

All Hades Breaks Loose

By Anna Nicolaides-Christofi

This past week, from March 19-21, Marist Theater took a trip “way down under the ground” as they told the story of HADESTOWN. Beginning Thursday night, Woodruff auditorium was brought to life with vibrant music, incredible choreography, and breathtaking performances.

The show follows the story of a young, poor boy, Orpheus, played by Charlie Kaufman, as he falls in love with Eurydice (Lauren Greenhill) almost instantly upon laying eyes on her. Hades (Charlie Frame), the ruler of the underworld, watches over a world driven by labor and power alongside his wife Persephone, played by Jane Bennett.

Facing hunger and poverty during a harsh winter, Eurydice is lured into the underworld to work for Hades. Orpheus, heartbroken and alone, sets off on a long journey along the “road to hell” to find her and bring her home.

Upon arriving, he too falls victim to Hades yet still remains persistent and hopeful. He uses the power of his beautiful music to soften the hearts of Hades and Persephone, reminding them of the most important part of life: love.

Hades eventually decides to let them leave – on one condition. Orpheus and Eurydice must return to the world above without Orpheus turning around to see if Eurydice is still with him.

As they make the treacherous climb out of the underworld, doubt flood into Orpheus’s mind. Just before they reach the end of the road, he turns around – breaking Hades’ single rule – and loses Eurydice forever.

This story is full of tragedy and heartbreak, but also hope. Orpheus was able to see the way that the world could be, even in the hardest of times, and encourages us to do the same in our own day-to-day lives.

Marist theater students began rehearsing for this show in January, devoting their heart and soul into making it beautiful.

When asked what her favorite part of the show was, Sophomore Julie Urban said, “My favorite part of HADESTOWN was the opportunity to bond with the cast.” During countless hours of rehearsal spent perfecting the performance, the cast made it unforgettable for every single person in the audience.

The Story Behind Kitchen 101



Photo Credit: Contributed

By Alec Devlin

Kitchen 101, Marist’s student-led cooking club, is giving students the opportunity to learn basic culinary skills while building teamwork and creativity in the kitchen. The club meets during activity period in the cafeteria and is open to students of all experience levels.

What began as a small idea between two students has quickly grown into one of our school’s most popular and wide-reaching clubs.

The club was founded by seniors John David Linch and Martin Laughlin, who started the club due to their passion for cooking. Both founders brought different experiences to the table, combining hands-on outdoor cooking knowledge with formal culinary training to create a space where students could learn in a supportive environment.

Linch explained that the idea for the club came unexpectedly.

“Martin and I started the club after the end-of-year freshman basketball meeting, discovering that many students liked to cook but had no outlet,” he said. “With my background in outdoor cooking as a scout and Martin’s trained culinary skills at the French-acclaimed Le Cordon Bleu, we decided to form the club with the help of the school kitchen and Sage dining, and we went from there,” Linch explained.

With the support of school facilities and SAGE Dining Services, the club quickly transitioned from an idea into a fully functioning student organization.

Since its founding, Kitchen 101 has grown rapidly, attracting students from nearly every grade level. “As of now, we have over 250 members, ranging from seniors to seventh graders, with varying levels of cooking aptitude,” Linch said.

The club meets once a month

and sometimes twice for special events, always on Fridays during activity period. Meetings typically involve dividing members into groups, reviewing safety guidelines, and preparing a featured dish together, allowing students to gain hands-on experience while collaborating with peers.

Over the years, the club has prepared a wide variety of dishes that reflect both creativity and student interest. “For me, the favorite dish we ever cooked was our killer smash burgers this year, and our tanguito, a hardened, sugar-covered fruit – a repeat we serve every year,” Linch said.

Events often extend beyond simply cooking food. One of the club’s most memorable moments combined fun with service. “The most fun we’ve had was our root beer floats during last year’s exams, where we raised funds for a food kitchen in downtown Atlanta called

Trinity Table.”

Through events like these, Kitchen 101 has also emphasized giving back to the community.

Laughlin also reflected on his favorite moments in the club, particularly the detailed planning that goes into each event. “My favorite memory was this year making smashburgers at the beginning of term one,” he said. “It was a great result after a lot of planning, and many people still ask us to bring this back in Term 3. Once the weather warms up, we might be able to do it again.”

According to the founders, preparation and coordination are key to ensuring that each meeting runs smoothly and that members leave having learned something new.

For Laughlin, cooking has always been personal and rooted in family tradition. “My passion for cooking has been inspired by my parents. They were both always in the kitchen when I was growing up, so I naturally adopted their love for food,” he said. “I began to spend more time cooking, and that fueled my passion for food.”

That passion has now extended beyond his own kitchen and into a club that serves hundreds of fellow students.

With strong leadership, growing membership, and a menu that keeps students coming back for more, Kitchen 101 continues to give Marist students a creative and practical outlet during the school year.

As the club looks ahead to future events and new recipes, its founders hope it will remain a place where students can build confidence, learn valuable life skills, and strengthen community through food.

Schirmer Honored for Excellence



Photo Credit: Contributed

By Cris Lewis

High school debate coach Abby Schirmer received a prestigious invitation to the Gold Key Honor Society, an illustrious honor society for high school debate programs all over the country. This grand milestone is one of the highest pedestals for high school debate coaches in the country.

The Gold Key Society is a highly selective honor society that was established in 1964 by the Barkly Forum for high schools at Emory University. The society’s main goal is to recognize members for their contribution to speech and debate education, mentorship, and ethical coaching.

This past January, Schirmer

was honored at the famous Emory Speech and Debate tournament for this induction. She sees this achievement as “a result of long-term professional discipline and success.”

Nearly every single weekend since 2008, Schirmer has dedicated her time and energy to coaching and judging at various debate tournaments all across the state. Additionally, she serves on the board of the National Debate Coaches Association and helps run major national tournaments sponsored the National Debate Coaching Association (NDCA) and the National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA).

Schirmer prides herself on her professional development, ensuring she is up to date on the latest arguments, and actively staying in the know on what is happening in the community. She is absolutely honored to be recognized by the community

and other coaches around the country by her membership.

It is easy for others to acknowledge and appreciate her passion and dedication to debate when her commitment is easily recognizable.

For the next generations of debate students, Schirmer says students should “commit, seek feedback endlessly, and measure success by growth and not just trophies.”

The longstanding motto of the Marist debate team holds true in her words: “Hold the vision and trust the process.”

Even with the massive achievements, Schirmer stays purposely committed to her work and her students. “Recognition carries responsibility. My goal moving forward is to continue raising the bar while ensuring debate remains a source of excellence at Marist,” she said.

Suthers Soul

News editor Clara Laskowski takes us to Suthers Food Pantry, where students spend their Saturdays earning service hours by helping people in need.

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Photo Credit: Ryan Akin

Olympics Anyone?

If only there was a way for us to review all the triumphs from this past Winter Olympics. Well, that is exactly what happens in the Sports section thanks to Finley Harris.

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Photo Credit: Reddit

A New Formula

Formula 1 is undergoing a change, and Meghan Lee has all the details. Turn to our Opinion page to learn more.

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Xmas Is Over . . . What Now?

By Grace McNary

Once Christmas ends and the decorations come down, it can feel like the most exciting part of the Church year is over. The music is quieter, the colors change, and everything seems to slow down. The Church moves into Ordinary Time.

The season often gets little attention. At first, it may sound boring or unimportant, but Ordinary Time plays a major role in the Catholic faith and how we live every day.

Christmas celebrates something extraordinary, God becoming human and entering the world. Ordinary Time comes right after and asks what we do with that gift.

Instead of focusing on one major event, this season focuses on the life of Jesus and how He lived.

At Mass, we hear about His teachings, His miracles, and how He treated people who were overlooked or struggling. These stories are not flashy, but they are practical. They show us what faith looks like when life is normal and routines take over.

What makes Ordinary Time special is that it reflects most of our lives. Not every day is a holiday or a major moment. Most days are regular school days filled with homework, practices, and responsibilities.

Ordinary Time reminds us that God is just as present in those moments as He is on Christmas morning. Faith is not only about celebrating big occasions but about showing up consistently and trying to live with kindness, patience, and integrity.

As Marist students, we are especially lucky to have opportunities to live out our faith during Ordinary Time. One meaningful way to participate in the life of the Church is by attending adoration in the chapel during activity period.

Adoration offers a quiet space in the middle of a busy school day to pause, reflect, and spend time with God. It does not require anything fancy or dramatic. Just showing up, sitting in silence, and being present can make a real difference. In a season focused on everyday faith, that simple act fits perfectly.

Ordinary Time reminds us that our faith is not meant to be seasonal or based on excitement. It is meant to be lived consistently, even when things feel routine.

The lessons we take from Christmas do not disappear when the season ends. They become part of how we treat others, how we spend our time, and how we grow as people. In that way, Ordinary Time is not a break from faith but a chance to practice it in the most real and meaningful way.



Photo Credit: Ryan Akin

Students Collaborate with Suthers Food Pantry

By Clara Laskowski

In our Marist community, completing service hours by the end of the year is a well-established expectation. Requirements range from 8 hours for freshmen to 12 hours for seniors, and students actively look for meaningful service opportunities throughout the year.

Luckily for us, down the road the St. Martin's Episcopal School's food pantry is always taking in Marist volunteers on Saturday mornings.

With the mission of giving what we have and doing all we are able to do, Suthers Food Pantry serves individuals and families in Dekalb County and surrounding areas who are facing food insecurity.

The food pantry partners with the Atlanta Food Bank and secures most of its food through the organization, as well as from neighboring stores such as Publix, which donate surplus food. Suthers provides bags in

different sizes based on household size, including bread, produce, meat, dry goods, and other fresh foods

Every Saturday morning from 7:30 to 10:30, volunteers are expected to assist with filling food bags, registering guests, unpacking food deliveries, and stocking shelves.

The food pantry relies on its volunteers to keep Saturday mornings running smoothly, many of whom are returning Marist students.

The close proximity and familiar faces make it an easy way for students to give back to the community and fulfill their hours.

Student volunteer Kaitlyn Kilborn is one of the many students who returns to the food pantry time and time again. "I fulfilled all my hours last year through Suthers and plan to do the same again this year," Kilborn explained. "The pantry is close to my house, and I always see Marist people. It is nice to

see people giving back to our own community."

Student Volunteer Charlotte Zalenski thinks its clear Marist students have a profound impact on the pantry. "My friends and I have been volunteering at Suthers since freshman year and the people there now know our names, and it's so special when we come together on Saturdays," Zalenski said.

Zalenski went on to explain how much her service at Suthers has meant to her. "It has been so eye-opening for me to serve in my own community and see how many people close to me could be struggling," she said.

As the end of Term 2 slowly approaches and service deadlines creep up, Suthers Food Pantry is always in need of volunteers to help serve the community. The food pantry welcomes Marist students and gives them an easy and meaningful way to serve the community.

Why Christians Decorate Easter Eggs



Photo Credit: Contributed

By Cris Lewis

Easter is full of fun traditions, like waking up to baskets of candy, searching for the Easter Bunny, and decorating colorful eggs. But behind all the excitement, there is a deeper meaning that many people don't think about.

Decorating Easter eggs is not just a fun activity; it has been an important part of Christian history for centuries. The eggs carry symbolism that connects directly to the story of Jesus and the celebration of Easter itself.

Easter egg decorating actually connects directly to the story of Jesus in the New Testament.

In the early church, eggs were used as a symbol of the resurrection. The hard shell represented the sealed tomb of Jesus and cracking the egg symbolized His rising from the dead.

During Lent, a 40-day period of fasting, Christians traditionally gave up heavier foods like meat and eggs. Because of this, Easter Sunday was the first day they could eat eggs again, making them a meaningful part of the celebration.

The eggs were not only a way to break the fast but also a reminder of new life and hope for believers.

Christians also decorated eggs by dyeing them. Early Christians dyed eggs red to represent the blood of Jesus. Over time, more colors were added, each with its own meaning.

Yellow came to represent new life and resurrection while blue symbolized the love of God. In some communities, eggs were even painted with scenes from the Bible.

These decorated eggs were not just for showcase; they were

a way to teach people the story of Jesus, especially at a time when many were illiterate. Hiding the eggs for children to find also became a fun way to involve families while passing on these traditions.

There are also stories that help explain the tradition. One popular story tells of Mary Magdalene bringing an egg to a Roman emperor to show that Jesus had risen. When the emperor doubted her, the egg is said to have turned red. Families in some parts of the world still crack red eggs together while saying, "Christ is risen," as a way to celebrate and remember the story.

Decorating Easter eggs is more than just a fun activity for kids. It is a tradition rooted in Christian history and belief. Even today, while many people enjoy it as part of the holiday, it continues to represent the story of Jesus, the resurrection, and the new life that Easter celebrates.

By keeping these traditions alive, families are not only having fun; they are connecting with centuries of Christian history and faith.

The Season of Lent

By Cecilia Piontek

After the liturgical season of Ordinary Time ends, Catholics all over the world enter the season of Lent.

As Christians begin preparing for Easter, they will start taking part in fasting and giving throughout this special forty-day period. With the ashes received on Ash Wednesday, they embark on the start of this faith journey and end it just before the Sunday of Easter.

The season serves as an opportunity to implement time to strengthen one's relationship with God and partake in acts of almsgiving.

Lent is a forty-day period, which helps Catholics to understand more deeply the forty-days in the desert that Jesus endured before beginning His preaching to the world. He was tempted constantly by sin and still remained faithful to His Father, God. His example is used to guide and build beliefs stronger than they were originally.

Three practices commonly followed during this most important of seasons are called the "three pillars of Lent." This includes prayer, fasting and almsgiving. All of these help to encourage ideas for things to give up, or actions to do during the Lenten Season.

When giving something up, helping someone benefit at the same time is a perfect example of these three pillars. For instance, giving up social media and using that time to serve others to give back to the community demonstrates this perfectly.

Prayer is frequently used in the daily life of a Catholic, but Lent allows them to focus even more on the action. This means putting God first and prioritizing time to be with Him throughout the day.

Fasting is used to build self-discipline and strengthen integrity. Fasting is a reminder to not allow yourself to rely on physical comforts and focus more on God. By fasting, we are called back again to Jesus' sacrifice while in the desert.

Almsgiving is usually overlooked but is viewed by some as the most important part of the Lenten practices. Helping others in need and giving your time to the less fortunate allows Catholics to grow their compassion and their understanding of the teachings of Jesus.

Lent is a season that helps renew, strengthen, and grow faith with God. As we move along the liturgical season and this time comes to an end, Catholics have prepared themselves for Easter, when Jesus resurrected.

The sacrifice of giving something up helps reflect on the true values of Lent just as Jesus endured and reflected.

The Soccer College Commit

By Clara Laskowski

Our school's 13-time, high school championship girls soccer program has produced many standout and well-known famous players. While strikers often get the credit, their success tells only part of the story.

The Marist girls soccer team's dominance is also built on the strength and consistency of its goalkeepers. Their dedication and resilience have been essential to every championship run.

This season, the girls team has played eight games and remains undefeated. Campbell Fletcher has been the starting goalie for the past four years, leading the team through multiple successful seasons. Their wins aren't based on luck. They're the result of consistency, discipline, and strong leadership in goal.

Fletcher, a Lafayette College commit, has proven herself as the backbone of the team. She trains every day, lifts 3 to 4 times a week, and attends goalie sessions on weekends. While most enjoy summer break, Fletcher trains twice a day, goes to the gym daily, and continues specialized goalie work.

Fletcher's success is no accident; it's built on relentless dedication. Though she has trained for the past 15 years, it was not always for goal keeper. Fletcher began her soccer career as a defender but switched after a coach placed her in goal. On that momentous day, she proved herself "good enough to stay," according to Fletcher.

Beyond her teammates, Fletcher says that her favorite part of playing goalie is "how much thought goes into the position" and having to "think about where to play the ball."

Last year, Fletcher committed to continue her goalie career at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania. She chose the school because she did not want to "sacrifice athletics for academics and vice versa."

While excited for the upcoming season and her new teammates, Fletcher admits she is "intimidated by the cold weather."

As her senior season gets underway, Fletcher reflected on all her favorite memories and best moments from the previous seasons. Despite countless standout saves and big wins, one moment that stands out is in her sophomore year quarterfinal game against Pope High School. "We won in PKs, which sent the team to state," Fletcher shared. Another one of Fletcher's favorite memories is after they won state sophomore year and "sang and danced on the bus ride back to Marist."

As the team continues their regular season and gears up for playoffs starting on April 24th, the girls carry momentum, discipline, and confidence into the postseason.

With Campbell Fletcher anchoring the defense, their championship hopes remain strong.



Photo Credit: Ralph Lauren

Team USA Strikes Gold in Italy

By Finley Harris

This year marked the first time the Winter Olympics were held across multiple locations – Milan, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Bormio, and Livigno – bringing the Olympic spirit to regions all across Northern Italy.

With the 2026 Games coming to a close, it's time to highlight some incredible moments as I share a few of my own personal favorite performances from American athletes in this year's games.

It goes without saying that Mikaela Shiffrin has redefined what it means to be an elite alpine skier. Shiffrin is the most decorated female American alpine skier in history, and her performance in Bormio was nothing short of it.



Photo Credit: Harpersbazaar.com, Xavier Lain

Shiffrin took home gold, finishing 1.50 seconds ahead of the next competitor, the third-largest margin of victory in women's Olympic slalom history.

One of my favorite moments from Shiffrin was her emotional interview following her gold medal win where she spoke of sharing this moment with her father who passed away in 2020. You could even see her mouth "dad" as she skied across the finish line, a special moment that touched hearts all around the world.

Over on the ice, Evan Bates and Madison Chock skated and graced the rink with a stellar performance, falling just short of France's Laurence Fournier Beaudry and Guillaume Cizeron in a controversial decision for gold. The two claimed silver before taking home gold in the team event.

The 2026 Olympics marked the fourth for the married couple, and every time they skated, my eyes were glued to the screen. One of my favorite performances included a Lenny Kravitz medley in the rhythm dance.

Sharing the spotlight with them, Ilia Malinin took the crowd by surprise during the mixed figure skating finals, ex-

ecuting an incredible backflip and landing on just one skate. Participating in his first Olympics, expectations were high as Malinin had not lost a competition since November 2023.

Everyone is human, however, and in the men's single skating, Ilia struggled throughout the routine and finished in 8th place. He nevertheless displayed a high level of class after a frustrating defeat. Just a few weeks later, Malinin was awarded the Milano Cortina 2026 Fair Play Award and, alongside Evan Bates, Madison Chock, and many others, took home gold in the team event.

Known for her striped hair and bubbly personality, Alyssa Liu graced the ice, taking home gold in both women's single skating

and the team event. Like Bates, Chock, and Malinin, Liu's performances captured hearts, and her showstopping routines to PinkPantheress and Zara Larson's "Stateside" during the exhibition gala demonstrated her joyfulness and skill.

Liu redefined her career at this year's Winter Olympics after retiring in 2022 at the age of 16 due to burnout. Before coming out of retirement, she established six strict rules her coaches would have to follow, and they seem to be working out quite well for Liu.

On the slopes, snowboarding also provided nail-biting moments with Jake Canter keeping every American on the edge of their seats as he took home bronze in the men's snowboard slopestyle. With a clutch run, Canter sat in 3rd place with three competitors yet to go, any of which could easily push him off the podium. Canter's final run was enough for him to secure the bronze, marking his second Olympic podium finish.

Among the younger competitors, 17-year-old Ollie Martin stunned the crowd in the men's snowboard big air event, narrowly missing out on the podium in 4th place. A few days later, he competed in slopestyle,

finishing 9th due to some skeptical scores from judges. Like Canter, Martin showed immense potential on the Olympic stage.

If you have ever watched snowboarding, you have most likely heard the name Chloe Kim. At only 17 years old in 2018, Kim won gold in the women's snowboard halfpipe, becoming the youngest ever to do so. This year, she took home silver despite competing with a torn labrum in her left shoulder.

I wouldn't be able to highlight this year's performances from American athletes without mentioning the men's and women's ice hockey teams.

The women's ice hockey team defeated Canada 2-1, thanks to Megan Keller's clutch overtime winner. Keller, a three-time Olympian and captain for the PWHL's Boston Fleet, joined the men's team in showcasing clutch performances as Quinn Hughes scored an overtime goal to send the team to finals where his younger brother Jack Hughes scored the game winning goal in overtime that defeated Canada 2-1.

This win marks the first time the US has won gold in Men's hockey since 1980.

The men's team wouldn't have been able to pull out a win without goalie Connor Hellebuyck, who had a stand out performance, which included 41 saves.

Over 200 countries were represented at the Games, and Georgia native Elana Meyers took home gold in the women's monobob event in bobsledding.

The five-time Olympian had never won a gold medal. Standing on top of the podium in Milano was one of the most heartwarming moments of the Games as she celebrated with her two sons, telling them she was now an Olympic champion.

From all across Italy, Team USA's performances in the 2026 Winter Olympics captured the excitement and spirit that the Olympics always brings. From resilient performances to heartwarming moments, these moments connect and remind fans worldwide why the Olympics are so special and set the stage for what's to come in France in 2030.

On Thursday, March 12, 2026, the girls basketball team won its third state title in five years at the Macon Centreplex.

With an impressive 58-50 win against the Kell Longhorns, this victory was an exciting one, to say the least. The 29-2 season these girls had was enthralling to watch. Given all the support from our school community and the tireless work Coach Kim Hixon poured into this team, a state win was so well-deserved.

For her historic leadership and ability to keep the team focused on the ultimate prize, Hixon was also named Coach of the Year in the AAAA division. The team, fans, and larger school community cannot thank her enough for all the hours she devoted to bringing another state title to campus.

Kate Harping, a North Carolina basketball commit, truly held her own on the court throughout the entire season. Harping scored 40 points at the state championship and became Georgia's leading all-time scorer, finishing her high school career with a total of 3,435 points.

Harping was also named the Gatorade Player of the Year for the second consecutive year and the Naismith High School Player of the Year. With her skills and athleticism, Harping took the team to another level and helped build the program to attain another state win.

Kate's phenomenal high school basketball career could not have wrapped up with a better ending, and has touched the Marist community in so many ways.

The environment in the Macon Coliseum displayed how the Marist community comes together for one another. The stands for both the students and the parents were filled and nearly overflowing, and the anticipation that built from the school spirit throughout the school day greatly grew a positive morale for the team.

For the out-of-uniform day, many students wore blue and gold. Chants at an all-school assembly and an early dismissal for students attending the game demonstrated how nobody does it better than Marist. All of the Marist Family love contributed to another win for the War Eagles.

Through the state championship win, many titles were won, hard work paid off, and the love of the game showed through the players and the Marist family. This season was extremely special, and something that will be long remembered. The victories won were thrilling to see, and a state championship win was the best way to finish it all off.

Girls B-ball Caps State Title

By Claire Helfrich

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New Rules, New Era for Formula 1

Whether the latest rule changes will help or hurt the sport remains to be seen

By Meghan Lee

In recent years, one particular sport has grown in global popularity: Formula 1.

What was once considered a niche motorsport has quickly become one of the most watched and talked about competitions in the world, drawing in new fans with its high speed, rivalries, and drama. But just as F1 reaches new heights, it is experiencing one of the biggest rule changes in its history in 2026, raising the question of whether these updates will improve the sport or make it more boring overall.

The most important shift is in the engines. F1 is moving toward fully sustainable fuels and more reliance on electric power. The new engines will use a more equal split between the traditional engine and electric energy, while also removing older, complex systems like the MGU-H.

This change is a huge step forward environmentally and could make the sport more relevant in a world focused on sustainability; however, it also raises concerns about whether F1 cars will still feel as fast and



Photo Credit: Reuters

exciting as before.

Another major change is the removal of DRS (Drag Reduction System). DRS was a tool that allowed drivers to open a flap on their rear wing to reduce drag and help overtake the car ahead of them. In 2026, it will be replaced by “active aerodynamics” and an “overtake mode,” where drivers use extra electrical energy to pass instead.

While this new approach to passing might make overtaking feel more skill-based, some fans complain that racing could become more boring without DRS.

The grid itself is also changing. Cadillac will join as a brand-new American team, expanding the field to 11 teams, while Audi will enter by taking over Sauber’s spot.

This change is exciting because it brings fresh competition and big names into the sport, but it also shows how difficult it is for smaller or less competitive teams to survive in F1.

One of the most interesting developments comes from Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team, which is emerging as a leader in engine innovation. With the new 2026 regulations

placing a huge emphasis on electrical power, Mercedes appears to have adapted quickly. That progress is already showing on the track with George Russell taking P1 in Melbourne and rookie Kimi Antonelli securing another win in Shanghai.

While it is still early in the season, these results suggest Mercedes’ new engine could be one of the strongest on the grid and that mastering the new engine regulations may be key to success.

Overall, the 2026 regulations represent a bold attempt to future-proof F1. The focus on sustainability and new technology is important, but there is a risk that the sport could lose some of its simplicity and raw excitement.

Max Verstappen, the star of F1 and a driver for Red Bull, has criticized the new regulations, calling them “not fun” and “unworthy of Formula 1.” Whether this new era improves racing or overcomplicates it will ultimately depend on how the changes play out on the track.

Hollywood’s Merit Myth

Do the Oscars really reward the most talented figures in the movie industry?

By Luke Childs

The most interesting thing about this year’s Oscars wasn’t who won but rather who did not. An award show and the most highly coveted celebration of film for nearly a century has hid behind its glamor as a mechanism for announcing disingenuous awards.

Many have questioned the sincerity of the Oscars and whether or not they have ever really been about who was best, or simply who the industry decides it is time to honor.

You could feel that precise tension in the air this year.

Paul Thomas Anderson finally took Best Picture and Best Director, among other awards, for *One Battle After Another*. He did so after 14 previous nominations and no wins. A long-deserved individual finally glorified, with the win feeling less like a surprise and more like an obligation.

While “*One Battle*” was the presumptive pick, what about a daringly different film like *Sinners*? Or a slower reflection like *Hamnet*? Or an unsettling film like *Bugonia*, which was wildly creative?

What the main discussion has focused on, in dramatic fashion, was Michael B. Jordan beating out Timothy Chalamet for Best Actor. Both were extraordinary performances. Chalamet was touted early on as the favorite, but *Sinners* gained serious momentum in the weeks leading up to the ceremony. Chalamet and *Marty Supreme* ended the night with no statues.

I’m tempted to attribute Chalamet’s loss to his recent comments labeling some art forms as out-of-style, namely ballet and orchestra. Politics. Comments. Campaigns. Anything to explain the outcome as something other than what it claimed to be: a recognition of the best performance of the year.

Chalamet’s loss is ironic as it opened up the door for Jordan, who ought to have been taken more seriously to begin



Photo Credit: Variety

with. Admittedly, had Chalamet won over Jordan, I might have chalked it up to long, entrenched biases among the voting members of the academy.

Ceremonies like these are not, and maybe have never been, purely merit based. They are carefully constructed, curated, collectively agreed-upon stories about careers, about legacy, about who has “paid their dues” and who still has time.

Can a fresh actor or director not emerge and be immediately recognized as a new and revolutionary talent?

Whether we realize it or not, we seem to prefer it this way. There’s something deeply embedded in the art world about delayed recognition. The “finally” narrative lands harder than the arrival. It feels earned in a way that immediate recognition does not.

This run of the award ceremony has caused me to think about the span of an artist’s life and the receiving of awards, as a last-ditch recognition of their performance. It’s no secret that the Oscars recognize seasoned actors later on in their careers rather than newcomers, with the average actor age around 45.

Awards so often go to the film, actor, or director who “deserves” the recognition. We’ve seen it with Gary Oldman beating out a 22-year-old Chalamet in a beautiful *Call Me By Your Name* in favor of the lackluster Churchill. We saw it with Jack Nicholson winning over the new kid on the block: a 27-year-

favoring older, more established men (often in their 40s, 50s, or older) for Best Actor. Even among the ten youngest men to receive an Oscar, the average age is 32.

But why? Why do we, as a culture, resist crowning greatness too early?

Perhaps immediacy feels



Photo Credit: British Broadcasting Corporation

old Matt Damon starring in his own film *Good Will Hunting*.

Even the numbers reflect this pattern. The stats demonstrate that awards tend to favor younger women (often in their 20s and 30s) for Best Actress while

too fragile. Maybe it’s because we’ve been taught to distrust anything that rises too quickly. Being early can look a lot like being wrong, even when it isn’t.

The geocentric model was believed to be the full truth for 150

years after Copernicus’s heliocentric counter was formulated. We cling onto what we know: the familiar, comfortable, common knowledge.

There’s a real dulling risk in that way of thinking. In always waiting. In always assuming that greatness must be stretched across time before it can be recognized. What gets lost, however, is the willingness to embrace something new, different, and revelatory as it is happening.

The youngish actor who lacks extensive life experience but makes up for it with skills and passion.

That’s what makes Chalamet such an interesting figure in all of this. He represents what I call “greatness culture.” There’s an urgency to him, a kind of unapologetic ambition that’s seen through his iconic public figure. He talks openly about greatness, about wanting to be remembered, about modeling himself after figures who didn’t wait their turn.

There’s something very modern in that. Chalamet resonates with a fast-paced generation more interested in possibility.

I believe that’s the tension we’re really seeing play out in Hollywood. An institution built on legacy and slow recognition confronted with a new revolting culture that is starting to question why it has to wait at all. Because striving for greatness openly, without apology, is not something to be dismissed.

It pushes the entirety of culture forward.

The question is not simply whether it is any one artist’s time to receive recognition but also whether we as a people are ready to recognize greatness when it arrives at all.