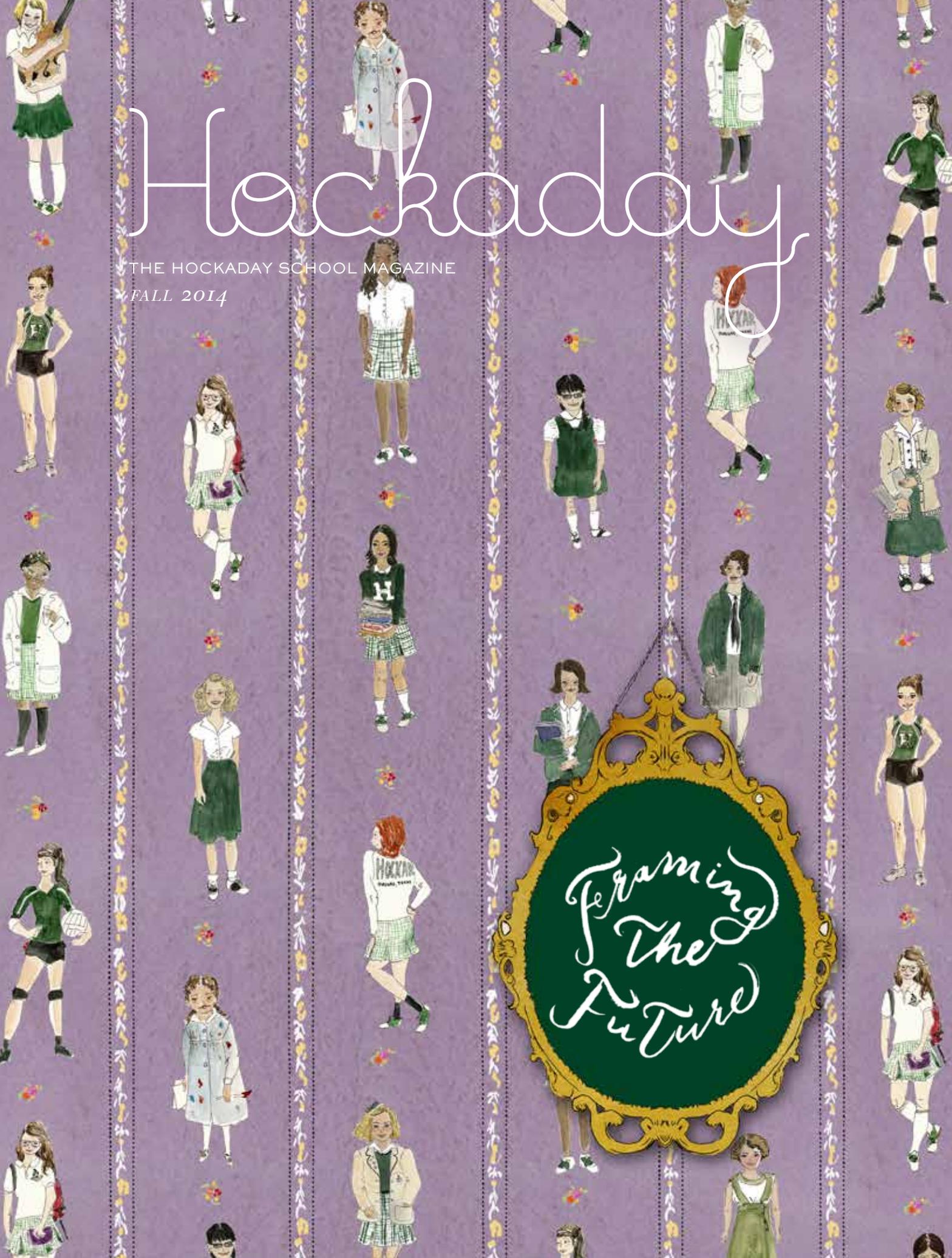
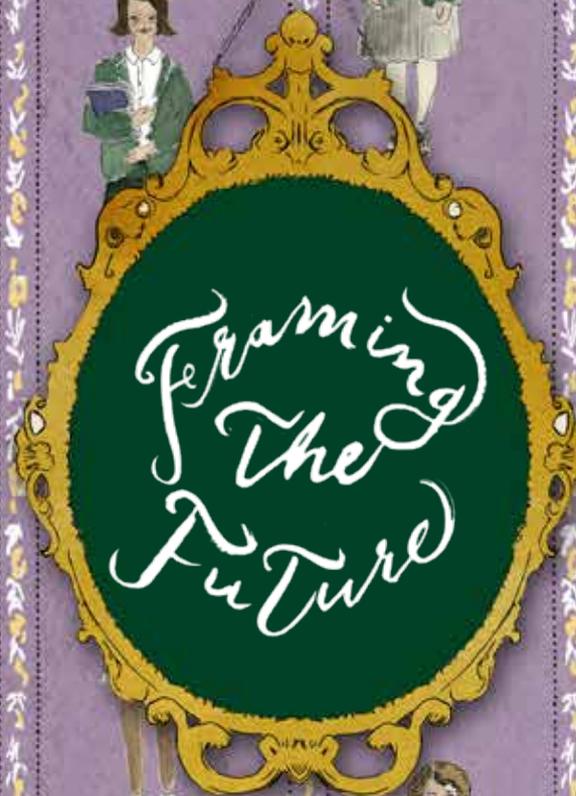


Hockaday

THE HOCKADAY SCHOOL MAGAZINE

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THE CENTENNIAL PROJECT

An Interview with Carlyn Ray

"The art of creation is beautiful. Creation starts with what? Dust? Sparks? An idea?"

WHAT INSPIRED THE CENTENNIAL PROJECT?

Hockaday's design of the Centennial Center focuses on the idea of combining science and art, embracing a multi-disciplinary approach to education and understanding that it is the way of the future. I was eager to do a project with these students that allowed them to design, create, participate, and watch their collaborative effort come to fruition, and the Centennial Project is a creative process involving all disciplines. From start to finish, scientific formulas, cutting-edge technology, mechanics of engineering, artistic design, and mathematical proportions all played critical roles in the success of the final product. These disciplines employed methods and generated ideas that complemented each other. It is a true STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) project.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING WITH HOCKADAY GIRLS?

Being a woman in a male-dominated profession, I am happy to watch Hockaday's young women seeing equal opportunity and optimism in any path they choose. The students' questions are insightful, poignant, and courteous. I see them growing into women who think creatively and technically. Balanced. And I also see teamwork; they work amazingly well together and really thrive from each other's ideas. The creation of Art can be the same

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journey as choosing one's own path. As each Hockaday student expresses her individuality, opinions, and uniqueness in the collaborative process, together they rise and build upon each other. They strive on the differences that make them unique; yet, they have learned at a young age the value in working with one another to accomplish something bigger than one's self.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS FOR THE CENTENNIAL PROJECT?

The project began after I showed all of the Upper School students several examples of installation art with multiple materials, in nature, with light, and multi-media. Fine Arts students generated 60 different to-scale models of potential designs and video presentations, which were then voted on by the Class of 2014.

Next I visited the Math Department, where I worked with students on the shape of the units within the design. From a model where one inch equaled one foot, the students solved equations to see how big an individual unit should be and how many units could be in the space. I brought these designs and configurations back to the team at Carlyn Ray Designs. My metal fabricators, John Christian Designs, created two different models generated from the math students' adjustments to the initial design.

Meanwhile, Hockaday's Chairman of the Visual Arts Department, Susan Sanders, made sample glass tiles and panels for the units. The metal fabricators, Ms. Sanders, and I worked together to create a prototype of a single unit. From this, we were able to calculate the weight load for the mechanical engineer. This provided a clear understanding of the weight-bearing specifications that the architects would need to prepare the installation space properly. Connection points for hanging the structure from the ceiling and placement of an LED lighting system rounded out this first phase of the project.

Then the creation of the glass began! Within the design, students, faculty, and staff made individual tiles out of clay. They cast plaster around the clay to make a mold. The void left in the plaster upon removing the clay tile was then filled by each Hockaday artist with recycled glass from Carlyn Ray Designs' studio. I demonstrated glass blowing, focusing on the different science concepts involved with glass. These concepts ranged from demonstrating thermal expansion to understanding the different metals needed to make color, i.e., gold makes red, cobalt makes blue.

Next, in the kiln, the glass melts to conform to the mold, and once cooled, the plaster is chipped away. This leaves the impression on the glass from the original clay model. The glass tiles will be placed in a continuous thread throughout the overall structure within the Centennial Project's design.

WHAT DOES THE FINISHED PIECE MEAN TO YOU?

I am elated when I accomplish a goal with a team. There is a time when an individual strives beyond one's self, while working with others, to accomplish a shared goal which would not be possible on one's own. Working together as a team while valuing each other's strengths, ideas, and participation creates an end result which far exceeds the product. In this piece, each unique tile is a part of the unified whole. This piece is only possible through a group effort, by the generation of different ideas, a collaboration of efforts from different students, faculty, and staff. This is what makes this sculpture unique to Hockaday. While the product of this creation will be installed in the Centennial Center for aesthetic enjoyment and, hopefully, inspiration, the learning process of this piece is what makes it so special. For in this collaborative process, our strengths are elevated, our minds are opened, and our patience is tested.

"Failures are a step toward success, and the ups and downs are part of the experience. To me, this is an amazing life lesson gained through a mesmerizing and educational material with a beautiful and impressive piece as the memento."

CARLYN RAY LEADS DISCUSSION WITH HOCKADAY STUDENTS AT THE DALLAS ARBORETUM'S CHIHULY EXHIBIT