constant. Many students have found different ways to cope with the stresses of school, friends, and family. For Amogh Maheswari, that relief comes from guitar.

"I feel quite a bit of stress because this is junior year, and grades matter a lot. There's also important academic things to consider over the summer. However, you always have to find something that you're passionate about. For me, that passion is music. Over the quarantine, I developed my understanding of music, specifically guitar. I even started a YouTube channel called "No Great Shakes!". This is a place where I can just jam. Sometimes my sister and I just bang out some songs and move away a little bit from my school life," states Maheswari.

However, Maheswari did not begin his musical journey during quarantine. Music has been a part of his life ever since a young age. "When I was in fifth grade, I had some guitar classes because I was really interested in learning. However, I lost interest because it was just so hard. It's similar to a learning curve that you have with many of your classes at school as well."

His family members have been great supporters of his musical talent. They explain the spark that they saw in him, music-wise. His father states, "We also always allowed him to play without any restrictions whatever he feels like. Music was never treated as noise at our home even when he would play and learn for hours. The other thing was to continue to motivate him somewhat, as during Covid it was not easy for him to know if he is playing well or not. Amogh otherwise is self inspired when it comes to music and playing guitar." Maheswari's mother elaborates, "Our family always

enjoyed listening to music. That probably helped Amogh develop his interest in musical instruments, specifically the guitar. From childhood, he enjoyed listening to songs and guitar solos. Eventually, he found his passion for guitar."

Maheswari's sister is one of his biggest supporters. She never misses the chance to help Maheswari out with anything related to music. "Amogh loved listening to music from a pretty early age. He loved pretending to play the guitar or drums from certain songs he heard. Amogh was always intrigued by music and loved listening to rock songs from the 70s and 80s. Some of the rock songs that he loved could be played on the guitar, so he started playing it and with practice, he was able to play the full songs and covers."

This interest in music was very easily seen by many of his classmates. One of those classmates is Arnav Gaddam, a friend of Maheswari. "I know about Amogh's passion for music, specifically his love for playing the guitar. He always seems happy to talk about his music, and you can see that he really has a talent for it. I have visited Amogh's YouTube channel, after a friend showed me a video of Amogh playing the guitar. I could really see the effort that he put into the video production, as well as the enthusiasm he showed while performing."

Pranav Putta is another friend who has known him for many years. He was there to witness a mini-concert that Maheswari had performed in his AP CSP class with his guitar. "The concert showed me that he was very dedicated and passionate about his music." Arnav Gaddam adds on, "Maheswari recently held a small performance in class, where he played the guitar. Personally, I really liked the music, as well as the ambience of the room when he started playing. When he was playing, you could sense that everyone in the room was awestruck with how good he was."

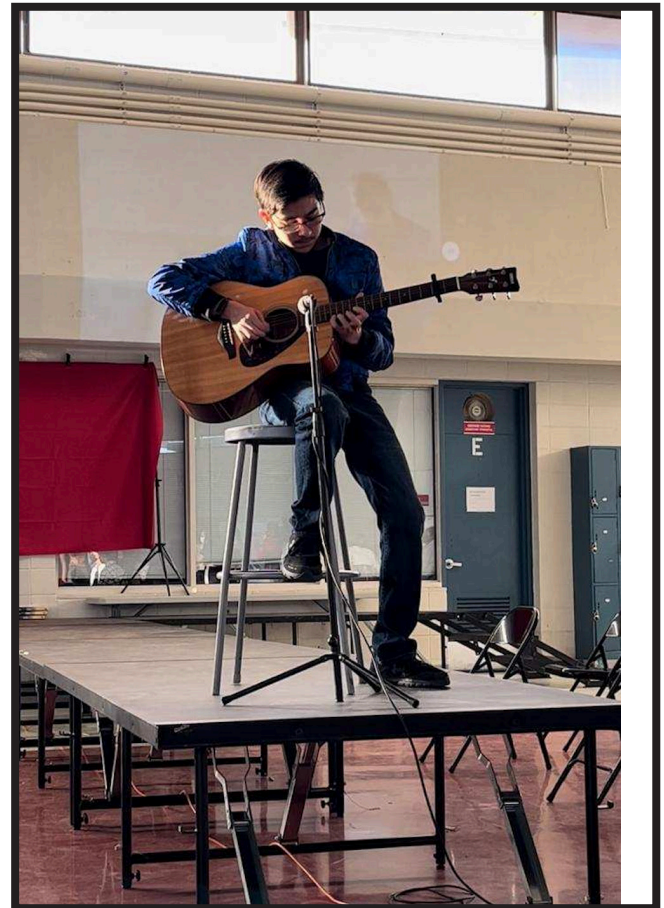
Atharva Netravelkar is an acquaintance of Maheswari. In the few conversations

that Netravelkar has had with him, the topic of other musicians on YouTube has come up often. "He is a little shy at school so it was nice to see Amogh get out of his comfort zone with music and start his own YouTube channel. He's been really passionate about music, from what I've seen, and he's even tried to show me other YouTube channels that he finds to listen to their music."

Maheswari has had a guitar teacher when he was younger. His guitar teacher explains the passion that Maheswari has had for music. "I was with Amogh for about 3 months, and he told me that he had always liked music. He wanted to learn how to play this for himself, and I started teaching him. He stopped his lessons after 3 months but 6 months later he sent me his YouTube channel that he started and he told me that he did it because he felt that he was ready enough to have an audience and play songs by himself confidently. Amogh stopped his lessons after

3 months but 6 months later he sent me his YouTube channel that he started and he told me that he did it because he felt that he was ready enough to have an audience and play songs by himself confidently."

He wants to continue to have music as a part of his life in the future, whether that be professionally or as a hobby. Maheswari does not want to give up on a passion that has guided him through the difficult parts of his life. As he expresses, "I feel forever grateful for all the support that my family has provided me throughout my life."



*Maheswari performs in the rotunda of American High School during open mic night. While he often only plays for his friends and family, he sometimes tries to get out of his comfort zone to express himself.*

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# AN ALL AMERICAN PLAYER

## AMERICAN'S MVP PREPARES FOR THE NEXT LEVEL

Joshua Arcangel  
Staff Writer

You would be intimidated looking at him. This person is a young athlete that's strong. Strong enough, maybe, for college ball. The MVP of the football team last year, who also got First Team Mission Valley All League as a running back (RB) and got Second Team Mission Valley All league linebacker (LB). Cristian Campos has arrived.

An athlete's success does not build character- failure builds character. Cristian explains how football has had a major impact on his life "I feel like the game has changed my life. Because of the sport, it pushes me to do good at school, and really enjoy school. Because without it, I wouldn't be having good grades. So having football and loving it just really changed my life. And now I'm going to be playing college ball after senior season."

Cristian's passion for football inspired his goal of challenging himself with college ball.

"I'm getting into college football because my goal is to try to get a scholarship so that I can get my college paid for. That's one reason I also want to play football on to the next level because it will make me become a greater athlete and learn many more new things at an advanced level." His passion, commitment to the program, and accomplishments have pushed him to work to the next level and work for scholarships. This influenced him to get better. "Also me being able to get the MVP award for the football program really encouraged me and motivated me to keep getting better. Because I don't just want to be the MVP for the team but I want to be the MVP for the whole league so that's one thing that I'm pushing forward towards senior year, to try to get offers to college football and get a scholarship."

One of the coaches in the

PC: Denim Bragg



*Cristian Campos celebrates a win at the homecoming game on October 15th, 2021. Despite winning MVP of the American's varsity football team as a junior, he still has higher hopes for his final season next year. "I'm going to end my senior year strong".*

program, Russell Sass, who has been coaching Cristian since freshman year, is familiar with his goals. Sass knows playing at the college football level is no small feat, and takes "a lot of work" and "some luck." However, Sass believes in the ability for Cristian to achieve this goal under the right conditions.

"Does he have the potential? Absolutely. He has not hit his peak yet. I will say that his work ethic is not as committed as it was, when he made the transition from going from Offensive line and D line to running back and linebacker. The

commitment that he had to improving himself and being better as a player, and being a leader on the team was outstanding and it was tremendous. He worked really really hard, partly because he's had some success such as getting all league back in his freshman year. If he puts that same effort in, I have no doubt that he'll play at the next level and have success at the next level."

Other than having the potential to get to the next level, Sass sees that Cristian doesn't just stand out on the field, but as a person.

"He's a very energetic

person. He has a big personality...He brings energy. There are people that just have that kind of presence, that when they talk, when they walk in the room, people look. When they talk, people listen. Cristian is one of those guys... But I think his success is 100% reflective of the effort that he puts in... He has enough natural ability that with hard work and effort then he can go wherever he wants to go."

Mattias Antona (11) has been Cristian's teammate for three years. For Antona, it is clear how deeply football influences his charac-

ter, and how it has changed him. "He is a great leader [when it comes to] football. Sometimes he is a little bit goofy, but I understand that because we're off season. But when the season's here he does take this seriously... He has changed a lot, [now] he takes things seriously. He focuses more on classes now."

Mr. Webb, Cristian's English teacher, has also seen him grow academically. For Mr. Webb, Cristian's connection to football also is apparent. "I know that he is an intelligent student that is definitely trying in my English class... I knew that he was on the football team. I talked to him about that... and he likes to talk about it. I think it's his way of making stronger connections to academics because grades are important for football. He definitely has leadership potential, I see that in him."

As a young athlete many students don't get the chance of being an MVP unless they want that title and work really hard for it, but Cristian Campos has accomplished his dreams by committing to the program, putting in the blood, sweat, and tears from his freshman year to his oncoming final season. In the eyes of those who have seen him succeed, Cristian is a great leader, student, and football player, and is ready to play ball at a college level.



PC: Jim Schinkel

# The Brain Behind the Game

## *Growing as an individual through robotics*

Jaylynn Visitation  
Staff Writer

There's chattering in the background and tension filling the air. The overhead speakers sound far away and your mind is focused only on the scoreboard and your next move. The competition in front of you is something you've been preparing for for a long time and now is your time to finally take part in it. "There's so much on the line and there's a lot of stress in knowing that all the time and money you spent might all go to waste. But, then when you walk behind the plexiglass separating you from the field and you pick up your controllers, you feel like you're in a video game. There's so many things happening at once and when I'm controlling the robot I feel hyper-focused on what I'm doing because I know there's a half of a second between winning and losing a match," describes sophomore Ujjawal Prasad.

Ujjawal is a member of one of Fremont's FIRST Robotics Competition team (FRC) where they create different robots to use against other teams in different competitions. FRC is a program that allows students in STEM to learn new skills and

have hands-on projects that are student-led and have little guidance, giving them the space to do more things on their own.

From his early life, Ujjawal has always been self-driven and has had an interest in mechanics and technology. His mother, Parina Prasad, explains, "When he was little we used to go on walks and since I'm from India, I would tell him how I missed my parents. He would tell me, 'I'm going to do something and invent teleportation.' He was already interested in computers and how time works and was introduced to robotics in third grade by his after school teacher. Since then he's taught himself how to code using online resources like Khan Academy, YouTube, and GitHub."

One day when Ujjawal was shopping with his mother, he got a link from the school's newsletter that included the form to sign up for FRC and spontaneously filled it out. After a few interview phases, he had gotten through and joined the team. "Thankfully, he's the type of person who likes to try new things. I'm sure that he thought it sounded fun because he's at a point in time where he's looking for experiences and setting future goals. He's a very

ambitious kid," comments fellow team member and friend, Enzo Emami (10).

Being in high school, there are a lot of responsibilities that Ujjawal has to deal with in addition to robotics. He explains, "It's made it harder to manage my time because it's such a big time commitment. I've had to get better at not procrastinating which helped me learn to keep a better schedule."

This year, he has taken on robotics and the swim team as extracurricular activities, creating a busier schedule for himself. Learning to juggle between different parts of his life has allowed Ujjawal to mature and practice other skills like problem solving and teamwork.

Parina furthers, "As parents, we have never had to push or ask him to do all these things, it was his own self-interest. Besides going to meetings and competitions, the only support we gave him was if he wanted a better quality mouse, keypad, or operating system. If he wanted us to upgrade something, he would come to us with a business plan and explain why he needed it."

Many of his friends have agreed that Ujjawal is self-driven and is able to do things on his own, which

is why FRC's helpful in allowing him to continue working at his own pace.

"In robotics, no one ever tells you how to do something so you have to figure it out by yourself. For example, if one of my captains tells me to do a specific task and I don't know how to do it, I have to teach myself. I Google things and ask around then learn how to apply it. One of the most recent things I learned was calculating the trajectory of an object us-

shops had taught him the fundamentals for robotics and gave him some of his first experiences. He explains, "They were so nice to us and [our team] wants to spread the favor and help out other new teams. We're planning workshops for coding, software, and mechanical so we could share our knowledge. For software, we're going to do it over zoom to teach the basics of coding and CAD, computer aided design, which teaches you



*Ujjawal is continuously teaching himself how to advance in coding and learning new skills to apply to his next project.*

ing trigonometry and it's cool because when you're in class you're like 'How am I ever going to actually use this?' And in robotics, I've actually been able to apply these principles of math in real life," expresses Ujjawal.

Being fairly accomplished, Ujjawal's friends admire his dedication and hard work to his team. Although no spectators are allowed due to Covid-19, one of his friends, Sophia Lo (10), remarks, "As a group, we're all cheering for him and supporting him. He inspires others to achieve what he can achieve and makes us feel like we can be accomplished as well."

In Ujjawal's learning stages, he had attended different workshops that were hosted by other teams that he has had the chance to compete against in recent competitions. Those work-

shops had taught him the fundamentals for robotics and gave him some of his first experiences. He explains, "They were so nice to us and [our team] wants to spread the favor and help out other new teams. We're planning workshops for coding, software, and mechanical so we could share our knowledge. For software, we're going to do it over zoom to teach the basics of coding and CAD, computer aided design, which teaches you

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*Fremont's FRC team, the Skywalkers, were placed second out of 59 teams in their most recent robotics competition at Silicon Valley, regardless of their smaller size compared to the other robotics teams they played against.*

# Art: An Escape Turned Platform

## How a move across the country transformed Preisha Agarwal's relationship with art

Sinchan Mishra

Staff Writer

It all begins with an idea: a thought that seizes her the second it enters her mind. Like a spark growing into a fire, what started as a skeleton of a concept becomes a full-fledged piece of art. Ink flies across paper, colors blossoming in its wake, and slowly, a picture emerges: bright, vivid, and most of all, full of heart. Because to Preisha Agarwal (11), creativity is more than just a hobby—it's a part of who she is, and it's a path she intends to follow in her future. But this wasn't always the case.

"I've been doing art since I was little," Agarwal shares. "It's kind of something that runs in my family."

"My mom, growing up, taught me to draw, so it's kind of something we all

do together as a family. It's always been a really big part of my life," Agarwal adds.

Art was one of many constants in Agarwal's life. She recalls her childhood in New Jersey, where she was born and raised before moving to Fremont less than two years ago.

"I [had been] living in the same house in New Jersey for 15 years, so a lot of my friends, I had known since elementary school or before. We also had a lot of family there. It was hard for me to say goodbye to some people and definitely a lot of the activities that I was involved with [in] school that I couldn't carry over here," Agarwal shares.

Yet as initially difficult as this move was, Agarwal views it as a positive event. "I think at that point, I was kind of ready for a bit of change in my life. I definitely feel like I've become a more open person after moving to California. It's changed my perspective on how willing I am to put myself out there and express myself."

Naturally, this has had a great impact on her art as well. "My first year at American was the year that everyone was online... Being new anywhere, it's kind of difficult the first year to make friends, so I was lonely a lot," Agarwal divulges. "It was hard to communicate or express myself verbally, because I didn't [exactly] have people to talk to regularly. So instead, I kind of channeled that energy [and] what I wanted to express about myself into the art that I was creating."

Agarwal's cousin, Aanya Agarwal, witnessed this firsthand last year. "She was constantly making cards and other [crafts] for birthdays and events," Aanya reflects. "Even during online school, I'd walk into her room and she'd be drawing while paying attention to the lecture. She was constantly doing something artistic."

In the summer of 2021, Agarwal stumbled across a fateful Instagram account, which changed the trajectory of what was



Agarwal's art has come to incorporate her own passion for activism and social justice. In this piece, she has included women of various backgrounds surrounding a closed fist to represent the wider cause of intersectional feminism.

then still mostly a hobby.

"She was a perfect candidate," says Agarwal's manager, Triana Patel. "I remember in her application and interview [for the program], she said, 'This is the perfect internship for me; it brings all of the things that I find important in my life together, and I really hope I get it.'"

"With her internship at the Asian Art Museum, she's working on incorporating her culture and nationality more into her art now," Aanya says. "In her room, she has a ton of drawings and paintings of South Asian women, and I think that's just one example of how her art has changed as a result [of ArtSpeak]."

Agarwal's current project centers on a piece that

centers on women's rights and equality, which is inspired by a sculpture featured in the Asian Art Museum. This is a task that requires deep and intensive research into the sculpture's artistry, historical context, and cultural significance. As part of her research, Agarwal created a zine that consolidated all that she had learned, to make the original sculpture more comprehensible to museum-goers.

"Social justice is a big passion of mine," Agarwal says. "I'm lucky to have such a great platform at ArtSpeak, it's allowed me to speak out through art, which I think does more talking for me than any amount of words could."



"Preisha chose a statue from the museum that really spoke to her. She [spent] all this time researching it. And then she created a zine that teaches people how she learned about it... where you can go for information, what she learned about it, the symbolism, the material, the technique, what the statues were used for," said Triana Patel. This is just one zine that Agarwal has made over the course of her time at the internship.

