



Students learn creative expression through fine arts programs like the Cy-Falls theater group



Programs like the Cy-Springs High School choir can help students discover hidden talents

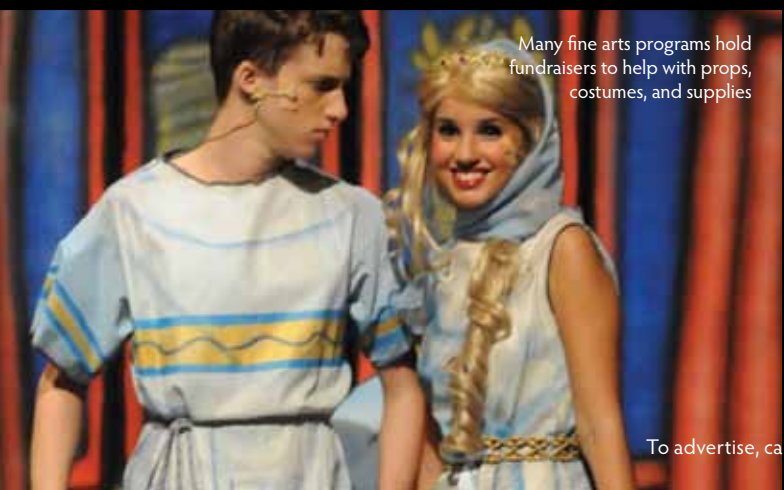


the battlefield
and in the ...

Cy-Creek students performed *Pippin* at the Texas State Thespian Convention



Many fine arts programs hold fundraisers to help with props, costumes, and supplies



THE BEAT GOES ON

Cy-Fair ISD Keeps Fine Arts Education Alive

Written by Bianca Gomez

Pablo Picasso once said, “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.” Art education can help foster a child’s creativity, and in Cy-Fair ISD, such programs have set the foundation of success for former students like actress Martha Madison, film director Joseph Kahn, and broadcast journalist Rachel McNeill. With school districts across the nation cutting back on funding of both visual and performing arts, Cy-Fair ISD still offers a rich variety of creative programs for its students.

The Value of Creative Classes

With numerous upcoming spring concerts, color guard shows, and one act play competitions, it’s easy to see the arts alive in Cy-Fair ISD. At the secondary level, fine arts programs ranging from band, choir, and orchestra, to theater, art, and dance are offered. At the primary level, students learn about different forms of creative expression such as painting, drawing, and sculpting, and teachers strive to relate art in the classroom to other subject areas.

Funding for fine arts programs is a topic every school district must give careful consideration to, says Joseph Akers, choir director at Cy-Springs High School. “All students deserve to have access to a high quality arts education,” he says. “Arts education is a vital element to child and/or adolescent development.”

Finding Resources

Despite the plethora of fine arts programs it offers, the school district has not been entirely immune from funding cutbacks seen in other districts. Pinching pennies has become popular with many teachers as they try to stock their classrooms with needed supplies. “Since everyone is cutting back, everyone is being very frugal,” says K-12

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CY-FAIR
magazine

Notable Fine Arts Students

Many Cy-Fair ISD alumni have pursued successful artistic careers

Cy-Creek High School

- **Shane Andries** - Member of the Blue Man Group
- **Ashley Axelson** - Radio personality with 104.1 KRBE
- **John B. Cole Jr.** - Actor
- **Nick Drago** - Dancer, appearing in film and music videos
- **Martha Madison** - Actress
- **Rachel McNeill** - Broadcast journalist with KPRC
- **Jeffrey Schottelin** - Actor
- **Dr. Jeff Ullom** - Professor of directing at Case Western Reserve University

Cy-Fair High School

- **Brian Baggett** - Composer and recording artist
- **Lynn Barstow** - Radio personality and program director in Austin
- **Canaan Brumley** - Award-winning independent film writer and director
- **Larry Campbell** - Director of fine arts at Blinn College
- **Brian Danner** - Award-winning fighting and fencing choreographer
- **Sandy Duncan** - Actress
- **Dennis Haskins** - Principal Belding on *Saved by the Bell*

Cy-Falls High School

- **Jeff Danhauser** - Actor
- **Mike Dodson** - Bassist for the David Crowder Band
- **Jacob Listvan** - Radio personality with 93Q Country
- **Kelly Watson** - TV and radio personality in Lubbock
- **Michelle Williams** - Musician

Cy-Ridge High School

- **An Ly** - NBA Houston Rocket Power Dancer
- **Jared Matthews** - Principal ballet dancer with the American Ballet Theater

Cy-Springs High School

- **Dustin Garcia** - Bass trombonist
- **Patrick Kelley** - Opera singer
- **Amanda McFarlin** - Flutist with the Lubbock Symphony

Jersey Village High School

- **Ryan Delahoussaye** - Member of the band Blue October
- **Rick Deskin** - Actor
- **Natalie Green** - Actress
- **Joseph Kahn** - Director of music videos and feature films
- **Zach Lewis** - Actor
- **Jon Eric Price** - Actor
- **Hakeem Seriki**, also known as Chamillionaire - Musician and rapper
- **Paul Wall** - Musician and rapper

Langham Creek High School

- **Lily Jang** - TV personality with KCPQ in Seattle
- **Jenny Law** - Radio personality with 93Q Country
- **John Salinas** - Saxophonist with the Amethyst Quartet
- **Karla Leigh Standfield** - Radio personality with 93.5 KHBT in Grapeland
- **Jennifer Trevino** - Radio personality with Mega 101 FM



Art Coordinator Sara Sanders. “[Teachers have] to be very careful of their needs and requests. They try to make do with what they have.”

Because each Cy-Fair school is site-based, budgets are not the same for each campus and every school is affected differently anytime cutbacks occur. Many Cy-Fair schools are finding creative ways to support their fine arts students. “At each individual school, they give students scholarships who can’t afford to go to competitions such as The Scholastic Art Competition or Culture Shapers,” Sanders says. “Sometimes, the schools will fundraise to support that money. Every school does it a little bit differently.”

Many fine arts programs, such as drill teams and theater companies, have supported themselves with fundraisers all along, holding events like car washes and bake sales to pay their way to contests and provide costumes, props, and other supplies.

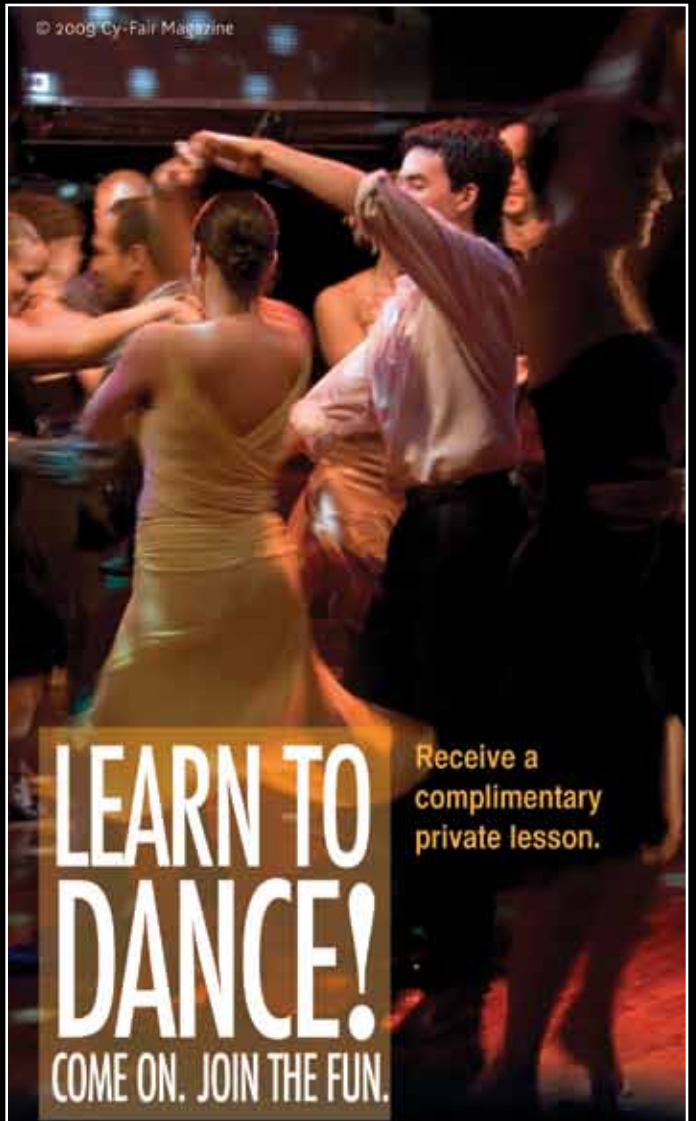
The Future of Fine Arts

With an ever-growing list of successful artists from Cy-Fair ISD, fine arts education continues to have a large role in shaping the future. “In most circumstances, the arts are one of the first things cut when there are financial difficulties,” says Jared Matthews, a graduate of Cy-Ranch High School who currently serves as a principal ballet dancer with the American Ballet Theater in New York City. “It’s not fortunate, but that’s just the reality of this situation.” Matthews also encourages students interested in an artistic career to supplement their training by taking outside classes and exploring additional ways to further their knowledge.

Sanders is optimistic of the role fine arts will play in shaping tomorrow’s leaders as the district continues to adapt to the changing economic outlook. “The budget issues that Cy-Fair ISD is currently facing have affected all areas of the district,” she says. “It is up to our current leadership to ensure that fine arts education remains in place for future generations of students that will come through Cy-Fair ISD schools.” CFM

BIANCA GOMEZ is a junior at Cypress Falls High School, is co-editor of the Wingspan Newspaper and enjoys reading, drawing, and listening to music in her free time.

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Must Sees

Don't miss these Cy-Fair fine arts performances at a school near you

Feb. 19 – 29

Showstoppers Performance
Cy-Fair High School
5 – 11 p.m.

May 11

Orchestra Concert
Cy-Woods High School
7 p.m.

April 11

Band Concert
Cy-Creek High School
6 – 8 p.m.

May 13

Choir Concert
Cy-Creek High School
7 – 9 p.m.

April 13

Choir Concert
Cy-Creek High School
7 – 9 p.m.

May 14 - 15

Dazzler's Spring Show
Cy-Ridge High School
7 p.m.

April 13

Choir Concert
Cy-Ridge High School
7 p.m.

May 14 – 15

Sterling Stars' Legacy
Spring Show
Cy-Lakes High School

April 23 -25

Panteras Spring Show
Cy-Springs High School

May 15

Choir Pop Show
Cy-Woods High School
7 p.m.

April 30

Battle of the Bands
Cy-Falls High School
7 p.m.

May 20

Band Concert
Cy-Ridge High School
7 p.m.

May 5

Band Concert
Cy-Woods High School
7 p.m.

May 21 - 22

Choir Pop Show
Cy-Ridge High School
7 p.m.

May 8 – 9

Senior Play
Cy-Springs High School
8 p.m.

May 21 - 22

Senior Production
7 p.m.
Cy-Falls High School

May 11

Band Concert
Cy-Creek High School
6 – 8 p.m.

May 24

Orchestra Concert
Cy-Ridge High School
7 p.m.



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The Dazzlers perform during halftime at a Houston Rockets game



The Jersey Village Gold Duster dance team

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