

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

THE MUSICAL THEATRE & ACTORS STUDIO



Director's Notes

I don't know about you, but March seemed to both come in and go out...like a cheetah! As is usually the case, come spring, the year seems to be flying by. And now, with us in the busiest season of the year for many of our students and families, it'll be graduation before you know it! With the hustle and bustle that comes with this time of the year, I hope you'll find the time to breathe and enjoy the journey. I always tell my seniors, "Don't wish it away. There'll be a time in the future where you'll have wished it to stay."

This eighth issue of *The Directors Cut* comes out fresh on the heels of Spring Break! I hope each of you found some time to relax and refresh with our time off. I found time to fit in a quick trip to New York City, where I was able to see Broadway's *Back to the Future* and Off-Broadway's *Titanique*. I highly recommend both; the latter perhaps for true Celine Dion fans!

Curricular-wise, over this past month students in our 2-credit classes have been tackling Duet/Trio performances. I cast each pairing and – after only about a week of total rehearsal time – students performed their final pieces in front of invited audiences, which included peers from the Academy's ASL and Dance courses and FHS' Advanced Theatre class. Meanwhile, students in our 1-credit classes are busy grasping the concepts related to *Particularization*, the art of dissecting and personalizing a song. Soon, they'll implement this work into performances of their very own [via pre-2000 musical theatre songs] and – just like their peers – will perform in front of invited audiences.

Erich DiCenzo

DIRECTOR OF THE MUSICAL THEATRE & ACTORS STUDIO



Broadway's Sierra Boggess Working with the Overtures Class of 2022

Our collaboration with Signature Theatre continues to grow and evolve as we work, in partnership, to determine how best to serve the young artists who make up the Musical Theatre & Actor's Studio. But perhaps the most exciting opportunity is still yet to come. On **Monday, May 13th**, Signature Theatre will host the Musical Theatre & Actor's Studio's third annual *Signature Spotlight Showcase*, an end-of-year performance in front of casting directors, agents, and industry stakeholders, where seniors will highlight their growth and talent. And one graduating senior will even be selected to participate in Signature Theatre's *Overtures: Musical Theatre Institute* at no cost! Final logistics of the event will be shared soon, but below you will find more information about this incredible opportunity!

Designed for college students and recent graduates, *Overtures* is a two-week intensive, professional training program designed to provide students with the necessary steppingstones from university training to working in musical theatre professionally. Rigorous and personalized instruction in vocal technique, song interpretation, acting and auditions in both group and private settings with professional directors, music directors, choreographers, casting directors and actors make *Overtures* a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Overtures 2024 runs Monday through Saturday, June 10-June 22, 10AM-9PM, with approximately nine hours of training each day, leaving sufficient time for meals and rest. Most days consist of a combination of classes, private sessions, and master classes. The experience culminates with an audition for local professional casting directors and a showcase for the public. Each student will also leave with high quality prerecorded monologues and songs for use in video auditions and on their personal websites.

Overtures is overseen by Signature's Artistic Department. In previous years, core faculty has included Signature's Artistic Director, Matthew Gardiner; award winning actress and voice teacher, Tracy Lynn Olivera; critically acclaimed choreographers like Kelly d'Amboise Crandall and Rickey Tripp; professional music director Bobby McCoy, and professional actors Gregory Wooddell and Holly Twyford. The 2024 faculty will be announced soon!

Following the audition for local casting directors, students perform a fully staged showcase for the public. This showcase features solos, duets, ensemble numbers and monologues. The 2024 *Overtures* showcase will take place on June 22 in the MAX Theater at Signature. The performance is free and open to the public. No reservations are accepted or required.

Visiting Voices: What Did Our Guests Have to Say?

On select Wednesdays and Thursdays throughout the month of February, prospective students were able to visit the Musical Theatre and Actors Studio during their school day. Visitors experienced, first-hand, what a day in the life of an MTAS Academy student is like. They were invited to be as active of participants as they wished, or just remain casual observers. Almost fifty students from across the county made it into the studio, and most of them jumped right into the action. Here are some of their reflections...

"I went to Fairfax Academy seeking more information on a program that I was interested in, and to my surprise I was greeted with a community of students that are dedicated to Musical Theatre, bring creativity and uniqueness to an ever-changing art form, and most importantly care for each other. I think the MTAS is an amazing opportunity that aspiring students who are interested in Musical Theatre should certainly look into!"

Matthew Garback [Chantilly HS]

"Going to the MTAS I thought it was going to be like my base school theater class, but I was pleasantly surprised as the class was nothing like I expected; in contrast to a typical theater class, we were working and learned about theater through practicing it. We would experiment with different tactics and exercises to develop and learn more about the art of theater. I had a great time!"

Leah Wadsworth [West Springfield HS]

"Visiting MTAS was an incredible experience, it really reminds me why I love theater! Everyone in the class was so welcoming and nice, and it really allowed the creativity to flow."

Lukas Simcox [Robinson SS]

"Visiting the MTAS academy was a highlight of my month, it was a great way to dive head-first and experience a class and workshop with the director. Most importantly, I had so much fun, and I even decided to audition based on my experience here at the MTAS academy!"

Iman Hassan [South Lakes HS]

"I'm so glad I got to experience MTAS last month! I was a little nervous at first, but everyone was so warm and welcoming, I could feel everyone's love of theater in the air, and I was so happy I had that opportunity to come visit."

Nathaniel Borrowman [Madison HS]

"Every single person in there was welcoming and kind. I received very helpful feedback on my 32-bar cut, learned some awesome choreography, and I just had a lot of fun overall!"

Elena Calsyn [Langley HS]

"I really enjoyed my visit to the academy! It's very different compared to any other theatre class I've been in. When I went there, I got to sing in front of the whole class, which was slightly terrifying, but I did enjoy it. Mr. Dicenzo was very kind and helpful with bringing out the full potential of my voice. I think he's a great teacher and I'm glad I went to visit MTAS academy."

Romain Dairay [Oakton HS]

"I had such an incredible experience visiting the MTAS academy! I was a little intimidated at first but was welcomed with open arms by all the students there. Mr. DiCenzo makes the class so enjoyable, and I had so much fun participating!"

Rosamy Perez Caban [Woodson HS]

"I had such a great time; the experience was like no-other I've had! Thanks to all for the amazing class."

Benjamin Mutterperl [Hayfield SS]



Oh, the Places You'll Go!

As you know, the Musical Theatre & Actors Studio is different from traditional base high school theatre programs in large part because of the emphasis on training for post-graduate plans. While some of our students are college or conservatory bound, other students may plan to take a gap year to save money or even audition and try to land local/regional gigs. Whatever their professional pursuits may be, we are excited to celebrate each one of our seniors.

As students begin to finalize their plans, they'll have the opportunity to share that with our MTAS community via our "Where Are You Going?" board. It serves as a decorative centerpiece of our classroom. So, as YOU begin to make those final decisions, be sure you communicate your commitment so we could spread the work and celebrate your success!



Class of 2022's Board Highlights Student Plans Ranging from West Point to Gap Years.

A LOOK AHEAD

Wednesday, April 10th

NO SCHOOL

Eid al Fitr

Thursday, April 11th

Signature Workshops

In-Class

Friday, April 12th

Signature Workshops

In-Class