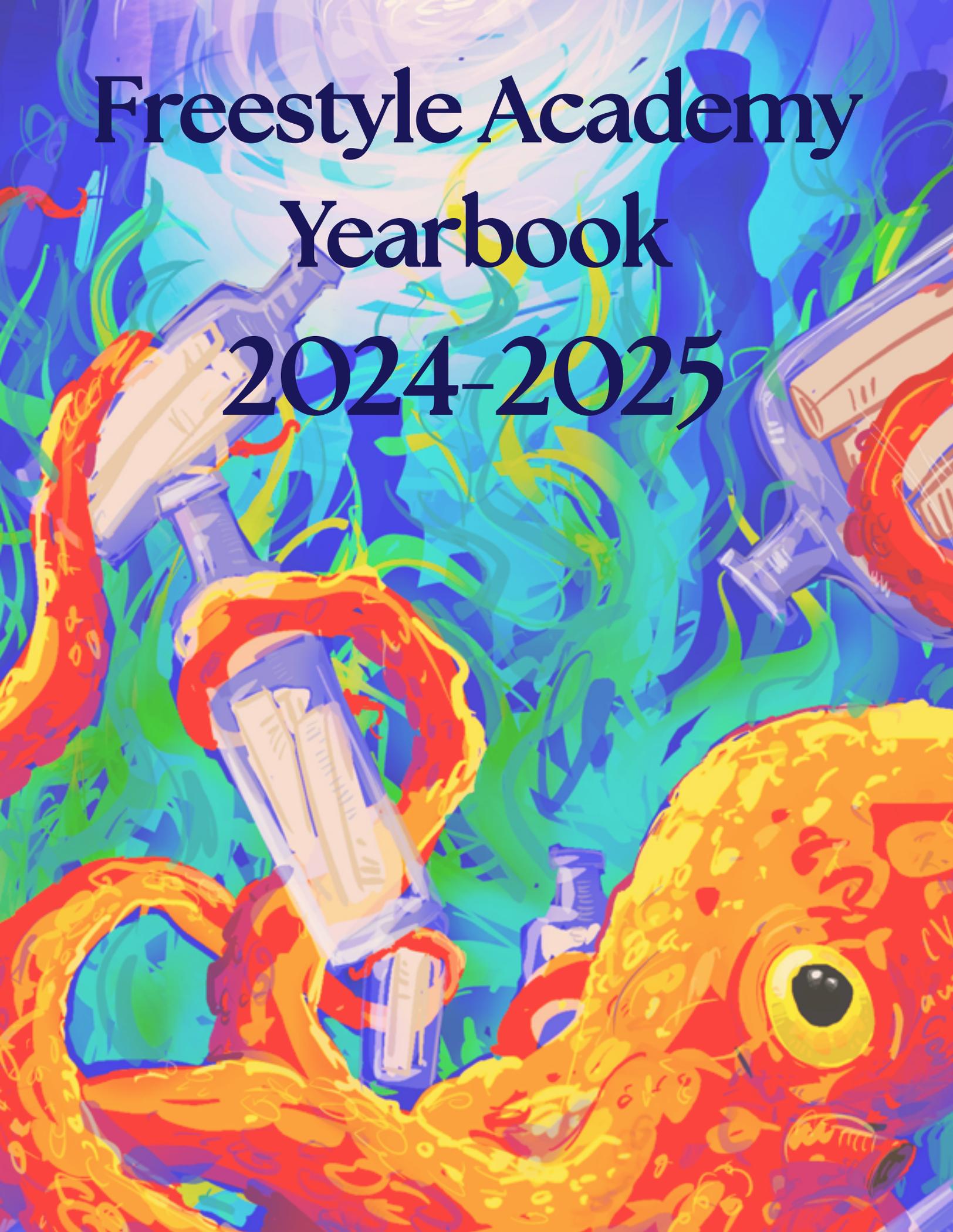


# Freestyle Academy Yearbook 2024-2025



This book is dedicated to all the Freestyle Academy students and staff-past, present, and future. Whether we've met or not, each of you has contributed to my personal growth in a special way...

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## Before we go on...

This book was written by me (Nadine Sheridan) so if it seems like there is bias towards pm/animation students, my bad... I intended to make this book as unbiased as possible, but I might have done some stuff unconsciously. Everything I wrote should be written in this font, so if you didn't submit your form, look out for this font...

# First Day!

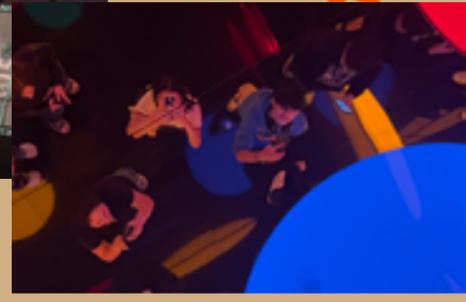


There's something uniquely magical about the first day at Freestyle. Sure, the first day of school is always memorable—but here, it's more than that. It might be the thrill of seeing the rainbow of iMacs in the Digital Media room for the first time, or the joy of reuniting with friends after a long summer apart. We kicked things off in the Film room with a warm introduction to what Freestyle is all about. From there, returning students led campus tours for the newcomers, making sure to capture a quick photo along the way. And, as tradition calls for, we wrapped up the day the sweetest way we know how: with an ice cream social.



# MOMA

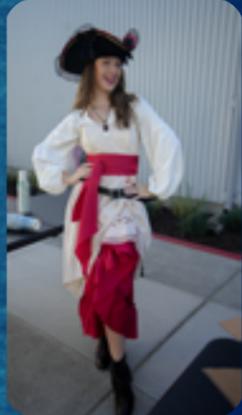
Early in the school year, all Freestyle students—seniors and juniors, AM and PM took a field trip to the MoMA art museum. Held on the first Friday of school this year, the outing wasn't just for fun (though there was definitely plenty of that). It was a chance to spark creativity and draw inspiration from some of the greatest modern artists. Whether students were sketching, snapping photos, or simply soaking it all in, the museum visit set the tone for a year of artistic exploration.



# Halloween

Who doesn't love a good party during spooky season? At Freestyle, Halloween is always a celebration—and this year was no exception. The campus came alive with a colorful mix of costumes: some silly, some spooky, and everything in between. Each outfit was a glimpse into the personality of the student wearing it, making the day as creative as it was fun. Between the laughter, costume contests, and photo ops, there was no

shortage of sweet treats—enough to keep the tricks at bay.



and the teachers dress up too...



# Hoco

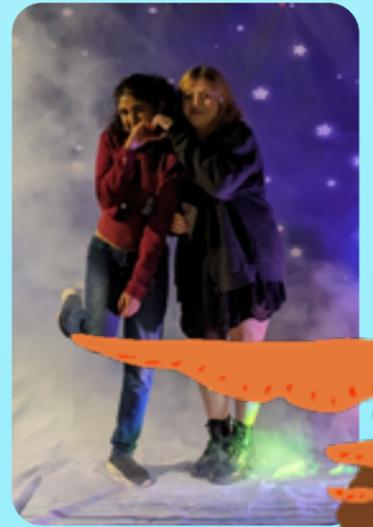
This year's fall-themed Homecoming was an absolute hit. The campus transformed into a cozy celebration space, with board games buzzing in the English room, pumpkin painting in full swing nearby, and a long buffet table offering warm drinks and fresh pies for everyone to enjoy. Smiles lit up every corner of the event.

A surprise highlight? The Jake Paul vs. Mike Tyson fight, live-streamed in the Film room, which drew a lively crowd and added to the night's excitement. Between belting out karaoke tunes and striking poses in the photo booth, students made memories they won't soon forget.



A special thanks to our homecoming planning team:

- Kaylee
- Nadine
- Angel M
- Ash
- Deepa
- Elai
- Isaiah



# Conceptual

In the Conceptual Project, Juniors explore abstract thinking and creative risk-taking by expressing themselves through unconventional forms like poetry, art, music, film, and web design. They also build technical communication skills using professional tools such as DSLR cameras, Wacom tablets, Adobe Creative Suite, Pro Tools, WordPress, and Google Apps.

## Art Reflection Video



Lam, Sophie. SF MOMA Art Reflection Video.

Each year, Freestyle Academy visits SFMOMA to reflect on awe-inspiring art. Students write about a piece that moves them, then use Adobe Audition and Premiere Pro to create voiceover videos, exploring awe through storytelling, sound design, and visual editing.

## Conceptual Web Page



Scan the QR code!

Juniors created their first project websites using WordPress, showcasing Conceptual work from English, Digital Media, and their elective—Animation, Design, or Film. This project introduced students to web design as a platform for presenting multimedia work in a cohesive, professional format.

## Experimental Film



Kershaw Estelle. *Luctus*.

This project introduces Junior Film students to experimental filmmaking by combining images, sound, text, voiceover, and music. Avoiding traditional storytelling, students explore personal themes and creative expression through unconventional, non-narrative techniques.

## Zoetrope



Clark, Jack. Zoetrope.

Junior Animation students studied traditional 2D animation styles and principles of animation to produce various kinds of frame by frame animations featured in this gallery: Zoetropes, Phenakistoscope Wheels, Praxinoscope, Stop Motion Paper Cut Outs, Stop Motion Objects.

## Paper Stop Motion

This stop motion project uses paper cutouts to create animated scenes frame by frame, allowing students to explore storytelling through movement, texture, and hands-on creativity.



Lee, Vee. Paper Animation.

## Name Photo

Design Juniors used DSLR cameras to capture naturally occurring, letter-shaped forms in their environment to spell their names. Without staging or creating the letters, students refined their photography and composition skills, then edited the images in Photoshop—combining technical learning with creative visual exploration.



Jeng, Mailie. Name Photo.

## Conceptual Photography

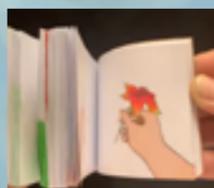
For their first Design project, Juniors received a juxtaposed statement—such as “the joy of being alone in the dark”—and selected two metaphorical objects to represent each idea. Using DSLR cameras, they crafted thoughtful photo narratives, avoiding clichés and focusing on visual storytelling through symbolism and composition.



Polika-Engle, Griffin. *Hostility When Viewing an Eclipse*.

## Flipbook

This 2D paper animation flipbook showcases frame-by-frame storytelling, where students bring drawings to life through traditional hand-drawn animation techniques, emphasizing motion, timing, and creativity.



Colace, Nicola. *Kauri and the Flower*.

## Phenakistoscope

Animation Seniors began the year learning how to create 3D models in Maya, ZBrush, and Substance Painter. These 3D Renders include a range of various kinds of 3D assets - buildings, tables, table accessories, environments, and custom designed weapons.



Driesen, Athena. Phenakistoscope.

# Reflections

The Reflections Project invites Seniors to explore the question “Who am I?” through personal essays, then express their insights visually through video essays, websites, mandalas, and animations—while building technical skills using professional tools like Adobe Creative Suite, Maya, ZBrush, and web development platforms.

## Core Values Animation



Delgo, Mia. SF MOMA Art Reflection Video.

As part of answering the question of the unit - “Who am I?”, Digital Media Seniors were challenged to learn and use preset text animations in After Effects for their 7+ Core Values in life. Design elements include using color, font-style, and animation to uniquely convey each Core Value.

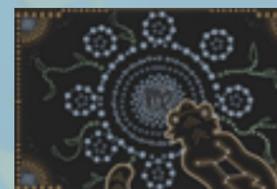
## Reflections Video Essay



Leal, Felipe. Reflections Video Essay

Senior Film students kicked off the year by exploring the question “Who am I?” through personal essays and video essays, blending storytelling and filmmaking to reflect on their identity and reconnect with the creative process.

## Aboriginal Art



Montiel, Angel. *Into the Clearing*.

Through this project students explored Aboriginal Dreamtime stories and created personal origin artworks in Photoshop using traditional dot, line, and symbol techniques. They focused on implied line, repetition, and muted colors to reflect ancient Aboriginal painting styles.

## 3D Assets

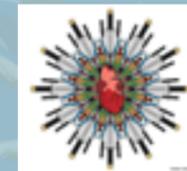


Husky, Lillian. Table.

Animation Seniors began the year learning how to create 3D models in Maya, ZBrush, and Substance Painter. These 3D Renders include a range of various kinds of 3D assets - buildings, tables, table accessories, environments, and custom designed weapons.

## Mandala

To explore the question “Who am I?”, Seniors designed Personal Mandalas using Illustrator techniques like custom brushes, reflections, and clipping masks. Their black-and-white mandalas were laser-engraved on materials of their choice, while colored versions and process videos further expressed personal identity and artistic style.



Cedar, Stella. *On Knife-Edge*.

## Reflections Web Page

These Reflections Webpages features all Reflections related projects from English, Digital Media and their elective class: Animation, Design, or Film.



Scan the qr code!

## Cursive Name

Students were challenged to write their name in Photoshop using the Symmetry tool. The Symmetry tool mirrored the writing on a horizontal axis. They were required to use cursive which was quite a challenge for them since most of them don't know how to write in cursive. The resulting images were then printed on watercolor paper and students used watercolor paint to symmetrically fill in the various spaces. The resulting art is displayed vertically with the upper case letter on the bottom.



Vazquez-Mendoza, Gloria. Cursive Name.

## PSA

The PSA (Public Service Announcement) assignment challenged students to investigate a socially relevant platform with which to base a poster meant to encourage social change, to raise awareness and change public attitudes, opinions, or even behavior towards an issue. These messages can be instructional or inspirational to elicit emotion and action. Students used Adobe Illustrator for their creations.



Rhoadarmer, Kayla. *You Drink What You Throw*.

# Narrative 1

The narrative unit works to ask the question "How well can you tell a story?"

## Short Story



Liang, Jerry. *The Night Before Prom.*

Juniors wrote short stories, then brought them to life as audio productions using Pro Tools, adding music and sound effects. Each student also created a unique album cover in Illustrator

## Illustrator Project



Cho, Elanie. *Cranes.*

Digital Media juniors enhanced their illustration skills by creating projects like stickers, apparel, patches, and laser-cut art using Adobe Illustrator, die cutters, heat presses, lasers, and embroidery machines.

## Experimental Music



Qizilbash, Landon. *Experimental Music.*

Digital Media juniors explored MIDI music composition in Pro Tools, creating short pieces or interstitials using virtual instruments like Mini Grand, DB-33, Vacuum, Boom, and Xpand.

## 2D Narrative Animation



Chan, Joshua, et al. *The Flight of Calypso.*

In their Project 2 Visual Narrative Unit, juniors created animations based on original English stories, using Adobe Animate, Illustrator, and Wacom Cintiqs. Audio was edited in Pro Tools and/or Adobe Audition.

## Exquisite Corpse Illustration



Barnett, Hannah, et al. *Exquisite Corpse.*

In groups, juniors used Adobe Illustrator to create Exquisite Corpse drawings—each student illustrating a section without seeing the others' work

## Character Bio

In Animation, students developed original characters with backstories, then visualized them using T-poses and personality poses, applying color theory and shape language to reflect each character's traits.



Lam, Cade, Finnegan Hughman.

## Parody Song

To learn layered audio editing, students rewrote song lyrics, found karaoke tracks, and recorded their own vocals. They mixed everything using Adobe Audition to create unique musical remixes.



## Narrative 1 Website

Juniors learned HTML and CSS to customize WordPress themes, creating section banners for Narrative 1 webpages that showcase their English, Digital Media, and elective projects in Animation, Design, or Film.



## Narrative Creature

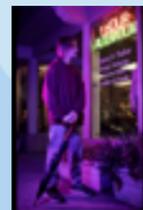
Students designed creatures based on their story characters by combining traits from three animals. They illustrated these hybrids and their environments using vanishing points and Adobe Illustrator.



Custodio, Anna. *Geckeybe Parctoctopus.*

## Narrative Portrait

Design juniors brought their English story characters to life by photographing classmates as models using studio lighting, props, and backdrops, then enhancing the portraits with Photoshop editing and lighting techniques.



Bousse, Maarten. *Alexis.*

## Narrative Film

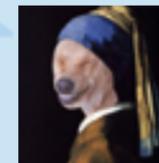
Film students wrote short screenplays based on their English stories, then filmed in pairs—learning camera, lighting, and sound techniques. They edited their final narrative projects using Premiere Pro.



Fuller, J. & Leung, K. *Furry Friend.*

# NARRATIVE 2

## Funny Compostions



Reall, Jane. *Funny Composition*

Seniors in Digital Media used advanced Photoshop compositing techniques to create humorous image compositions, showcasing their skills in visual storytelling.

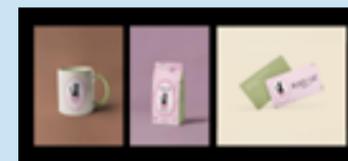
## Surreal Compostion



Cheng, Weiyi. *The Future With No Hope.*

Seniors wrote original world stories in English, then adapted them into screenplays for films, animations, and more. In Digital Media, they used advanced Photoshop techniques to create surreal images representing their imaginary worlds.

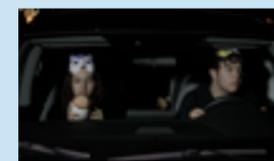
## Product Logo and Label



Patron, Lucy. *Midnight Coffee Co.*

Design seniors created a logo, label, and magazine ad for a consumer product, using marketing research on color, font, and placement. The final project was compiled into a triptych in Photoshop.

## Senior Narrative Film



Kostka, James, et. al. *Narrative Film*

Senior Film students advanced their cinematography and lighting skills with Canon DSLRs, creating ten-minute screenplays based on original English stories. They storyboarded, filmed, and edited using Premiere Pro and After Effects, with some creating trailers.

## Movie Poster



Berry, Rachel. *The Highest Bid*

Students enhanced their storytelling by experimenting with narrative perspectives and dialogue, creating movie posters and book jackets for fictitious projects. They also mastered studio strobe photography, Photoshop, and Illustrator for professional-level design.

## Narrative 2 Website



The Senior Narrative 2 Webpages showcase all senior projects from English, Digital Media, and their electives: Animation, Design, or Film.

## Music Recording

In May 2023, the new campus featured a state-of-the-art music studio. Seniors in Digital Media invited local musicians to record, then mixed and mastered their tracks in Pro Tools, showcasing the project on linked websites in this gallery.



Vishwa, Dhriti. *Buy Buy Buy!*

## Worldbuilding

Seniors created fictional worlds with original characters facing various conflicts. They developed a 3-5 page film-style treatment and pitch presentation, incorporating real-world research to enhance the themes and conflicts relatable to their audience.



Hoffer, Kajsa, et. al. *How to Kill an Angel*

## Book Jacket

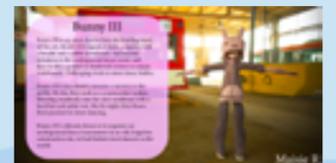
Students explored narrative perspectives and dialogue in their writing, applying advanced techniques to create movie posters and book jackets.



Chen, Sylvia. *Paradox VI Book Cover*

## 3D Character

Senior Animation students created 3D models using Maya, ZBrush, and Substance Painter to bring their designs to life.



Rennie, Maisie. *Bunny III*

## 3D Narrative Animation

Senior Animation students collaborated to write and animate their story, using 3D models in Maya to bring it to life.



Rodriguez, Angel, et. al. *Boo-quet*

## 3D Layered Art & Video

Seniors in Digital Media created 3D layered art using 2D stacks for projects like concept rings, light boxes, and stacked wood art. They used Illustrator for design, laser-cut materials, and documented the assembly process. In After Effects, they animated the 2D art in 3D space with virtual lighting and cameras.

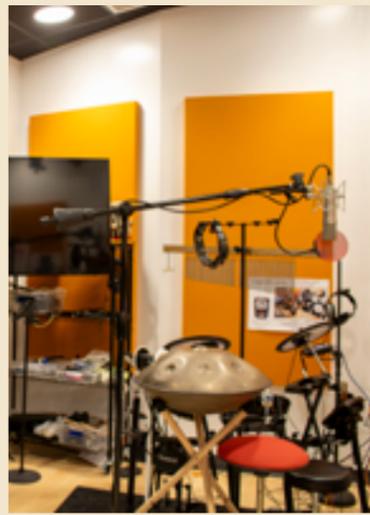


Dillon, Ash. *Paradox of Humanity*

# Around The Campus



## Recording Studio



Freestyle's recording studio is a fully equipped, professional-grade space where creativity and technology come together. It's been used for everything from serious student productions to spontaneous jam sessions, making it both a high-performance workspace and a community hangout spot. The studio features top-tier gear including Ableton Live with Push 2 controllers, Avid Pro Tools Ultimate, and a full suite of Avid control surfaces like the S1 and Dock. Students have access to a range of premium microphones, including Neumann U87s and TLM 103s, Shure SM57s and SM58s, and AKG C414s, along with drum, vocal, and instrument mics to suit any recording need. The space includes a Yamaha upright acoustic/digital piano, a Roland digital stage piano, full drum kits, electric and acoustic guitars, basses, handpans, tablas, and more—backed by professional amps, mixers, and monitors from Genelec, JBL, and Yamaha. With mixing tools like the Livemix system and monitoring options like Sennheiser headphones and Avantree wireless systems, students can collaborate

seamlessly. Whether producing music, podcasts, or sound design for films and animations, Freestyle's recording studio gives students the tools and environment to turn their creative visions into polished, professional audio projects. Now for some reviews:

"The recording studio is insane. The instruments they have in there are beautiful and really high-end. If I was into music production, that place would be my DREAM."



"I thought the photo and recording studios were very high tech and impressive. It made me wish I was better at music seeing all of the equipment"

"I liked listening to my friends play different instruments in the recording studio!"

"The recording studio is amazing, all the technology is set up for a really good and professional experience!"

"The music recording studio is the best part of freestyle is totally underrated and underused"



## Photo Studio



Freestyle's photo studio is a fully outfitted, professional-grade space built for both photography and film production. It features green, black, and white backdrops, making it perfect for everything from portrait photography to green screen video shoots. The green screen setup allows students to film scenes and composite backgrounds in post-production, adding a cinematic edge to their projects. The studio also includes four stop-motion booths for animation work, along with a wide range of tripods and professional lighting equipment with adjustable diffusion, giving students full control over their creative environment. Whether you're

capturing still images, shooting video, or experimenting with animation, the photo studio offers the tools and flexibility to bring your ideas to life. Some words from your peers:

"I like the huge green screen"

"Smells bad looks great"

"Low-key broke my back trying to get the shots for my stop motion animation walk cycle, but still cool anyways"



## Bathroom

Out of all the amenities schools offer, none is more heavily used than the bathroom. This 4 stalled, 2 sinked, attraction is loved by many here at Freestyle Academy. Though sometimes misused for 15 minute long breaks, the bathroom has received much praise by the people here a freestyle, saying praise like:

"10/10. It's a really nice place to just sit and think"

"Ahh yes, bathroom review. Very spacious, good sinks, but for some reason it's locked every so often."

"Because the students are mature enough to not destroy the bathrooms, they are intact which is sadly a very positive factor."

"Love the bathroom, glad they took away the 'big brother watching you' sign cause it low key scared me"

"Those bathrooms are probably the best ones in the whole district. The one at LAHS, especially the boys, is always disgusting; the ones here are always clean, and the doors actually go to the floor and don't have the dumb gaps. The only other one that goes all the way down is one at LAHS, but they are very narrow and long, which is weird"

"Free tampons. Hell yeah."



# What Lies Ahead

## Documentary

Right now, the juniors are in the middle of working on their Documentary Project. For this unit, all of us in Junior Freestyle were challenged to find a person or place in our local community with a unique or powerful story to tell, and to explore the question: “How do you authentically portray the untold stories of your community?” Throughout the project, we focused on doing solid research, telling stories truthfully, and building strong arguments across all our classes. In English, we interviewed our documentary subjects and used those conversations—along with outside research—to write a Research Paper. In Design, we took photos, collected images, and combined our interviews, research, and quotes into a Photo Documentary Article or Book using tools like Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator. In Digital Media, we edited together audio interviews, narration, music, and sound effects to create an engaging Introduction Video. We also used HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to design a Documentary Website that showcased everything we made. In Film, we used Adobe Premiere Pro to create a full Documentary Film about our topic, and in Animation, we brought our stories to life with Animated Documentaries made in Adobe After Effects. This project pushed us to think deeply, create across multiple mediums, and connect with the real stories happening all around us.

## Explorations

After wrapping up the Documentary Project, the juniors moved on to their Explorations Project. For this unit, each of us got the chance to dive into a personal passion and develop a specific skill within our elective class—Animation, Design, or Film—while focusing on 21st Century Skills like creativity, communication, and self-direction. We shared what we created with our classmates as our Semester 2 Final. In English, we experimented with lyrical essays, blending poetry, storytelling, and research to express our ideas in a unique and creative way. In Digital Media, we learned how to mix and produce music to complement our projects. All of our Explorations work is featured on the websites linked in this gallery, showcasing the wide range of skills and passions across the Junior class.

## Humor

Right now, the seniors are diving into their Humor Project while reading *Slaughterhouse-Five* in English. We’ve been exploring how humor works not just to entertain, but also to sell products and make powerful points about important issues. In class, we’ve looked at comedy through all kinds of mediums—classic literature, sketch comedy, stand-up, print ads, TV commercials, political cartoons, speeches, and even songs. Along the way, we’ve learned how verbal, written, and visual comedic techniques can be used to grab attention and deliver a message. We’ve also taken part in collaborative processes like improv and writer’s room-style brainstorming to come up with ideas for our own humor productions. This project has challenged us to think critically and creatively while still having fun with the material.

## Zenith

The Zenith Project is the grand finale of the Freestyle experience—a chance for seniors to ignite their passions and push their skills to the highest level by creating the ultimate project in their elective class. Whether in Animation, Design, or Film, each senior chose their own focus, with guidance and approval from their elective teacher. From March to May, we planned our own timelines and took full creative control to bring our visions to life. The challenge was simple but powerful: “How do you ignite your passion and elevate your skills and experiences to create your ultimate and most successful Freestyle project?” The result was a wide range of personal, skill-driven productions that reflect everything we’ve learned. Some students created videos focused on special effects in After Effects, while others took different creative directions—but all of us documented our process and final work on individual webpages. In May, we came together with Juniors and Freestyle staff to celebrate each senior’s journey and final creation. The projects featured in this gallery represent the heart of what Zenith is all about.

# MR. FLO

## THE BIRTH OF FREESTYLE

"I have two children. One is called Mia—she was born in 2006. The other is called Freestyle Academy—it was also born in 2006."

This quote was the first thing Mr. Flo said in my interview with him and it perfectly captures his deep connection to Freestyle Academy, a school that combines art, technology, and storytelling into a unique creative education experience. Before he became one of the founding teachers of this innovative program, Mr. Flo was teaching physics at Los Altos High School. It may seem unusual for a physics teacher to help lead a creative arts program, but he had a knack for turning complex physics concepts into something students could grasp and even enjoy. His passion and unique approach caught the attention of the Los Altos High School principal, who was assembling a team for the brand-new Freestyle Academy. The principal saw something different in Mr. Flo—something visionary. So, Mr. Flo was invited to an interview. He got the job, and the rest is history. Since then, he's been shaping creative minds and blending each of their unique traits, personalities and art in a way only he can.

## TAKEAWAYS OF TONGA

Of all his adventures, Mr. Flo often speaks most fondly about his time in the Kingdom of Tonga. He was there as part of the Peace Corps, working and living in rural communities where he was immersed in a very different way of life. One moment, in particular, stuck with him: he was planting yams and began digging a hole the way he thought

was best. But before he could finish, he was stopped and gently corrected by locals who had

grown up with this knowledge, planting in ways shaped by generations of experience. That small moment turned into a lifelong lesson—one about humility, listening, and learning before acting. Instead of assuming he knew best, Mr. Flo realized the value of slowing down, observing, and respecting others' expertise. It's a philosophy he's carried into his work at Freestyle, encouraging students to honor process, culture, and collaboration before rushing toward their own ideas.

## MUSIC AND MACHINERY

Mr. Flo may not be a professional musician but his passion for sound and experimentation is obvious. He dabbles in almost all of the instruments in the recording studio, though some instruments challenge him more than others, it only makes him respect musicians who can play those instruments more. As of now, he's picked up a few tips from fellow teacher Mr. Cho about the guitar, our resident guitar expert. As much as Mr. Flo is a master at playing a range of different instruments, his strength lies in being able to guide students in music recording and creation, help troubleshoot technical issues, and open new doors for them.

## A SWORDSMAN AND A MENTOR

While studying at UC Santa Cruz, Mr. Flo joined the fencing team. There, he trained under a



former Olympic fencing coach, a man who wasn't just focused on athletic form, but on developing character and wisdom. Training sessions often paused for conversations about life's deeper questions: "What is love?" "What is time?" This balance of discipline and introspection inspired Mr. Flo deeply. It shaped how he views teaching—not just as delivering content, but as guiding young people through their own philosophical and creative journeys. That fencing coach became one of Mr. Flo's most influential mentors, reminding him that rest, curiosity, and reflection are just as important as working hard.

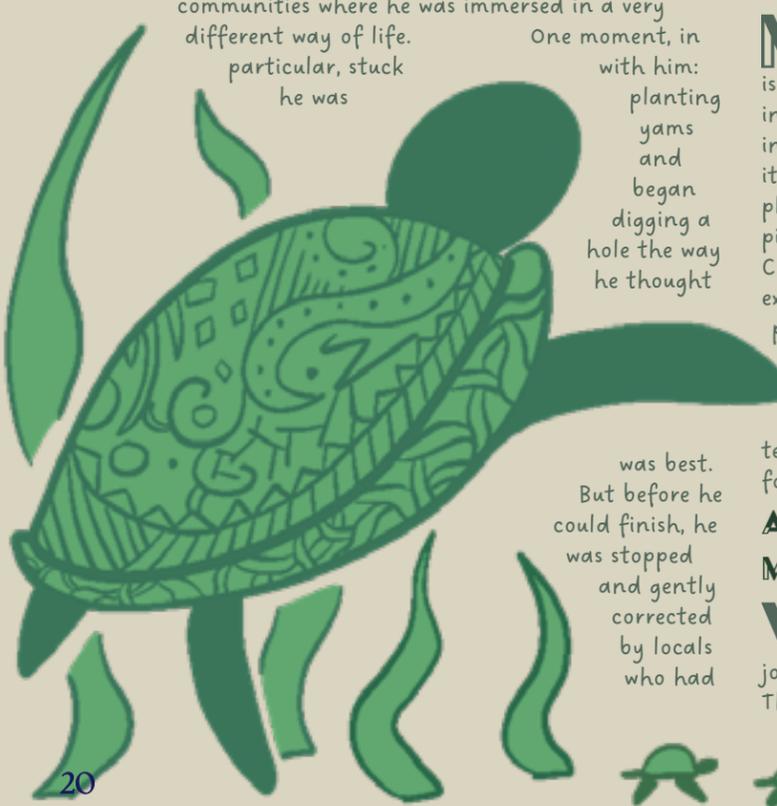
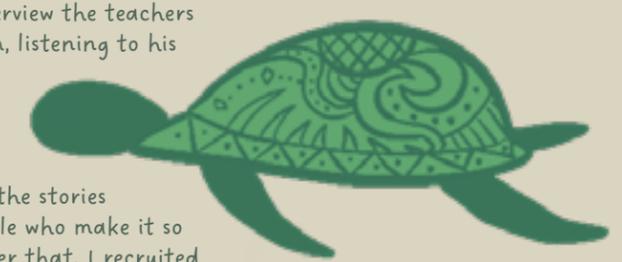
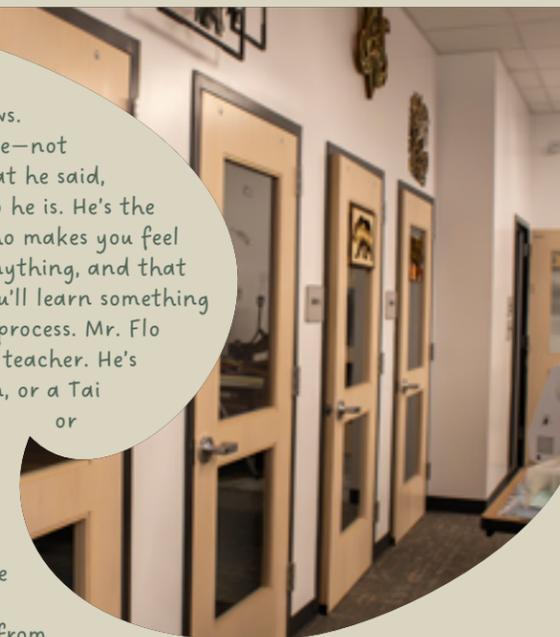
## SLOWING DOWN THE FLO

As years passed and soccer became more physically demanding, Mr. Flo found himself drawn to something slower, quieter, and just as powerful—Tai Chi. He discovered a studio and began taking lessons, falling in love with the calm and control the practice offered. Now, between Design Media and English classes at Freestyle, students can often find Mr. Flo leading a short Tai Chi session. It's a time to breathe, to ground oneself, and to transition mindfully between the technical and creative halves of their day. One of his most treasured memories is of a graduating class that surprised him by requesting one last Tai Chi session together on the day of their graduation. It was a small, serene moment that captured the deep connection he shares with his students.

## NADINE'S NOTES

Reflecting on this interview, I can confidently say that Mr. Flo was the perfect person to start with. I was nervous—I didn't know if I had the confidence to interview the teachers of Freestyle by myself. But talking with him, listening to his stories, and seeing how open and genuine he was made something click in me. I left thinking, "I have to do this." Not just for me, but for the whole Freestyle community, to capture the stories of the people who make it so special. After that, I recruited

a few friends to help with more interviews. Mr. Flo set the tone—not just because of what he said, but because of who he is. He's the kind of teacher who makes you feel like you can try anything, and that even if you fail, you'll learn something valuable from the process. Mr. Flo isn't just a physics teacher. He's not just a musician, or a Tai Chi instructor, or a former Peace Corps volunteer. He's someone who lives with intention—someone who believes in the power of learning from others, trying new things, and staying curious. Most importantly, he believes in his students. He gives them room to grow, room to fail, and room to create. Freestyle Academy wouldn't be the same without him—and honestly, neither would I.



# Mr. Greco

## The Journey Back to the Beginning

Long before Mr. Greco became a teacher at freestyle, he was a student at Los Altos High School, where he took a film analysis class, lead by Susanne Kiefer — a name some might recognize as the very first film teacher at the school. Originally he had headed toward a degree in economics, but those classes couldn't quite bring joy to his heart so he decided to switch his major to film and literature studies instead. After his undergraduate studies, Mr. Greco earned his master's degree at Cal Poly and taught at Nipomo High School, where he met another pivotal person in his life: Ms. P. However, the 2007 financial crisis forced Ms. P to leave the area — a hard moment for both of them. But, as fate would have it, a few years later, she reached out to Mr. Greco with an unexpected offer: a call to come back to his hometown and teach at Freestyle. Mr. Greco didn't hesitate. "I just knew it was the right place for me," he said.

## A Freestyle Father

In recent years, Mr. Greco's life has transformed in ways even more profound than curriculum planning. He's now the proud father of two young children: Theo and Holland.

parent, especially to two energetic little ones, means life is busy down to the minute and nothing ever goes according to plan. Mr. Greco wakes up at 4:30 a.m. most days — not because he wants to, but because he has to. "It's the only time I can get a head start before the chaos begins," he laughs. Mornings involve changing diapers, dressing tiny humans, packing lunches, and adapting on the fly when things inevitably go sideways. "Their flow is irregular — like Slaughterhouse-Five," he joked. All of this happens before he even steps onto campus. Freestyle is a unique environment that gives teachers incredible creative freedom, but it also means the work never truly ends, a double edged sword. He often runs on just five hours of sleep, yet still shows up each day ready to listen, engage, and challenge his students.

## Literary Loves

When asked about his favorite books, Mr. Greco's answer isn't fixed, that it evolves with time, mood, and personal growth. Right now, he's deeply inspired by the works of George Saunders, author of Lincoln in the Bardo and Tenth of December. Saunders' unique blend of emotional intelligence, surreal humor, and human vulnerability speaks to Mr. Greco on a personal level. "I've often thought about what I want to be when I grow up," he says with a smile. "I laugh, because I'm almost 44. But I still feel like I can grow up and become someone greater." That idea — that there's always room to grow — is something he finds in Saunders' writing. Currently, he's reading Saunders' Substack, a collection of essays and short stories that reflect on everything from writing to the human condition. For Mr. Greco, reading isn't just about stories — it's about connecting to ideas, to other people, and to himself.

## Nadine's Notes

As someone who's had Mr. Greco as a teacher for two years, I've come to see how deeply he invests in every aspect of his students' growth. Whether we're discussing personal essays, meditating as a class, or diving into literary analysis, Mr. Greco brings a sense of presence. He doesn't just teach, he listens. He remembers the little things students say in passing. He values every opinion in the room, making space for voices that might otherwise go unheard. English with Mr. Greco isn't just about grammar and essays; it's about life, perspective, and finding the courage to express your truth. Personally, I never expected to look forward to writing assignments or to enjoy mindfulness practices, but here I am. His classes are where I've had some of the most thought-provoking conversations.

During the interview Mr Greco presented his goal as a "You don't always remember what a teacher actually teaches you in terms of content, but you'll remember how a teacher made you feel" and I can say with absolute certainty, that I will remember how Mr. Greco made me feel — seen, heard, and loved.



Mr. Greco owns two cats, Moxie and Saturn. He got them during the pandemic, and Saturn tends to be more of his wife's cat and Moxie more of his.



# Mr. Taylor

## I Know a Guy

When long-time film teacher Sue Kiefer had to step away mid-year for health reasons, Freestyle Academy found itself in a bind. Who could step in to guide a group of film students throughout the rest of the year? As it turned out, the solution came from a parent's recommendation – a suggestion that led to a major turning point for both the school and the teacher who would come to shape its film program. Mr. Taylor first came to campus during February break.

While the students were off, Mr. Taylor met with none other than Mr. Flo. It took just 30 seconds of watching Mr. Taylor's past work and a casual conversation before Mr. Flo was convinced: this guy needed to be at Freestyle. For a short time, a substitute teacher sat silently in the corner of the film room, while Mr. Taylor taught the class himself because he did not hold the right credentials. He began the process of earning his substitute teaching license, followed by a long-term credential. All the while, he worked tirelessly to prepare each class, sometimes staying up past 1:00 a.m. to develop lesson plans and review student projects. What kept him going during those long, exhausting nights? His students. Even the smallest gestures of support made a difference. A few Mountain View High School students who had known him from his previous job at Oak School stopped by during lunch just to cheer him on and it meant a lot to him. Eventually, his hard work paid off. Mr. Taylor was officially named the new film teacher at Freestyle Academy, stepping into a role he now clearly cherishes.

## Movie Nights

If you've ever attended a Freestyle movie night, then you've already experienced one of the most memorable traditions Mr. Taylor helped cultivate. It all started back in 2015, when a student really wanted to host a movie night.

With enthusiasm and popcorn in hand, the group gathered for the first-ever screening on May 22, 2015. The movie chosen by popular vote? *Blades of Glory*. After that experience, Mr. Taylor decided it might be better if he picked the films himself—giving him the chance to expose students to more refined and diverse cinema. He also remembered what it felt like to be a teenager on a Friday night—either out getting into trouble or sitting at home alone feeling like you were missing out. Movie nights became his way of offering a better option. In Mr. Taylor's words, "It's not so much about the movie... It's about giving students a chance to hang out with some fun people and a good community... where they feel like they belong." And that's what keeps the tradition alive. So if you haven't gone to a movie night yet... well, now's probably the time.



## Raccoon Toons

Peek behind Mr. Taylor's desk, and you'll spot a poster featuring a series of cartoon raccoons. These aren't just some random characters—they're part of Mr. Taylor's personal project: Raccoon Toons. Long before he was a film teacher, Mr. Taylor was a kid with a pencil. Like many of us with original characters (OCs), he started drawing raccoons in fourth grade, inspired by the storytelling legacy of Walt Disney and the iconic simplicity of characters like Mickey Mouse. The raccoons stuck with him over the years. People liked them, and so he kept drawing. What began as childhood sketches eventually became

short animated episodes. Even now, though his schedule is packed with teaching and planning, he still makes time to create new episodes—always prioritizing quality over quantity.

## Yoo-hoo Milk

To put it simply, Mr. Taylor loves chocolate milk, but there's more to the story. Traditional chocolate milk is dairy-based and perishable, which makes it impractical for someone who spends long hours in a classroom. Enter Yoo-hoo: a chocolate-flavored drink that isn't technically milk, making it shelf-stable and easy to stock.

## Nadine's Notes

Going into this interview, I'll be honest—I was nervous (he probably picked up on that). I'd heard plenty of jokes from film students about Mr. Taylor "threatening to make them cry" with tough critiques or intense lessons. But as soon as the conversation started, all of that fear vanished. As you probably know, I'm not a film student, and I haven't had much personal interaction with Mr. Taylor. But even from a distance, his presence is felt throughout Freestyle. I've heard about his lesson plans, his sense of humor, the cactus he keeps alive by the film room door. I've been to one movie night—where I saw *Godzilla Minus One*, a film I never would've picked on my own—and had an unexpectedly great time. I think that the fact that I can admire someone I've barely met shows just how great of a person Mr. Taylor is.



# FFB

Favorite Project

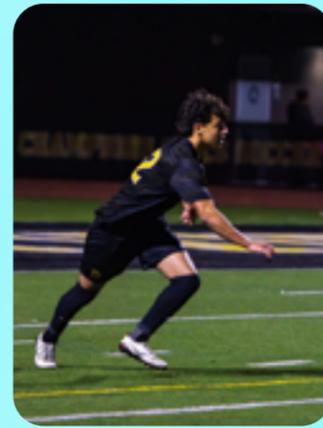
Narrative 1



Aidan Juliano

Favorite Project

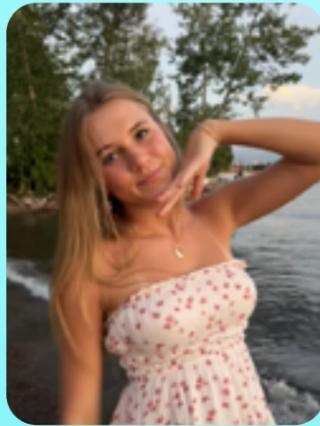
idk man



Carlos Buntz

Favorite Project

Documentary



Emma Beedon

Favorite Project

Narrative Film



Landon Qizilbash

Favorite Project

Narrative Film



Mia Staulo

Favorite Project

Illustrator Project



Stephen Messner

Favorite Project

Acting for a senior film



Darian Romero

Favorite Project

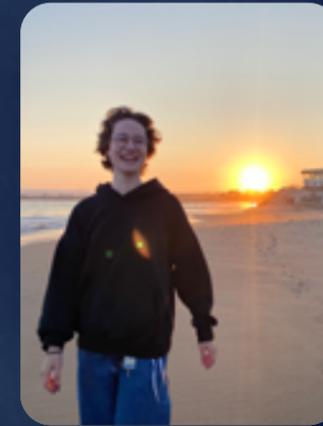
Documentary Film



Giselle Arellano Guerrero

Favorite Project

Narrative Film



Jordan Fuller

Favorite Project

Flash Fiction



Katie Leung

Favorite Project

Experimental Film



Estelle Kershaw

Favorite Project

I'll never know, so you'll never know



Mark Villanueva



## Ben Kipnis

### Favorite Project



idk man

### Favorite Media

I have know idea

How am i supposed to know?

"Some hobbies, and activities I partake in outside of school are water polo, exercising at the gym, rock climbing, playing guitar, and occasionally playing basetball"  
- Ben K



## Ben McDonald

### Favorite Project



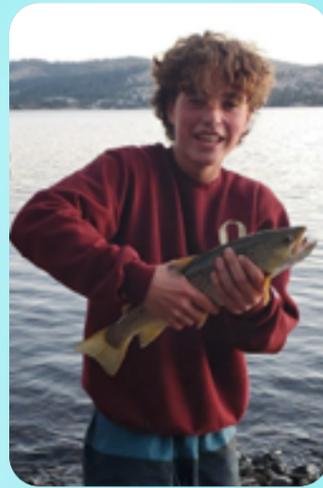
who knows?

### Favorite Media

Untitled

idk I didn't get a title

"My core values are Empathy, Integrity and Persistence"  
- Ben M



## Charlie Schwartz

### Favorite Project



Senior Narrative

### Favorite Creator

Steven Speilberg

I just have loved his movies growing up watching them and he inspires me to do my best in film.

"RIP Rivi"



## Jane Reall

### Favorite Project



Worldbuilding and Zenith

### Favorite Creator

Paris Cavanagh

She's an insane choreographer and storyteller and I just adore her creativity.

"There is a stubbornness about me that never can bear to be frightened at the will of others. My courage always rises at every attempt to intimidate me."  
- Pride and Prejudice



## Aahan Nariyawala

### Favorite Project



he's just too mysterious

### Favorite Media

something... probably...

There must be some reason...

"this is a website about me"  
- Aahan N



## Bradley Aquino

### Favorite Project



Junior Documentary

### Favorite Media

Invincible Goated Show

"I am marking it"



## Elai Tsur

### Favorite Project



ask later

### Favorite Media

rawr rawr rawr rawr rawr

"AHHHHHHHHHH"  
- Elai T



## Felipe Leal

### Favorite Project



tis a mystery

### Favorite Media

perhaps one day we'll know

he probably likes being mysterious

"I expect to keep up good grades and do more volunteering work this school year."  
- Felipe L

# Film



**Jaz Livnat**

**Favorite Project**



left on read...

**Favorite Media**  
gatekeeping  
the wifi was probably down

"I have been spending some time learning how to mix music and DJ practicing downtown on weekends when the clubs close in front of a taco stand"  
- Jaz Livnat



**Jessie Erb**

**Favorite Project**



404 not found

**Favorite Media**  
None. Probably just reads vibes.  
probably why they couldn't submit

"I also love watching movies, some of my favorites are: Paper Moon, Frances Ha, Fantastic Mr. Fox, and Almost Famous. And Gremlins."  
- Jessie E



**Julia Fung**

**Favorite Project**



still loading

**Favorite Media**  
we'll get it... eventually...  
any second now

"I've been told I seem quiet and put together, but once you get to know me that is immediately dismantled"  
- Julia F



**Julia Kipnis**

**Favorite Project**



Parody Song

**Favorite Creator**  
Jean-Michel Basquiat  
I love his style and the message behind his artwork.

"hey big brother"



**Gordon Schmidt**

**Favorite Project**



Mandala

**Favorite Band**  
Delights  
new album goes hard

"im literally better than you at Connect 4"



**Isaiah Reloba**

**Favorite Project**



Junior Narrative

"Live Laugh Love"

"Go"



**James Kostka**

**Favorite Project**



I ended up really liking the projects where you design then build something, so the bee ruler or fish ring art. If this question like requires one go with the bee ruler.

**Favorite Game**  
Elden Ring  
It is a difficult game, but still a game that wants you to win.

"Go"



**Nate Kelly**

**Favorite Project**



Jr Narrative Short Film

**Favorite Media**  
Game of Thrones  
This masterpiece cannot be put into words.

"Please join me on DM Zoom"

# Film



## Logan Nilotruong

Favorite Project

World-building



Favorite creator

MICO

He was part of a musical I really like, and I ended up in a rabbit hole of his solo music.

"Film is the best elective (the person I'm calling out knows who they are)"



## Mallory Berent

Favorite Project

quack

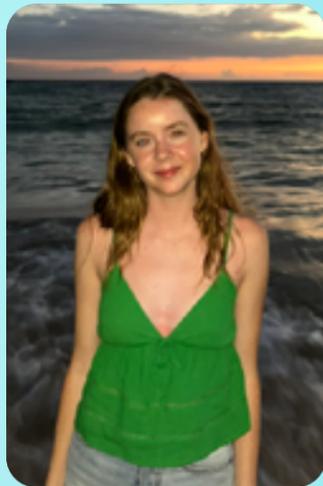


Favorite Media

quack quack



"Fun infuses my life and artwork with joy and creativity"  
- Mallory B



## Mary Kate Outten

Favorite Project

Documentary



Favorite movies

The Notebook, Juno, and Almost Famous!

I really like coming-of-age movies!

"There are so many beautiful reasons to be happy."



## Mia Delgo

Favorite Project

meow



Favorite Media

meow meow



"Music has been a huge part of my life since I was little and I could not live without it"  
- Mia D



## Ori Arel

Favorite Project

Film Greenscreen Project



Favorite Media

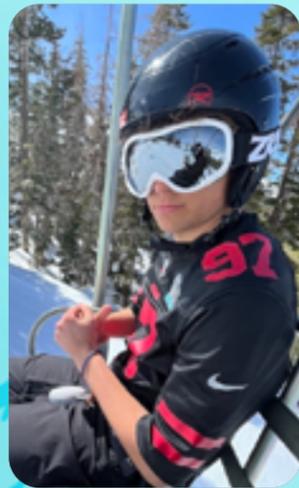
"Ethereal Gore" by EtherealExist

Each piece perfectly fits each other, with the different materials on the shoes making them feel almost alive.

"Photo Blogs <3"



# Film



Ryan Pacheco

Favorite Project   
Junior Narrative

Favorite creator

Martin Scorsese

I love his character development in his movies he's a master at diving deep into the psyche of his characters, especially in films like Taxi Driver, Raging Bull, and Goodfellas

"I did it my way"  
- Frank Sinatra



Roberto Artola

Favorite Project   
Music Recording Project

Favorite creator

Salvador Dali

He's chill

"Goated Bathrooms"



Thomas Villablanca

Favorite Project   
no comment

Favorite Media

classified taste

bro must have higher status than me

"I also am trying to learn new instruments, as well as practicing piano, as it is the instrument I have played the most."  
-Thomas V



Yannick Slimani

Favorite Project   
Zenith

Favorite Media

Madden/CFB

It's my biggest addiction and I play almost everyday.

"Best believe imma go out fly"

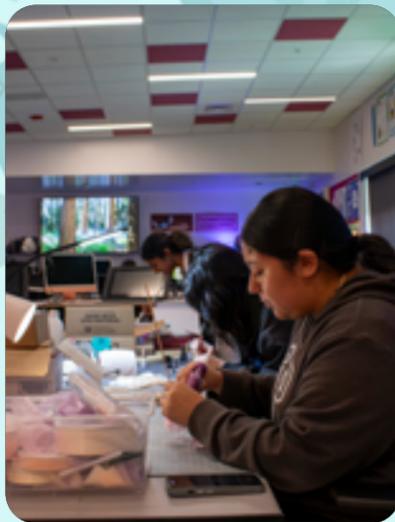


# Film

# Ms. P

## Her Story

The 2007 Great Recession hit hard across the country, and public schools weren't spared. In the midst of all the uncertainty, being an art teacher at Nipomo High School became more precarious than ever. Every year, the threat of budget cuts loomed, and for Ms. P, that meant living with the possibility of losing her job — again and again. She had already been “pink slipped” multiple times, a term used when a teacher is officially notified that their position might not be renewed the following year. It was nerve-racking, but somehow, each time, she was brought back. This year, the principal even reassured her she'd be safe. But then everything changed — the school brought in a new principal who didn't say a word to her. With no communication and no sense of security, her anxiety deepened. Was this it? Was this the year they wouldn't call her back? Then came a phone call from her dad. “Are you looking for jobs?” he asked. She lied. “Yes,” she told him — but the truth was, she hadn't started. That conversation was the push she needed. She opened her laptop and started searching for jobs that could be a better fit — places where creativity was valued, where she could grow as an educator and an artist. She scrolled through page after page of listings until she reached the very last page — page seven. There, tucked away, was a listing for Freestyle Academy. She knew immediately: This is it. But there was a catch. The application deadline was in just two days — not nearly enough time to collect letters of recommendation, transcripts, and all the



necessary paperwork. Most people might have given up. Ms. P didn't. She tracked down then-English teacher Mr. Jack Gordon and, with the urgency of someone who had found her dream job, told him: “You don't know me,” she admitted, “but this is my job. Don't hire anyone until you interview me.” Somehow,

against all odds, she got everything submitted. Then came the interview — and to Ms. P, it didn't go well. Her heart sank. She walked out feeling certain that she had blown it. Days passed, then her phone rang. And on the other end of the line was the call that changed her life. She got the job.



## Her Four “Husbands”

Over the years, Ms. P has become a legendary figure among Freestyle students — not just for her teaching but for her personality, humor, and unexpected quirks. One of the more beloved stories that circulated among students this year

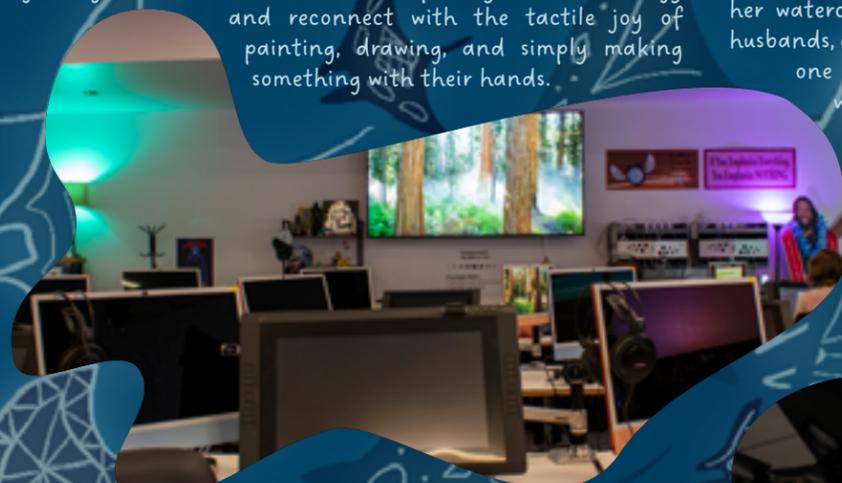
was the gift she received: a slightly-larger-than-life cardboard cutout of basketball player Klay Thompson. That might sound like a random joke gift — until you realize Klay is one of Ms. P's four “husbands.”

Here's the full list:

- **David Bowie:** Ms. P's first love. So influential to her, that she cut her hair to match him, despite her parents wishes. Bowie was a symbol of unapologetic individuality, an icon of self-expression who wore weird clothes. She loved that his looks embraced the unconventional. He showed her that there were people out there like her — creatives who didn't fit the mold and didn't want to.
- **Ángel Pagán:** The former San Francisco Giants outfielder caught Ms. P's eye not just for being, in her words, “drop dead gorgeous,” but also for his passion and energy on the field. There's something about the way he played that resonated with her.
- **Jason Momoa:** A no-brainer for a beach-loving, woman like Ms. P. But what really earned Jason a place on the list wasn't just his rugged good looks — it was his kindness. Ms. P sees him as the whole package: humble, down-to-earth, and genuinely real.
- **Klay Thompson:** Ms. P has a deep appreciation for people who defy expectations. And Klay, despite being an NBA star, does just that. Before games, instead of blasting music or getting hyped up with teammates, he quietly sits and reads a physical newspaper. That blend of focus, intelligence, and quiet cool? That's what made him her fourth “husband.”

## The Design Room

To someone passing by, the Freestyle Design room might look a little strange. It's often dimly lit, music humming in the background, glowing screens lining the walls, and students sprawled out across couches in deep discussion or lost in their projects. But there's a reason behind every detail. The space was designed — quite literally — to mirror a real professional studio. It's not just the technology that gives the room its magic, though the rows of Cintiq drawing tablets certainly help. What makes the space special is the atmosphere. There's a shared sense of community, collaboration, and creativity. Students bounce ideas off each other, give feedback, and push each other to create their best work. Even the layout of the couches was intentional — it invites conversation, not just about art, but about life. Ms. P's curriculum doesn't only live in the digital realm. She believes strongly in balancing screen time with hands-on creative work. Traditional media projects — like watercolors — are regular assignments in her classes. These assignments have become favorites among her students, giving them a chance to step away from technology and reconnect with the tactile joy of painting, drawing, and simply making something with their hands.



## That's so Ms. P

What makes Ms. P such a beloved figure at Freestyle isn't just her teaching ability — it's who she is. She is unapologetically passionate. She's expressive, vibrant, and deeply human. You feel her energy the moment you walk into the room. It's in the way she talks about her students, the way she lights up when she sees someone make a breakthrough, the way she celebrates weirdness and individuality. During our interview, she shared little stories that paint a vivid picture of who she is. As a child, she used to dream about being a jewelry thief — not for the crime, but for the glittering of jewels she imagined hoarding. She would wake up disappointed that the diamonds weren't real. Her favorite animal? A black panther. One that she can imagine wearing a giant rhinestone-studded collar and walking beside her on the beach. One of the most surprising things about Ms. P? Her age. When we spoke to her, both Kaylee and I assumed she was much younger than she actually is. She radiates such youthful energy and curiosity that it feels like she belongs right alongside the students — not just as a teacher, but as a fellow creative mind.



## Nadine's Notes

I'm not a design student myself, but I've heard enough stories to know the impact Ms. P has had on those lucky enough to be in her class. The long conversations, the thoughtful critiques, the laughter, the tough love — all of it shapes her students in ways that go far beyond art. While I can't capture every lesson she's taught or every memory made in that dark, glowing room, I hope this piece preserves a little bit of what makes Ms. P special. And whether you knew her for her watercolor projects, her cardboard husbands, or just her unbeatable energy, one thing's for sure: Freestyle wouldn't be the same without her.



# Design

Favorite Project

it vanished



Anna Custodio

Favorite Project

Illustrator Project



Christopher Green

Favorite Project

Illustrator Project



Elaine Cho

Favorite Project

Open House Poster and Illustrator Project



Jerry Liang

Favorite Project

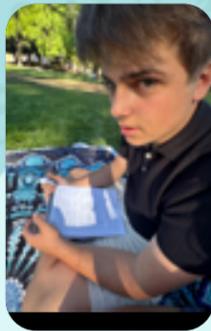
All the music projects



Justin Hung

Favorite Project

Documentary Project



Luca Deck

Favorite Project

Documentary Project



Maile Jeng

Favorite Project

Illustrator Project



Sophia Kwong



Favorite Project

Documentary



Griffin Polika-Engle



Favorite Project

Documentary Book



Hannah Barnett



Favorite Project

gone rogue



Josheline Lara



Favorite Project

Narrative Story



Maarten Bousse



Favorite Project

Documentary



Sophie Lam



Favorite Project

Documentary



Zoya Kalavade

# Juniors

# Design

Bryce Lin



Favorite Project  
Watercolor Name



Favorite Artist  
Hayao Miyazaki

I love his art style for all of the Studio Ghibli movies.

Huh, what?

Charlotte Van Kerschaver



Favorite Project  
Explorations Project



Favorite Singer  
Frank Ocean

His music has inspired and helped me through many difficult times.

"Work Hard in Silence, Let Your Success Be Your Noise" - Frank Ocean

Chloe Walters



Favorite Project  
Probably me zenith but it's not done yet



Favorite Singer  
Lauryn hill

I love her style, voice and her core values

"Inmate 100031470 is about to be released"

Emma Tan



Favorite Project  
Zenith



"Be happy"

# Seniors

Akshay Menon



Favorite Project  
Product Logo



Favorite Song  
"Whalien 52" - BTS

It's been one of my favorite songs since the 5th grade.

"If I agreed with you we'd both be wrong." - Some random quote I got off Reddit

Angel Montiel



Favorite Project  
undecided



Favorite Musician  
VIOLENT VIRA

"To survive is one thing, to live is another."

Deepa Bala



Favorite Project  
imma guess the fun one



Favorite Media  
she never even made it to this question form. fatigue hit hard

"Hi!!!"

Dhrithi Vishwa



Favorite Project  
Why Art? Essay



Favorite Musician

beabadoobee  
beatopia cured me

"caffeine free!"

# Design

Kayla Rhoadarmer



Favorite Project  
Illustrator Project



Favorite Musician  
Daniel Caesar  
love his music

"if there's no wind, rho"

Kelsey Khazam



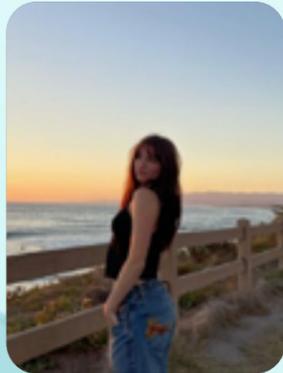
Favorite Project  
Documentary Project from Design



Favorite Musician  
Frank Ocean  
I really like his music

"Money can't buy happiness, but it can buy Taco Bell, so that's pretty much the same thing"

Lucy Patron



Favorite Project  
Junior Narrative in film last year!



Favorite Movie  
Waves  
I love the soundtrack, actors, and cinematography!

Sorry Mr. Taylor!!

Lulu Duarte



Favorite Project  
Product label design



Favorite Musician  
Ms. Lauryn Hill  
I just love her lyrics, production, pretty much everything about her music.

"I am just Mary, I am a girl and I have opinions and I'm just me. I'm not everyone's favorite and that's okay. I work for me, myself, and I. And I am myself."

# Seniors

Gloria Vazquez Mendoza



Favorite Project  
Watercolor Cursive Name



Favorite Singer  
The Weeknd  
His songs are good.

"Yes, I have two last names. I do NOT have a middle name."

Kaylee Jampayai



Favorite Project  
Lyrical Essay



Favorite Band  
The Crane Wives

Their songs are bangers and their albums never miss. I love their album art and one of my favorite albums is Foxlore. My favorite songs from that album is Down the River and Ribs.

"When people tell me 'you're gonna regret that in the morning' I sleep till noon because I'm a problem solver"

Leo Burns



Favorite Project  
Worldbuilding lightbox scene in DM



Favorite Musician  
Atsuover

She used to make music for the rhythm game, Friday Night Funkin' when it was popular. She also makes music for herself. Her music is a range from upbeat instrumental to emotional stories about herself. About her depression, anxiety, and difficulties being trans. I love her music, even if it is a bit sad. I can't help but connect with the lyrics. And her voice is super soothing. She's not very active, but she might livestream herself doing silly cartoons.

"Songs are like hugs that mouths give to ears" - Mabel Pines, Gravity Falls

Sylvia Chen



Favorite Project  
Contemporary Narrative Photoshoots



Favorite Fashion Designer  
John Galliano

I'm very inspired by the renowned fashion designer John Galliano's presentation of fashion, such as his 2022 Spring Margiela Couture collection. He fused fashion with theater, transforming models into vessels that brought his designs alive. I envision the runway becoming my platform, where the wearers' performance and interaction transform the work from a mere artistic creation into a complete, vibrant, and soulful entity.

"Proceed straightforwardly and successfully, ascending to great heights with a promising future"

# Design

Noam Avrahami



Favorite Project  
PSA Poster

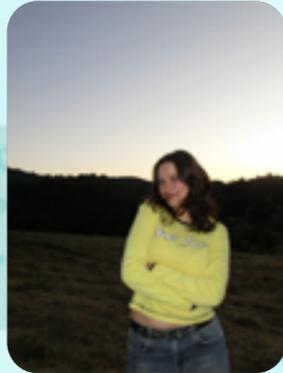


Favorite Game

Rhythm Heaven  
Rhythm Heaven has catchy music, fun gameplay, and quirky visuals!

"Every moment can be memorable, so long as you invest in that moment."

Rachel Berry



Favorite Project  
Worldbuilding



Favorite Musician  
Del Water Gap

Each of his songs vary from each other and I love his creativity!

"I am 100% certain that I am 0% sure of what I'm going to do."

Samay Shanmugham



Favorite Project  
Documentary Book



Favorite Artist  
Vincent Van Gogh

He creates unique artwork.

"He creates unique artwork"

William Oshaugnessy



Favorite Project  
left it blank for dramatic effect



Favorite Media  
to cool for content probably on a media detox right now

"Hi, I'm Will a junior at Los Altos highschool , I'm on the swim and waterpolo team."  
- Will O

# Seniors

Val Vaddi



Favorite Project  
movie poster



Favorite Series  
Cowboy Bebop  
great music, artwork, and story

"are you sure?"



# Mr. Cho

## The Newest Family Member

Mr. Cho might be one of the newest members of the Freestyle family, but he's already become one of its most beloved. With his scarves, his guitar, his stories, and his experience, he's made a lasting impression on everyone lucky enough to learn from him. Before he stepped into the Freestyle classroom, Mr. Cho was already something of a legend in the art education world. He held teaching and leadership positions at institutions like the Art Institute of California (San Diego and Orange County), Cypress College, Irvine Valley College, ArtCenter College of Design, and the Orange County School of the Arts. It's no surprise that other schools have tried to recruit him away from Freestyle — and honestly, who wouldn't want someone with his résumé?

But Mr. Cho stays, not for prestige or promotions, but for something far simpler: he loves his job, and he loves his students. He's said it himself — there's something special about the Freestyle environment, something that fuels his passion and keeps him coming back each year with new ideas, new energy, and yes, new scarves.

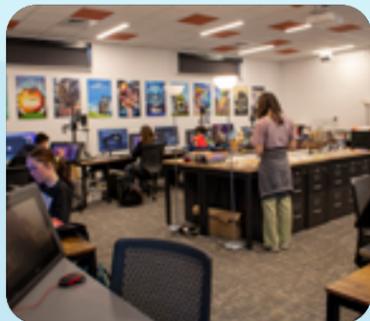
## Mr. Rockstar

It's hard not to be a little starstruck when Mr. Cho picks up his electric guitar. But his musical journey started long before his current rockstar phase. As a child, he first learned to play the cello, then moved to classical guitar at age ten. His early years were filled with delicate melodies and intricate fingerpicking. But as he grew older, he began to crave something more powerful, more expressive. So, around the age of 40, he picked up an electric guitar and never looked back. Today, he plays with the same intensity and emotion that he brings to his animation work. His playlists span genres and generations, from the haunting sounds of Radiohead to the raw energy of

Green Day and the soulfulness of Gary Moore.

## Scarfs!

It's hard to separate Mr. Cho from his signature scarves. Whether it's raining, sunny, or somewhere in between, he's often spotted with a stylish wrap around his neck. As it turns out, it's a habit from his days living in colder climates like Korea and New York, where scarves were as common as jackets. Now, even in warmer weather, he says he just can't tolerate the cold, so the scarf stays. And honestly? It suits him.



## Favorite project

When asked about his favorite project, Mr. Cho answered it was working on MTV music video animation projects at Curious Pictures in 2002 and 2003. "I was a 3D general artist for making 3D models, textures, and animation," he explains. The experience was fast-paced, dynamic, and creatively rich — a perfect fit for someone with his broad range of skills. It's this real-world experience that makes Mr. Cho such a valuable mentor for aspiring animators. He knows what it takes to thrive in the industry because he's done it all himself.

## To the Seniors

As the school year comes to a close, Mr. Cho takes a moment to reflect on the graduating seniors — and his words are nothing short of heartfelt.

"I love all the memories we made together in Freestyle. You guys are so kind to everyone and passionate about the arts and animation, you always do the freestyle school projects with a lot of effort, and participate in all the activities with enthusiasm. In the class, you are quiet and calm, but I see the higher quality of the class standard than what you produce easily exceeds the previous years of the Freestyle animation classes. I also admire all the sincere minds set to care, help and cooperate with each other. I wish the best for all the seniors in Freestyle and there will be no doubt you will have wonderful careers for your future."

## Nadiné's Notes

I'll admit, I was pretty intimidated going into 3D animation for my senior year. It always seemed incredibly complex — with so many steps, buttons, and techniques to figure out. But Mr. Cho made it all feel manageable. He was clear about what we needed to know and helped us bring our ideas to life, no matter how ambitious. He supported me every step of the way and genuinely appreciated every single project our class created. Animation takes an enormous amount of time for just a few seconds of video, but seeing how proud Mr. Cho is of each piece makes every frame worth it. And I love that since he found out I'm into birds, he'll randomly share stories about ones he's seen — little things like that show how much he cares. I'm so grateful to have had him as my teacher; I know I wouldn't have been able to create so many projects I'm proud of without him.

# Animation

## Juniors

Favorite Project  
Narrative Animation



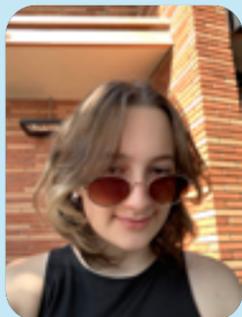
Albert Kuo

Favorite Project  
Narrative Animation



Athena Driesen

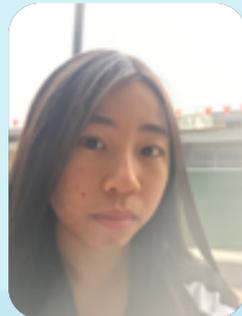
Favorite Project  
Stop Motion Animation



Nicola Colace

Favorite Project

Illustrator Project



Jaidyn Pham

Favorite Project

Puppet Animation



Joshua Chan

Favorite Project  
silence speaks wonders



Tyler Buhr



Favorite Project  
Short story project in English was fun.



AJJ



Favorite Project  
Connecting with all the people!



Blanki Fernandez-Miranda



Favorite Project  
Stop Motion Animation



Cade Lam



Favorite Project  
Illustrator Project



Cam Munoz



Favorite Project  
currently on strike



Cater Cox



Favorite Project  
retired early



Ehren Hyndman



Favorite Project  
TOD



Jack Clark



Favorite Project  
currently under review



Kailie Cablay-Alagot



Favorite Project  
we don't talk about it



Kingston Reloba



Favorite Project  
Illustrator



Mason Serna



Favorite Project  
Illustrator Project



Orlando Morales



Favorite Project  
Stop Motion Puppet



Vee Lee

# Animation



Juan Leo Vazquez

**Favorite Project**  
whoops



**Favorite Media**

oh no  
they blinked and the deadline passed

"Hola! Soy Juan Vazquez y yo soy un alumno de MVHS en mi año junior."  
- Juan V



Maisie Rennie

**Favorite Project**

Lyrical Essay



**Favorite Media**

Identity V  
Despite not playing the game for years, it still holds a special place in my heart, as I will always love its characters, their backstories, and the overall concept. I haven't kept up with the game, so it's likely very different now, but I cherish it as it was when I was still playing. However, I don't miss the stress of ranking. That's staying in the past.

"I'm really going to miss this."



Ynez Hoffer

**Favorite Project**

Worldbuilding and Zenith



**Favorite Band**

The Smiths

They're cracked just take a listen to their rank album, I used to listen to them 5 hours a day 5 days a week for like two years.

"Ynext"



Kajsa Hoffer

**Favorite Project**

Worldbuilding

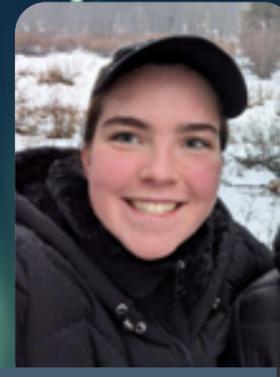


**Favorite Creator**

Jeff Smith

The Bone comics were a staple for me growing up. I think that everyone would benefit by reading Bone. Read Bone.

"Yeeooooowwch!"



Ashley Dillon

**Favorite Project**

Junior Narrative



**Favorite Series**

Love, Death, and Robots  
Netflix Animated Series  
A collection of beautifully animated darkly humorous and thought-provoking short stories

"Life is a blank canvas, make some art!"



Angel Rodriguez

**Favorite Project**

Senior Narrative



**Favorite Creator**

Cole Bennett

Growing up, my brother showed me Cole Bennett's music videos, and they instantly changed the way I looked at music and creativity. His visuals weren't just cool, they brought the music to life. Those videos sparked something in me, a desire to create and connect with people the same way Cole did. From that point on, his work became a huge inspiration, and I've always hoped to be in a position where I can have the same impact.

"We live in a society"



Lillian Husky

**Favorite Project**

24 Hour Animation



**Favorite Series**

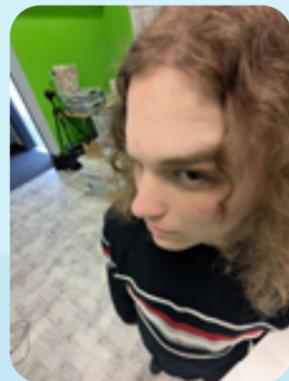
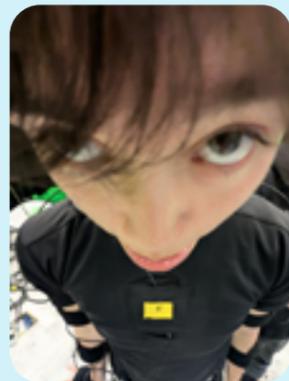
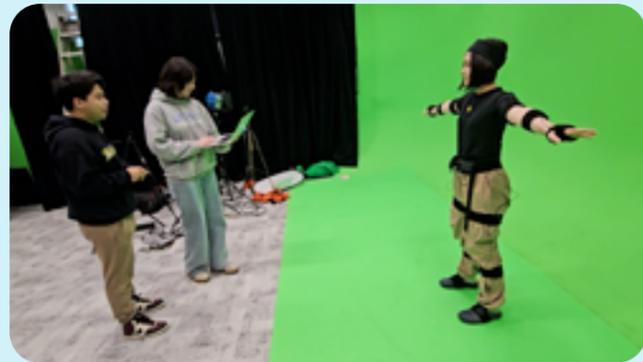
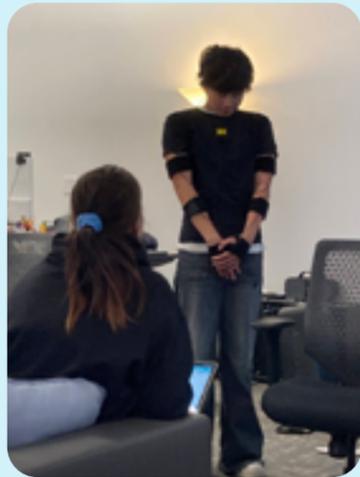
Percy Jackson Books

Reminds me of my childhood (I will say 1 month from now when I turn 18)

"Life is good :)"

# Seniors

# Animation



Nadine Sheridan

**Favorite Project**

This yearbook? maybe...



**Favorite Movie**

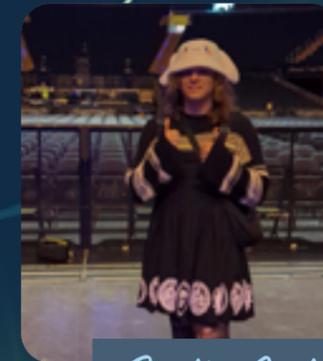
Cars

I can't explain why I love this movie so much. I hate cars. I hate driving. I hate the desert because it's hot and has no plants. Yet, something about the ending gets me every time.

"You can't stay in your corner of the Forest waiting for others to come to you.

You have to go to them sometimes."

-Winnie the Pooh



Stella Cedar

**Favorite Project**

So far, my Zenith Project

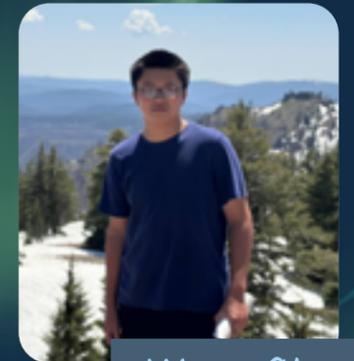


**Favorite Band**

Bring Me The Horizon (for now)

Their newer blend of metal with electronica/hyperpop is right up my alley!

"enjoy life, be silly :p"



Weiyi Cheng

**Favorite Project**

Senior Narrative Animation



**Favorite Game**

Genshin Impact

\*Genshin Impact\* features a vast open world with stunning visuals, allowing players to freely explore diverse landscapes and culturally distinct nations. Its unique elemental combat system and diverse character combinations make battles strategic and engaging. The game offers deep storytelling with well-developed characters, enhanced by high-quality music for an immersive experience. Continuous updates and cross-platform support ensure long-term enjoyment for players.

"Never be late, especially for presentation day!!!"

# Seniors

# Random Stories

"One day, the wind was so strong that all of the tables and chairs and other things in the courtyard started blowing all over the place. Ms. P. managed to mobilize the design seniors and recruit some people from animation to stack the chairs and put everything away. So I want to shout out Ms. P. for helping take care of the campus and the students for braving the wind."

"I danced the Macarena in a Mo-Cap Suit"

"Ms. P's neon pink frosting and pitch black cake with glitter scares me."

"My Japanese teacher walked through the Freestyle campus while I was in English and it scared the hell out of me "

"Kaylee put aluminum in the Design microwave and I watched Lillian put out the fire"

"Pm design seniors gave Ms. P a life size cardboard cut out of Klay Thompson for her birthday."



"Extreme wind flipped half the ping pong table over."

"We ran out of burger so I asked Mr. Greco to fried a break for me instead."

"Last year's prom was on my birthday so I had my birthday @ Freestyle"

"In film one day Mr.T had us do a photo scavenger hunt type thing. And one of the photos was getting a

stealth photo of Mr.Flo. Was pretty silly."

"One time I forgot when class ended, so I ended up running after the moving shuttle waving my arms and screaming stop. Good times."

"Gordon figured out where he was in Geoguessr by looking at the pavement."

"I spent most of homecoming watching the Jake Paul vs Mike Tyson fight "

"Mr. Greco dressed up as Gregor Samsa from the Metamorphosis for Halloween, which basically meant he wore a cockroach suit

with a name tag that said "Hello my name is Gregor" and it was hilarious."

"We held a seance in the Animation room using the fall party props and Mr. Cho was very concerned. There was also a stained chair with like some sort of yellow liquid that we deemed "the pee chair" that continually got more eroded with time."

"Someone gave me something called the Silly Test. I never had the chance to finish it."

"We learned about the backstory of the cactus that's outside of the film room, with the plastic face parts. It used to belong to the previous film teacher, and now Mr. T takes care of it. I've send photos of it almost everyday to my friends at LAHS, even after it got live!"



"I think it was that time where we were reading "Red" by John Logan and a lot of us accidentally swore (because there were swear words in the book), and swore backwards "god damn" ----> "damn god""

"I saw Mr Taylor as a render in blender... "

"we went to the freestyle dungeons"

"singing hard times by paramore at the holiday party"

"the wind blew all the turf up and it looked crazy"

"I was suspected of being an alien."

"I beat the green screen curse - anyone who volunteered for a green screen activity we did in film would leave Freestyle early. And I've beaten the curse, at least for this year."

"During finals week it was so fun to hangout in the recording studio and play house music and do karaoke with friends."

"Mr. Taylor threatening us that he will make us cry for some reason."

"Got to hang out a lot more with my friend Mason (he's so cool) who I haven't seen in a while"

# Praise for Freestyle

"Gives people both the facility and the supportive community to reach their full potential (at least here)! (This is anonymous right)"

"I am so grateful for all of the opportunities freestyle has offered me these past two years. It's been great to see our freestyle community get closer and see our skills improve over the years. Freestyle is a place that made school something I looked forward to and there really is no other place like it. I will forever cherish the memories I made here."

"Thanks for making this an open learning environment and it makes it easier to talk and connect to people. Also thanks for convincing me to go to school everyday"

"RAAAH!!! YEAH!! WOOO!!!"

"I love you guys!!!"

"I entered as a first year senior, but regardless of my short time here, I've felt more connected to a school than I'd ever been before."

"I liked hanging out with my friends, creating cool and unique projects, and getting the opportunity to learn how to use equipment I otherwise wouldn't have."

"Nice campus, nice people"

"Freestyle lets you do so much awesome stuff!"

"It can be fun, it can be daunting, but at the end of the day-- it's something different from your typical high school experience. I think having that change of pace was crucial to preserving my sanity over the past two years."

"THE ONLY REASON TO COME TO SCHOOL -- FREESTYLE ACADEMY"

"I liked the community there and getting to talk to people I wouldn't get to talk to at school."

"i like the bathroom"

"I'm so grateful for Freestyle and all the opportunities and resources it has given me. This place has truly made my highschool experience much better."

"The Cintiqs in the Animation room are HEAVENLY. Those things are honestly a good enough reason alone for joining Freestyle as someone who loves digital art. I'm also so insanely grateful to Freestyle for giving me the opportunity to make all my beginner mistakes in the animation/artistic process and learn how to actually manage my time during these kinds of projects before college, and in a setting that's extremely forgiving. If my first experience with large-scale artistic projects under tight due dates was in art school, then I would definitely be doing horrendously."

"it's really useful for technical skills"

"No meme this school was the best thing to ever happen to me I'm so thankful for it everyday."

"It's a really cool place with nice teachers"

"So glad we have a place to actually learn all these Adobe apps and get good with advanced technology, like other schools don't even have this opportunity."

"Freestyle Academy is a great way to explore passions for Design, Film, Animation, and Digital Media in general, especially with the easy access students have to advanced and professional equipment such as cameras, Wacom tablets, audio software, and more."

"its so fun and exciting i love the experience"

"I love Freestyle!"

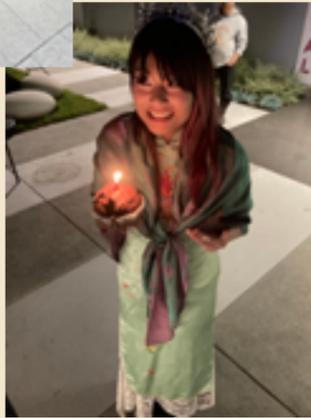
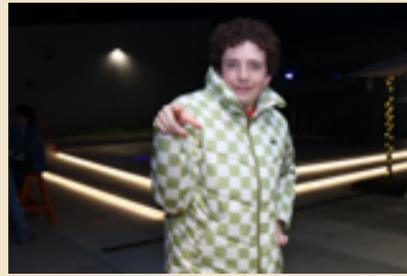
"I absolutely love the work environment here, it's so laid back and makes me feel relaxed. I also really can see the job potential from a lot of the material I've learned from here."

"Freestyle is a pretty dope school and frankly I do recommend it towards people who genuinely wanna expand their creativity "

"Surprisingly entertaining with a great community"

"You get tons of equipment and resources that you're allowed to use!"

here's to the memories...



# Credits

## About the Author

Hi! I'm Nadine Sheridan, and I'm often recognized for my deep love of plants and birds—especially my own. I'm a student in the Animation program at Freestyle Academy, where I was honored with the Freestyle Award for Excellence. I've made countless memories here, and I hope this yearbook captures and preserves some of the best ones for all of us. This fall, I'll be attending UC Santa Cruz to pursue Plant Sciences. I'm beyond excited to continue learning and growing (pun intended) in a field that I'm truly passionate about.

While this yearbook may seem like a solo effort, I absolutely could not have done it without the support of so many amazing people—especially these two:

## Cover Designer

Ash Dillion is a fellow Animation student at Freestyle Academy and recipient of the Freestyle Award for Advancement. She designed this yearbook's stunning cover—seriously, she nailed it. Ash is an incredible artist, a cat enthusiast (especially her own, whom I also adore), and a truly wonderful friend. Next year, she'll be heading to Chapman University to double major in Animation and Biological Sciences.

## Biggest Supporter

Kaylee Jampayai is, in my opinion, the glue that holds the Freestyle PM seniors together—and quite possibly the rest of the students too. From organizing parties to lifting everyone's spirits, Kaylee is a great person. I'll always be grateful that she copied my biology homework in 9th grade—otherwise, we might not have become friends for another two years! Kaylee will be attending De Anza College next year, where she plans to major in History and pursue a career in Library Sciences.

## Special Thanks to:

- The Freestyle Teachers
- The Freestyle Principle
- Our amazing janitor
- All the supportive parents and donors

Freestyle wouldn't be the same without you!



2024-2025 Freestyle Academy

