

ASPIRE

NEWS

10 March 2020

FROM THE DESK OF THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

We are into the second half of Term 1 and our production is well and truly taking shape. We have been impressed by your commitment in the auditions we've witnessed for solos and parts in particular. Our junior drama students prepared short monologues last week and performed them in front of each other and we were so happy to see such thought had been given to character and blocking. Our vocalists also all had the opportunity to prepare a verse and a chorus of a song for the group as we get into decision making around solos. Be proud of yourselves for having a go and if you're not successful in gaining a solo or the part you want this time remember ASPIRE is about learning and developing as a performer, not who has the most lines or biggest solo so please stay focused on your own journey and of course the story we are telling as a cast.

Special guest week is on 31 March, when we welcome industry professionals to work with each of our ensembles. Please note that all ensembles are required from 4.30pm – 7.30pm on the 31 – there is a two hour workshop followed by a Q&A session with all our special guests followed by pizza for the entire cast (we know how much you all enjoy socialising!). This is a highlight of the ASPIRE calendar, it's important as artists that we learn from a number of different mentors; it's how we figure out how we like to work so enjoy this opportunity to learn a new skill or be introduced to an area of practice.

And of course keep practicing your parts, learning lines and thinking about 'The Pecking Order' it's an ambitious show to say the least this year and you need to keep thinking about it and working on your role within it between rehearsals.

Anna



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE ENSEMBLES

DRAMA

Drama is about the creation of a world on stage. Sometimes the world is real, at other times it is fantasy or imaginative, while in other creations it is absurd and abstract. No matter what style we use, the purpose remains the same. We always want to entertain and challenge the audience to think.

Imagine if we could communicate with animals. It has long been a fascination of people. In so many ways I think we do communicate with animals. So many people know exactly what their dog or cat is thinking and feeling. But imagine a full conversation.

Would your dog tell you how annoying you are? Would they suggest that you ignore them? Would they challenge your commitment to their feelings?

So I ask you to think of two things this week. Firstly two questions that you would like to ask a bird. And then two questions you would ask a human if you were a bird. Think about them. Email me your answers.

On a performance note, seniors you should be learning your lines now. Remember it's critical that we learn dialogue as soon as possible so that we can use our movement.

Enjoy your week

Yours in Drama

Lisa and Jay

DANCE

ASPIRE is all about giving you all an experience similar to that of a professional production, which is why we ask you to push yourselves to try new things.

After each rehearsal, take a moment to think back over what you have learnt. Is there something that you can't quite nail....YET?!

This term is about setting those goals. What do you need to work on? When will you have it conquered by?

Hold yourself accountable and don't let fear get in the way!

You, your mind AND body, are capable of more than you might realise!

Lauren and Montana

MUSIC

We are half way through the term and have received half the music for the production. Rhythm section- practice along with the tracks that were emailed to ensure you know the structure of each song. At this stage we are getting through each song, enough to ensure the ensemble can play from start to finish without stopping. Next focus will be refining the sound, use of dynamics and articulation to create a sophisticated ensemble sound. Please ensure you are on time at 4.30pm and setting up ready to go by 4.45pm. There are professional standards that all ensemble members adhere to- being organised, focussed and prepared for the duration of rehearsals.

Jess and Dom

VOCAL

**"My love of theatre was certainly not typical.
I mean it was considered to be very, very abnormal in fact"**

Andrew Lloyd-Webber

What a wonderful quote from the very talented and accomplished composer who has been dubbed by the New York Times as 'the most commercially successful composer in history'!

Lloyd-Webber is a wonderful story teller. His music reaches millions of people who can relate and enjoy his works; whether it be about a lonely man in an opera house (*Phantom Of The Opera*), the life of Eva Peron (*Evita*), Jesus and his dad (*Jesus Christ Superstar + Joseph & The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat*) or a bunch of cats (*Cats*) crawling around the stage! His music is very versatile and calls for the performers of his works to also be very versatile and to be good story tellers.

ASPIRE also requires us to be good storytellers, regardless of our character. Like Lloyd-Webber with his cats, in 2020 we embark on a journey as birds! So we have to be incredibly versatile and convince our audience that we ARE birds and we ARE kids at camp! This will feel 'abnormal' ... very VERY 'abnormal' ... but that is why we are here!

So, let's all be 'abnormal' together.

Let us **ALWAYS RESPECT EACH OTHER** and be positive in our comments and suggestions. We must work as a cohesive, happy and united team who lift each other up and encourage everyone to shine and be as 'abnormal' as we can possibly be!

Have a wonderful week!

Jeanette and Luke

EXCITING AND IMPORTANT DATES/NEWS

ASPIRE SPECIAL GUEST EVENING

Tuesday 31 March 2020 St Pius X High School, Adamstown from 4.30 pm – 7.30 pm (pizza to follow)

ANNA RECOMMENDS

HMS Pinafore by the Hayes Theatre
at Cessnock performing Arts Centre
Saturday 7 March 2020

Grace Under Pressure by David Williams and Paul Dwyer in collaboration with the Sydney Arts and Health Collective Presented by Alternative Facts at the Civic Theatre Newcastle on Friday 13 March 2020 at 7.30 pm and Saturday 14 March 2020 at 2.00 pm and 7.30 pm

Music of the Guns Australian Army Band at Fort Scratchley on Saturday 14 March 2020

Mr. Melancholy by Matt Cameron
Maitland Repertory Theatre on Friday 13 March 2020 at 8.00 pm, Saturday 14 March 2020 at 2.00 pm and 8.00 pm and Sunday 15 March 2020 at 2.00 pm

Gordon Koang presents Unity at the Civic Playhouse Thursday 26 March 2020

Chess by the Very Popular Theatre Company (over 14's only) at the Civic Theatre Newcastle, Friday 27 March 2020 and Saturday 28 March 2020

The Sapphires at Manning Entertainment Centre on Thursday 2 April 2020

DESIGN

It is such a pleasure to work with a great group of designers as part of the design ensemble each week. I am always so impressed by the students' enthusiasm and motivation for every task, and the ability to create and explore the themes inspired by Lauren's costume and Lisa's design ideas. The students have continued to work collaboratively to create foam feather pieces and latex prosthetics for the bird costumes. I am very excited to see the costumes 'come to life' and for assembly to begin over the next few weeks. The students have additionally been set a logo design task, which they can work on at home or on Tuesday evenings.

A special mention this week to the amazing effort from **Jasmine Hole, Caitlin Cashmere** and **Abbey Cashmere**. Voluntarily the students gave up their Sunday last week to be part of the Civic Theatre Open Day. The girls arrived early to set up the ASPIRE dressing room to be viewed by the public and stayed to apply prosthetics and makeup which was then displayed on stage at the Civic. This 'sneak peak' and an explanation from Anna as to the processes involved gave the audience a first look of this year's production. A big thank you to the girls, for what was a hugely popular day for the Civic Theatre.

Gillian

