

**Coram Deo Academy**  
**Fall Festival of the Arts 2004**  
**Opening Remarks of Rodney Marshall, Headmaster**

We live in what is sometimes a coarse world of even coarser values while raising our children to appreciate truth, beauty and goodness. We desire for them to develop lives reflecting academic insight, athletic accomplishment and artistry acuity. Today we celebrate the arts and the young artists of Coram Deo Academy as they learn to produce them.

An artist is someone who employs creative talent to produce works of art. The term describes any branch of the arts including music, literature, poetry, and theatre and most commonly refers to an individual who practices the visual or fine arts. The arts may elevate and lighten the spirit as in *Mid Summer Night's Dream* or elicit contemplation and introspection as we watch *Lady Macbeth* work out her ambition through murder. The arts may challenge and inspire as in Mendelssohn's *Oratorio, Elijah*. As parents and educators, we seek development of these young artists' skills and taste, or their delicate discrimination of aesthetic values.

The home of James and Doris Marshall exemplifies such discrimination of aesthetic values. When my parents recently moved from their home of twenty-six years into a beautiful but smaller domicile at St. Andrews Estates, a retirement community, they were required to downsize and therefore part with some possessions. While the abundance of antiques and fine china attracted the attention of my sisters, I requested my father's library and my mother's art.

Although willing to part with his histories and atlases and a few of his array of ornithological books and works of natural science, my dad could not separate from his leather bound *Count of Monte Christo* authored by Alexander Dumas which he read as a schoolboy.

Together my mother and I leafed through a lifetime of studies, sketches, pastels, charcoals, oils, woodcuts, portraits, outdoor and indoor compositions, and browsed her statuary, shared memories and delights before she was able to part with the creative work of her own hands. Soon a selection of these works of art will grace a web gallery in her honor and adorn the walls, steps and entry at the home my wife and I enjoy together.

By their example and lifestyle, I learned to love the lovely. May God help us nurture the same in the next generation. Now, let us enjoy this Festival of the Arts.