

The Wildcat Newspaper Excerpts

Swinging into MHS: Tarzan and the Strength of Our Spirit

by Ishika Muchhal

You better watch out, you better not cry, you better not pout, I'm telling you why – Tarzan the Musical is coming to town! That's right, for the drama department's annual musical, we will be doing the stage version of the Disney classic, Tarzan, here in the MHS Auditorium on March 22nd, 23rd, and 24th. This family musical brings the story of the orphan boy who is raised by apes to life on stage. But when a human expedition enters the jungle, Tarzan -- now a man -- encounters strangers like himself for the first time, leading to conflict, romance, and adventure. With classic songs like "You'll Be in My Heart" and "Stranger Like Me," professional Broadway costumes, flying actors, and much much more, this is a show you do NOT want to miss.

Not only that, the advanced drama class is also putting on our second play – The Strength of Our Spirit. Written by Cynthia Mercati, this one-act follows the stories of several real people, interspersed with memoirs from real Holocaust survivors and victims, as they gather courage from one another to fight for freedom and dignity for all. We will be staging this production as a black box, which means you, the audience, will be sitting on stage in the midst of all the actors and the action. Directed by Nate Overby, the play will be performed during school and in the evening this coming January 25th and 26th. We hope you will join us to commemorate the lives of those lost to the Holocaust.

Drama 2017-2018: Curtains Close

by Ishika Muchhal

Last week marked the last productions of this year's drama season! After a successful and diverse season of musicals like Tarzan and plays like The Brother's Grimm Spectaculathon in October and The Strength of Our Spirit in January, the advanced drama class ended the year with three Honors Productions. These were the capstone projects for Honors Drama students in which they handled everything including directing, producing, publicity, lights, sound, costumes, set, props, and more.

On Wednesday, Honors student Haley Rogers produced & directed the play Dog Sees God starring Mason Tyler, Brenton Guthaus, Victoria Stranglen, Amanda Eckroth, Hallie Molnar, Matt Gutierrez, Alexis Callanta, and Angie Portillo. Her play showed the infamous Charlie Brown characters as high schoolers and facing the rampant challenges that teenagers face. On Friday, there was two productions - The Whole Shebang directed by Valerie Munoz and Rabbit Hole directed by Ishika Muchhal. The Whole Shebang, a play about how the Earth was created and why humans keep living, featured Jordan Montgomery, Davis Brown, Tayjai Horton, Logan Davis, Rita Toufik, and Gabby Vilderain. This was followed by Ishika Muchhal's Rabbit Hole, a play about a couple who deal with the loss of their 4-year-old son along with their sister, mother, and the teenager who killed their son by accident. The cast was Mariah Helm, Juan Aguirre, Nachala Waters, Madison Stranglen, and Gabby Moroyoqui. All of the productions

were staged as a black box, which means that the audience sat on the stage with the actors to create a more intimate theatrical experience, and were all adjudicated by a professional actor and director from the repertory theater A Noise Within in Pasadena.

I am sure that all three directors would agree that this was a valuable experience to learn about how much work goes behind making a production possible. These shows were a great way to end our drama season with a bang, and I can't wait to see what all the department does next year with the new Theatre Arts Conservatory!!!

Senior Goodbye: Ishika Muchhal

Wait, we're graduating? When did that happen?

I know a lot of people say they can't wait to graduate, but for me, it's kind of bittersweet. For the last 4 years, MHS has been my second home and my second family. All of the teachers have been so helpful and inspiring and all the students so supportive and caring. Even though I will continue learning throughout my life, I will miss the homely environment of my classes.

I want to thank the entire drama department for supporting me, giving me so many opportunities, and helping me to solidify my career goals. From Mr. Overby teaching us in class and giving us the opportunity to perform to Angelo, Samantha Avalos, Jen Little, and everyone in Stagetech making all the productions possible, to everyone in the productions who have continuously encouraged me and become some of my closest friends, drama has become an even more integral part of my life!

I am so glad I joined the Wildcat Newspaper team this year and was able to highlight and get more involved in the events on campus. Being part of clubs like Interact, International Thespian Society, CSF, NHS, and NTHS has made me feel so connected to campus and that connection is something I will miss a lot.

A few things I have learned from theatre:

- Get your education, don't forget from whence you came, and the world's gonna know your name.
- People come into our lives for a reason, bringing something we must learn.
- History has its eyes on you so don't throw away your shot by waiting for it.
- You are the one thing in life you can control. You are an original, you are inimitable.
- It's best to take the moment present as a present for the moment.
- No one is alone.
- Everyone deserves the chance to fly because everyone's future is unlimited.

So, to all my teachers, my friends, my classmates, all the faculty and staff, everyone in the drama department, all the students, all the clubs, Renaissance, ASB, all the alumni who I knew, all the parents and volunteers who made events possible, and to my parents...thank you for everything! Thank you MHS for making me who I am today! I will never forget all of you, and I hope to cross roads again someday!!!

Ishika Muchhal
MHS Class of 2018

Drama Seniors' Final Bow: Spotlight on the Honors Projects

By Ishika Muchhal

After a busy and successful series of shows, the advanced drama class is gearing up for the final production - the Honors Projects! Within the advanced drama class, there are 7 students who qualified this year for being in the honors drama program. Throughout the year, these students were not only acting in the productions, but they also took on various technical aspects of the shows as well - from being props manager to arranging costumes, from designing and composing sound to making the programs. For her Honors project, Amanda Eckroth was assistant director for both one-act productions alongside director Mr. Overby, and Samantha Avalos has been stage manager for all the shows put on by the drama department this year. In our last production, honors students Valerie Munoz, Ishika Muchhal, and Haley Rogers will be directing and producing 3 individual plays featuring the advanced drama class as actors while Logan Davis will be handling lights for one of the plays and Matthew Gutierrez will be writing his own play! Valerie, whose play is called "The Whole Shebang," says, "I'm looking forward to learning more about the directing process, and to finally get to sit and enjoy a performance put on by the drama department! Overall, I am most excited to watch my friends on stage doing what they love most." Haley will be directing the play Dog Sees God, and she is "excited because it will be a new experience and I look forward to seeing everything that goes into producing the plays I would normally participate in." I personally look forward to directing my play, Rabbit Hole, because seeing a production from a director's perspective is always beneficial for an actor, and it is always a great experience to collaborate with such talented individuals! All the one-acts will be performed on the evening of Friday, May 25th for an invite-only audience and for a panel of professional actors and directors from a repertory theater!

Club Special: Interact Gives Back

by Ishika Muchhal

Interact is one of our service clubs on campus, the high school branch of Rotary International. Throughout the year, Interact collaborates with Monrovia Rotary to organize community service projects benefiting the city, the country, and the world. In October, Interact volunteers participated in the annual San Gabriel Valley 'Make a Difference Day,' alongside other volunteer groups and clubs. Interact officer Evan Peters reported that they "helped with renovating the new Foothill Unity Center office space," and officer Aaron Mercado said it was "a great experience, always happy to help the community." In November, our volunteers participated in Rise Against Hunger here in our very own gym, packaging over 20,000 meals for children in developing countries. We were not only able to provide meals for all these kids, but also a reason for their parents to send them to school and get an education. For our December service project, Interact will partner with the Foothill Unity Center and Kohl's to buy clothes for children who cannot afford it, the only present they will likely get for the year. If you want to join Interact, contact the advisor Mrs. Van Dyke, president Haley Rogers, or vice president Ishika Muchhal.

The Drag Races Come to MHS

by Ishika Muchhal

On November 6th, the United States Army brought their professional drag-racing car to the MHS campus for all the students to see. The race-car, driven by 8-time world champion Tony Schumacher, can reach over 330 miles per hour in about 3 seconds! Not only did students get to see the car on campus, some students from Mr. Montenegro's automotive classes got to visit a drag-race event too.

Here is a little bit about the field trip to the races on November 15th from Mr. Montenegro:

IM: "Can u describe the experience?"

Mr. Montenegro: "I thought it was very interesting for my automotive students to see this kind of venue."

IM: "How many students went?"

M: "62 students of the automotive students went to the field trip."

IM: "Do you have any highlights from the day?"

M: "Spending time out of school with my students in the content area I teach."

Here is what the students say was their favorite part of the field trip:

Emiliano Ocaranza: "When Mr. Montenegro fell and we spent an hour looking for tires."

Paolo Comia: "The sound the car makes and the environment."

Hallie Molnar: "The racing and the experience."

The race car visit and trip to the races was a great experience for everyone who went, and the Automotive department hopes to bring more such opportunities to MHS!