



Notes from the Studios

Department Head: C. Clarke



It has been an exciting semester for our dance, drama and theatre students. Please check out our social media pages for pictures and further activity summaries:

Twitter: @amhsa

Instagram: @theatreartsmackenzie

From workshops to field trips to performance opportunities, the students in the dance, drama and theatre classes have been actively engaged in authentic, arts based, critical thinking activities. Here are some highlights of our semester:



Grade 9 Open Drama

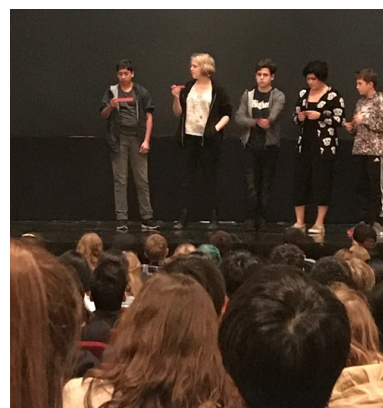
This semester has been a high-energy, hands on learning experience. Students, many absolute beginners to Drama, learned the fundamentals of performance and built the confidence that will carry on with them for their high school careers. From frozen pictures, to improvised comedy, to in depth scene work, to a final, full-blown student-created play, the students tackled and overcame creative challenges and learned to collaborate effectively. A lot of laughs and a lot of creative learning has led to a truly wonderful semester

Grade 10 Open Drama

This semester the students of ADA20 part took in learning the basics of dramatic arts, where they learned tableaux, movement techniques, and scripting. Throughout the semester, they demonstrated their learning through presentations, script making, filming and editing. Their final project consisted of the students displaying their knowledge and creativity of fables through script creating, 3D mask making, and presenting their assigned morals.

Theatre Arts Mackenzie

The theatre students have been busy working on a variety of theatrical activities from playwriting to performance techniques throughout the semester. From Stanislavski to satire, the students combined critical thinking with creativity by researching topics that mattered to themselves as artists and devising a pieces of theatre that represents their research





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through choral reading, monologue, scene study and movement. We were fortunate to have workshops from Ash Knight (director/playwright) and Krystal Meadows (actor) as well as participate in artist driven workshops during our field trips to the Stratford Festival of Canada, to support our studio work.

The Theatre students had a variety of successful performance, including Arts Information Night, the Quest Conference for Well-Being, and Future Is Now, Winter Showcase.

Looking forward to semester two, the theatre students are excited about:

- a series of guest artists in technical theatre, film production, a variety of cultural dance genres, modern dance along with a variety of field trip opportunities with Studio 180, Musical Theatre Company, Canadian Stage and Stratford Festival
- National Theatre School of Canada Drama Festival performances in February
- Continuing our participation in YRDSB Design Thinking: A Sense of Belonging project
- our first extended arts trip to Ottawa and Montreal in March 21st to March 24th
- representation of Arts Mackenzie/arts education at Town of Richmond Hill Cultural Summit on March 26, 2019 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
- spring shows: April 17th (Senior Theatre), June 13th (Junior Dance/Theatre/Drama/IB Theatre showcase)



Special thanks to our Dramatic Arts Council for their leadership this semester. Dramatic Arts Council has been a strong participant in student life at AMHS, organizing spirit days, wellness opportunities for students, and enhancing life for drama students at AMHS.



Dance Arts Mackenzie



As we complete the first semester of the 2018-2019 school year, it is evident that the dance department has been quite busy! The students in the department have put on some outstanding performances with their own original pieces of choreography, participated in workshops with major contributors to the world of Canadian dance and continue to put dance on the map as a legitimate art form within the Alexander Mackenzie school community. Students were challenged with both practical and theoretical assignments and consistently went above and beyond expectations.

In October, the students in all four grades represented the dance department during our annual ARTS Information Night. In November, students went on a field trip to see critically acclaimed ProArteDanza's performance of Figaro 2.0 at the Fleck Dance Theatre in the Harbourfront Centre. The junior dancers were asked to perform at the Quest International Educational Conference and presented a piece called We See You. This piece explored breaking down the stigma of mental health and how we need to open the conversations about how we are feeling so students don't need to wear a mask to school.



Dance Arts Mackenzie



We were fortunate to have many guest artists this semester. The junior dancer students participated in a Kyle Kass hip hop storytelling workshop and Modern technique workshop lead by Megan Nadain. The senior dance students also participated in a jazz dance workshop with Lindsay Fell and the Grade 11 dance class also completed an African dance unit that culminated in a three-day workshop with African dance specialist Sharon Harvey.

The AMHS Dance Council has also been working very hard and has contributed to the dance program in many ways. This council has been a part of many school initiatives encouraging school spirit as well as giving back to the local community. The students have held weekly meetings and social gatherings to continue and solidify the bond between the students within the program. The Dance Council's mission is to increase the presence of dance within the hall of AMHS and this was definitely the case when they choreographed and presented a piece for the school's Remembrance Day assembly. Dance Council members have contributed to AMHS' Spirit Days such as the Halloween Festivities that included line dancing in the front foyer. More significantly, the Dance Council continued the initiative and raised over \$450.00 that will be donated to Dancers for Cancer which is an organization that contributes to an Arts Therapy Room at Toronto's Sick Kids Hospital. When the dancers reached their fundraising goal, they choreographed a holiday dance for staff members that was then performed at AMHS' Winterfest Assembly. It was a performance many will soon not forget!

Most recently, our graduating Grade 12 class just completed with a final culminating project known as The Graduate Showcase 2019. The senior students were each responsible to choreograph a piece of modern contemporary dance using student volunteers from the Grade 9, 10 and 11 classes. All of the students' hard work culminated in a truly successful evening at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Congratulations to the Grade 12 students on all of your hard work. Your choreography was absolutely beautiful and was a true testament to all of the hard work that you have completed over the last few years. A special thank you and congratulations goes out to all of the student performers who volunteered their time to make the performance what it was. In addition, the Grade 10 choreographed pieces based on themes they were passionate about and this was presented at a family show and share evening. What a beautiful night that was as the students shared their love of dance with an audience.

As we look towards the upcoming second semester, we are sure that it will also be filled with excitement. Students can expect to work on original pieces of choreography with their teachers as well as working with guest choreographers for the 9th annual Dance Expressions on Tuesday May 7, 2019 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Congratulations and thank you to all of the dance students as well as their parents for all of their hard work and support. It has been a wonderful semester and we are sure that 2019 will bring the same success!





Musical Production



Mackenzie Music proudly presented *Les Misérables: The School Edition* on December 6th and 7th at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. The students of the musical theatre classes performed four performances to sold-out audiences. The audiences were blown away by the musical proficiency, staging and professionalism demonstrated by all members of the production company.

The Mackenzie Music production of *Les Misérables* is a collaboration between the musical theatre classes and Arts Mackenzie departments, including a live student orchestra, sets designed by the visual arts students, a technical assistance from the theatre arts students.

This year, the students in the company presented workshops to our elementary school feeder schools before and after the show to make further connections to the musical work.

We thank the AMHS community for joining us for the performance and sharing the magic of *Les Misérables*.

Join us next year for our musical theatre production on December 12th and 13th, 2019.

ARTS

MACKENZIE

Music

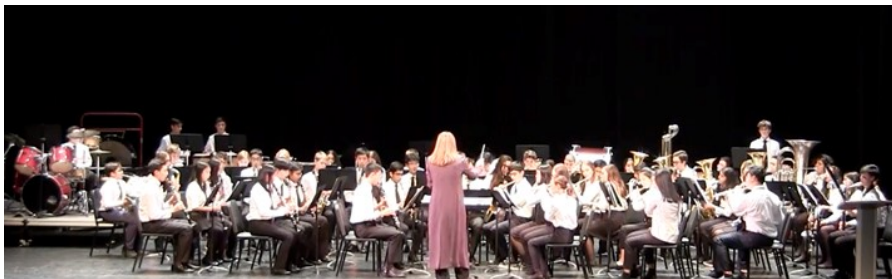
Department Head: E. Hudspith



The AMHS Music Department would like to congratulate all of the music students who have worked so hard this semester and taken part in many different concerts and events. We would also like to welcome Ms. Furois as a member of the music and theatre departments.



We started off the semester in October with multiple performances at the Arts Information Night. In November, the Chamber Choir performed for Remembrance Day. Later the same month,



“Showcase 2018” featured 300 music students performing in concert bands, choirs, orchestras, and jazz ensembles at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. The Music Department’s annual musical, “Les Miserables” was a huge success in December (with more details on a separate page).



Music students have had many extra opportunities both outside of the classroom and through interaction with guest artists. In October we joined the other Arts departments for a trip to Stratford to see the musical “Music Man. Over the semester, Arts

students in vocal, band, and strings all received multiple private lessons specific to their instruments in addition to participating in advanced workshops on performance skills. The Grade 11/12 Arts class studied world music and participated in clinics on everything from the music of India to Drum Circles. In January that class hosted a dinner and performance showcasing their work.



Finally, our Music Council hosted successful events for the music students, including the grade nine barbeque, a movie night, and a skating social.

Upcoming Dates:

- April 30-May 5, 2019 – Extended trip to Halifax and PEI (there are still a few spots left!)
- May 8, 2019 – *Fanfare 2019* at Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts
- May 16, 2019 – *Spring Celebration 2019* at Richmond Hill United Church
- May 28, 2019 – Strings and Concerto Recital
- May 30, 2019 – Music Banquet
- June 10, 2019 – Pops Concert at AMHS on the lawn

In second semester, we are looking forward to a busy performance schedule including concerts, music festivals, and our annual extended trip (this year to Halifax and PEI).





Visual Arts

Department Head: A. Bhaitia



Once again, it's been an eventful first semester in the visual arts department. One of the most outstanding semester one projects was the Grade 11 class' sets for our school's production of *Les Miserables* at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Our team of artists did a fantastic job of helping to create the atmosphere of the 1830's Paris slums. Perhaps the most notable newest addition within the school walls is the Horse of Cards, the life size Mackenzie Mustang made of playing cards which graces our foyer. Max and Anthony worked for weeks in creating this fantastic sculpture for our school. Another very memorable occasion this fall was our school's competing in the OCADU Markt'd sneaker design competition where one of our students, Kellyann, made it into the finals in Ottawa. It was a day of challenge and excitement! As always, a highlight of the semester was our annual AGO field trip. This year we took all grades of visual arts to see the Anthropocene exhibit. It was a definite eye-opener to humankind's interaction with our planet and inspired many social statement artworks. While the weather was warm, several art classes went on walks up to Mill Pond to do some plein air sketching. A tradition that is enjoyed every year when the weather permits.

Currently our film students are in the process of submitting films for the Vaughan International Film Festival and several media arts, photography and traditional arts students are gearing up for the York Region Skills Challenge which takes place at Seneca College in February. We look forward to what is sure to be a fantastic and creative second semester!



Please follow us on Twitter for updates and upcoming events @amhsvisa



Horse of Cards, the Mackenzie Mustang, with creators Trutneva and Maiorano



Kellyann, Imara, Isabella and Sophia at the Markt'd Shoe competition at OCADU



Set from AMHS's production of *Les Miserables*

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