

# ASPIRE NEWS

26 February 2019

## FROM THE DESK OF THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

I can't believe we are three weeks into the rehearsal period already. It's been an interesting start to rehearsals as we all get used to our different ensembles and get creative. Our vocalists are offsite for the next two weeks as they are signing at the Catholic Schools week liturgy, we are very proud to be invited to participate in this important diocesan event every year. Well done to the vocalists for learning this music so quickly.

There is a creative vibe in the air at rehearsals. The script is continuing to develop as our drama ensemble devise scenes and come up with ever more mind boggling ideas. Our band are playing beautifully together and the dancers are thinking about telling the story. Our design team have been coming up with ideas for our set, it's really inspiring hearing about their ideas for what the show is going to look like.

When we think creatively we can sometimes fail, it should be difficult sometimes. Things that we thought would work in our heads might not when we play them out in reality. That's ok. This is all part of the creative process. Sometimes you have to get things wrong, to take a couple of steps back so you can see the way to move forward. This is the time for that, the time for things to not work, to have to find a better, more interesting way of telling the story or playing a song. So enjoy the opportunity to be creative, it's all part of the journey.

Anna



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ENSEMBLES

### DRAMA

What does it mean to belong to an ensemble?

The literal definition is a group of actors, dancers or musicians who perform together. Truly that is what we are. But I also like the secondary definition that defines ensemble as a group of things viewed as whole rather than individually. Not that the drama kids are "things" but the fact that we are a team first and individuals second. This is a very powerful thing to be and this has been the key to our success over the past seven years.

Each one of us is important and totally integral to the show. We have no stars, no leads. We just have characters and the opportunity to bring these characters to life. We work together, support each other and grow and learn together. Everyone has their place and truly has earned that place. We are all unique and yet all the same.

Another important part of our ensemble involves respect. We respect each other by being good audience members and by sharing and listening to each other's ideas. It is important to show respect to everyone. Try to remember BLESS. I like this way of remembering respect. B is for Be Kind. Love our differences, support our mistakes and create harmony. A kind person can change someone's life with one word. So be that person. L is for listen; really listen not only to the words but to the meaning too. It isn't always easy to listen. E is encourage; make sure everyone feels like they matter. When we keep rehearsing and can't get it right, a smile and a kind word will lift someone's mood and let them fight on. I love seeing the way that you all encourage each other and appreciate each other's talents. Finally that brings us to the two "S"s which are support and spirit. We must work together as a team in the most positive spirit that we can.

When we do BLESS and get it right, it works. This is our challenge for the rest of the year. I am excited to see our ensemble grow. I have already seen some great work from both juniors and seniors. I love it when your creativity and BLESS meet and drama bursts forth.

Have a great week

Lisa and Jay

## DANCE

The 2019 Aspire dancers have been very busy practising it seems, and it definitely shows! We are so happy with all your progress so far and are loving seeing you work on new skills to add to your repertoire. Keep up the practising!

In the coming weeks we will be starting new routines, so keep using the videos to help you remember what we have done. Also use them to make sure you have learnt the choreography right so that you don't get the wrong moves into your muscle memory. So when you are watching the videos, watch others and pay attention to detail.

Enjoy getting to know each other as we move into partner/group work, as this will help you all work better as an ensemble.

## Lauren and Montana

## MUSIC

### What's your role?

Rehearsals are well under way for the band- we are very impressed with the ensemble! The past weeks students have been working on new repertoire. It is important that they practise their parts at home. This means not only learning the notes, but playing along the tracks (emailed earlier this term). Some parts may seem easy, but are more challenging when having to play with the ensemble. Start to think about your role within the ensemble, what is the role of your part in each song. Melody? Accompaniment? Rhythm? Tone colour interest? This will affect the way you play... you don't just play notes!

## Jess and Dom

## VOCAL

During the week, I came across this quote from the Spanish Opera singer Monserrat Caball ...

*"When a singer truly feels and experiences what the music is all about, the words will automatically ring true."*

... so simple, yet so true!

As we continue our exciting ASPIRE journey this term, and we start to get down to the finer details of performing and storytelling, it is vital that we know the lyrics to all the songs. However, more importantly to know WHAT the songs are about! Only then will we be able to convince our audience and engage them in our story.

So, let's learn the lyrics this week ... but also discover the exciting story that is found in each song. Consider HOW that song fits in the overall story of our show.

***Don't forget Catholic Schools Week / Project Compassion Liturgy ...***

**Tuesday 26th February:** Rehearsal @ Sacred Heart Cathedral / CSO 4.30pm - 7.30pm

**Tuesday 5th March:** CSW / PC Liturgy + ASPIRE Workshop afternoon @ Sacred Heart Cathedral / CSO 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

- wear concert blacks
- bring ASPIRE music + folder + pencil + snacks + water

## Jeanette and Luke

## EXCITING AND IMPORTANT DATES/NEWS

### ***Catholic Schools Week/Project Compassion Liturgy/ASPIRE Rehearsal***

*Tuesday 5 March 2019: Liturgy at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 10.30 am followed by ASPIRE Rehearsal in the Toohey Room at the Catholic Schools Office till 4.00 pm*

## ANNA RECOMMENDS

*Musica Viva : Natalie Clein and Katya Apekisheva* at the Newcastle Conservatorium on 28 February 2019 at 7.30 pm

*Hermit Crabs and Meteors* at The Royal Exchange from 7 March 2019 - 9 March 2019 (*featuring Senior Drama's Annie Mcloughlin*)

*ACO Beethoven and Prokofiev* at City Hall 7 March 2019

*Gratitude and Grief: Katie Noonan's Elixir and Michael Leunig* at Civic Theatre, Newcastle 15 March 2019

## DESIGN

It has been an exciting couple of weeks with the Design Ensemble as we have started to produce set pieces for ASPIRE 2019. I have been impressed with the students' excellent collaboration and problem solving skills, especially in working out how to produce items on such a large scale. The creative design ideas have begun to flow and this week will read through the script and consider how we can incorporate the actor's words into the design of the set. Very soon, we will have a full list of the pieces and items to be designed and produced over the next two terms – goal setting and time management skills are going to be a key skill for us to enable the set and costumes to come to life!

## Gillian

