



# Notes from the Studios

Department Head: C. Clarke



## Performing Arts Department (Theatre ARTS, Drama and Dance)



### A Semester Full of Inspiration! Performances, professional workshops, and field trips support a semester of creative activity in the Performing ARTS Department

The Performing ARTS students had a busy, successful semester working in various studio spaces. Highlights include: developing new Canadian work in all grades, performing at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts and other venues around York Region, Sears Drama Festival, field trips, student leadership with Dramatic Arts Council and Dance Council, guest artists and workshops! Check out what the Performing Arts students have been up to in semester two....







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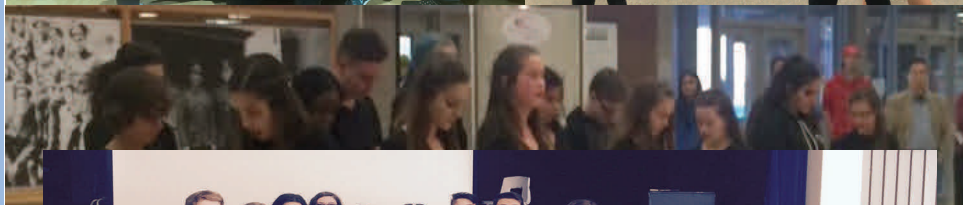


## Performing Arts Department (Theatre ARTS, Drama and Dance) *cont...*

### Fun From the Yellow School Bus

We love field trips and workshops!  
Highlights include:

- ◆ *Kinky Boots* with Tour of the Royal Alexandra Theatre
- ◆ Town of Richmond Hill Cultural Summit
- ◆ Acting Workshops by Theatre ARTS alumni Alicia Bender and Stephanie Smith
- ◆ RHCPA Performances: *Zero to Three*, April 12th (Grade 9 and 10) and *Nothing Is The End of the World (Except the End of the World)* May 17th
- ◆ Rogers Television Interview: <http://bit.ly/May17Production>
- ◆ World War I Inquiry Project
- ◆ York Regional Police/Empowered Students Partnership Social Media Awareness Performance
- ◆ Shakespeare in Action Workshops



**New Studio Space for September 2016!**

Theatre Arts, Dance Arts and Music Arts will enjoy classes and performance events in Studio 121, ARTS Mackenzie's brand new, multi-purpose studio!



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### Performing Arts Department (Theatre ARTS, Drama and Dance) cont...

#### Grade 9 and 10 Dramatic Arts

One of the biggest joys of an Open-level Drama class is that each and every semester is unique! This semester, the interest in student writing and storytelling was unprecedented, with so many creative ideas coming from a wide variety of students. We always begin with the foundations of live dramatic performance (stage image, movement, voice, and text), and what we build from there depends on the interests, passions, and personalities of each new group of students. Students already familiar with dramatic conventions had an opportunity to lead and support their peers, while those whose passions are not in stage performance had the opportunity to pursue design, sound, and other technical elements. Students also participated in a highly engaging workshop by Toronto company Shakespeare In Action, where they learned to approach challenging text playfully and to connect the mind, body, and heart to deliver compelling performances and to make themselves truly heard. Beyond the foundational skills and concepts of creating visually, emotionally, and intellectually engaging work from primarily human resources, this semester's Drama students also learned a variety of valuable work habits and learning skills. With so many ideas and always working within specific timelines ("the show must go on!") students learn how to turn an empty stage and few basic props into a version of reality that their audience can believe. Ingenuity, resourcefulness, time-management, resilience, compassion, collaboration, and inclusivity are just a few of the skills developed and demonstrated by this semester's grade 9 and 10 Drama students--skills that will serve them well in the years to come, both inside and outside of the Drama studio!

#### Grade 11 and 12 Dramatic Arts

In Mr. Eason and Ms. Coleman's Grade 11/12 Open Drama class this year, students were challenged to investigate language and character looking at the Elizabethan period and Realism with Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. The students also refined their skills by delving into the absurdist play, *The American Dream* by Edward Albee where they explored gender hierarchies and the use of repetition as a recurring motif. The culminating project called upon the students to devise a docudrama based on a topic of their choice. Issues such as sexism, bullying and conspiracy theories were pulled apart and explored dramatically. Students were asked to combine dramatic devices together and many integrated devices such as improvisation, tableau, reporting, film, poetry and dance into their final performances. The dedication of the students this year has allowed for some really wonderful work to come forward. Congratulations to all! the years to come, both inside and outside of the Drama studio!

#### Sears Drama Festival

Congratulations to the 2016 Sears Ontario Drama Festival Company for an outstanding student-produced staging of Tad Mosel's one-act play "Impromptu." The entire company received accolades from our adjudicator, Kelly Straughan, Executive Director of the Toronto Fringe Festival, with special mention of their careful script work and performance technique, and for tackling a challenging and thoughtful piece that satirizes life in the limelight. Awards of Merit for this year's production will go to Victoria Watson-Sepejak for directing, Joshua Kilimnick for performance, and the lighting team, Natasha Strezov and Roy Zvifel, for design and operation. The Performing Arts Department would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of Sears alumni and past award winners, Annalee Dimpfel, Jacob Lin, and Kiana Hagher. Special thanks to Kai Halligan for her instrumental stage management work and to Jenni Hearn for helping with sets and supporting her fellow company members.



## Dance ARTS Mackenzie

Department Head: C. Clarke



### Performing Arts Department (Theatre ARTS, Drama and Dance) cont...



## Dance ARTS Mackenzie

It has been yet another fantastic semester for the Alexander Mackenzie High School Dance Department. The past few months have flown by with many great achievements! While working diligently on their daily assignments, students had the opportunity to participate in workshops, field trips as well as developing their own choreography and performances. In March the students participated in a National Ballet of Canada field trip and saw absolutely outstanding performance of *La Sylphide*.

On May 10, 2016 the Dance Department put on it's annual gala entitled Dance Expressions at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. The show consisted of faculty and student choreography that varied from classical ballet, to tap and all the way to hip-hop. Student began to prepare for the show in March and worked with choreographers Kiera Punnett, Jordana Deveau and ARTS Mackenzie Dance alumni Lindsay Fell. The show culminated in a beautiful finale with all four grades participating. Dance Expressions is a true testament to the hard work and dedication of the dance students! As always, a great success!

Next September already looks to be an exciting start to the school year as we will have a full program of dance classes being offered from grade 9 through to grade 12. The Dance Department is looking forward to welcoming the new grade 9 students to the program as well as possibly participating in workshops with local Toronto and New York based choreographers and dance companies. The Dance Department is also incredibly excited to be moving into a new space at the start of the 2016-2017 school year. The ARTS Mackenzie Dance classes will now be taking place in a brand new state-of-the-art SPACIOUS studio! We are all incredibly excited for this next chapter!

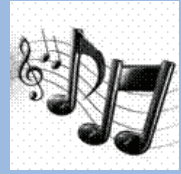
It has been yet another outstanding year for the dance program. Thank you to all of the students, parents and community members for their continued support. AMHS Dance faculty would like to send a huge congratulations to the dance students who truly commit themselves to the program and make the department what it is! The department would also like to wish the very best to the Graduating Class of 2016! We wish you the very best as you embark on a new chapter in your lives. Thank you for contributing and helping to build the family that we know as the Dance Department. Have a safe, healthy and happy summer.





# Music

Department Head: E. Hudspith



## Music Department

What a fantastic year we have had in the Music Department! From performances in festivals and concerts to our annual trip to performing in the community to our annual Music Banquet, we have made amazing memories!



We started semester two with our annual performance at the Richmond Hill Winter Carnival. A.M. Stages (our jazz band) and add9 (our jazz choir, led by Lilly Korkontzelos) entertained those in attendance and the performers were very happy with the 'spring-like' temperature – much easier to perform! Also, the Symphonic Band competed in the Kiwanis festival with the top bands from the GTA. We came in 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 'A' Class and tied for 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the Challenge Class, the two highest competitive classes there are. In York Region's own festival, Music Alive, our Women's Choir, Chamber Choir, Concert Band and String Orchestra all received Platinum awards. Our Symphonic Band and add9 received Gold+ and Intermediate Band received Gold. All outstanding results and we are so proud of all our students.



Our annual trip this year was to Chicago. We took 81 very enthusiastic students who, as always, represented our school, town and country very well. Thanks to Mr. Perri and Mrs. Carageorgopoulos for helping our music staff to supervise all of our students. We participated in workshops at Northwestern and Vandercooke Universities with amazing professors who taught and inspired us all. Our students took in the sights of the windy city, including "The Bean", Chicago 360, Andy's Jazz Club and the incredible aquarium, to name a few. We had a fantastic time and we're looking forward to next year's trip – destination: Walt Disney World!

Our busy spring performance schedule began with *Fanfare* and *Spring Celebration* in May. We entertained large audiences at all of our concerts and we were so amazed as to our students' improvement over the year. We are extremely excited to see what next year will bring! Our performance calendar continued into June with our Coffee House and Silent Auction, where soloists, small ensembles, jazz choir and jazz band delighted our audience.



Thank you to everyone who supported us by participating in our Silent Auction. Also, our Symphonic Band performed a wonderful "Pops concert" where we were all treated to a trip down memory lane, listening to the favourites from the past four years. Finally, A.M. Stages and add9 performed at the Oak Ridges Fair, where the new Lake Wilcox Park was officially opened. We were very honoured to be included in such an event and our groups performed amazingly!

Thank you to our amazing students who have worked so hard this year and amazed us with their talent, perseverance and dedication. The music staff feels very fortunate to have such amazing students to work with everyday and we look forward to another fantastic year! A special thank you also goes to all of the members of the Music Council. You are amazing ambassadors and you bring a special life to our musical 'family'.



# Visual Arts

Department Head: A. Bhaitia



## Visual Arts Department

As another school year comes to a close, we would like to thank all of our art students for their enthusiasm and the wonderful artwork they produced.

Over the course of the second semester we were fortunate to have two guest artists work with our students. In May, Steve Schulman joined us for a week of graphic novel drawing. Steve shared his wealth of knowledge and creativity with our students in helping them create their own one page 'short' graphic novel. In June, glass artist Bonnie Thomson worked with four of our art classes in helping them create fused glass tiles representing the four seasons. These tiles were glued to glass panels which will be framed and hung in our school library.

In March, we held our second annual Arts & Crafts Sale. All of our Arts Mack visual arts classes participated in the creation and selling of their art and craft items during our school's annual "Manicure For Cure" cancer fundraiser. The sale was a huge success and we are pleased to now call this our annual Arts fundraiser for cancer.

In the extracurricular department, the Arts & Culture Council (ACC) held our annual *Lava Night* in April; an opportunity for students to show off their musical, dramatic, dance skills and comedic timing. We always appreciate the amazing effort put forward by the council. It was a fantastic night of performances, including the fabulous Mac Rockers, our school's very own caretaking band who rocked the walls of our cafeteria! We even had an appearance from some alumni!

In early May, we had our fourth annual off-site student-run art show at Richmond Green's Boynton House. Positive comments came from the community as it was also part of 'Doors Open' Richmond Hill. The show featured painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, photography, film and mixed media works. A selection of works from the Boynton House show was then displayed at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts throughout June. Student works were also displayed and toured as part of the Richmond Hill Youth Art Festival this spring.

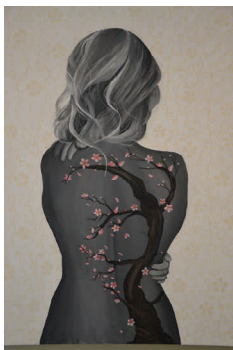
We would like to wish our graduating students all the best in their future endeavours. You have all contributed so much to the school and to the community over the past four years. You will all be greatly missed. Also, a thank you goes out to all the parents and guardians of our students for being so supportive. Have a great summer!



*Entelechy* Art Show at Boynton



*Umbrella Revolution*  
by Conan Chan



blabitty bla  
by Taia



Arts Mack grads at Boynton House

Alexander Mackenzie High School  
300 Major Mackenzie Drive West  
Richmond Hill, Ontario  
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