
Providing Excellence in Musical Theatre Training and Performance

This past year has been a journey. There have been ups and downs and adjustments for everyone. We are forever grateful to be the space that hosts this incredible collection of students. It is a pleasure and a joy as an employer to have curated such a wonderful staff and to have expanded the programs as needs grow. It means we continue to grow as a company with more classes than ever. Our year has been full of growing programs, a run of Descendants the Musical, Spring Festival, and summer camps.

Because of flexible management of programs and a keen eye for areas of development, we've had multiple years of growth with an influx of new students. We had so many on the waitlist, that more hiring had to happen so we could accommodate a whole new class! This was a repeat of last year's growth, and an exciting trend for the company in a post-pandemic transition. For this season, we began developing a more structured framework for our class paths. Our JR, Intermediate and Senior branches of classes will continue to expand in the coming year. We are so privileged to have knowledgeable instructors who allow us to offer Stage Acting, Musical, and Devised theatre classes. This is along with excellent opportunities for older students to expand their skills in all kinds of aspects of performance and technical theatre.

We had an incredible time at our annual Destination Broadway fundraiser! This year, instead of just MainStage students, we had the whole school get involved. It was so joyful to see so many students who don't normally get the chance to interact, come together to create this season's fundraising cabaret. Seeing this fundraiser reflect the populous of the whole school is such a beautiful opportunity to highlight the variety of classes and different opportunities to learn curated here. This was a needed adjustment post-pandemic and we look forward to continuing on this path. The whole school will participate in next month's Destination Broadway. The whole CSOPA family in one place, coming together to support the non-profit dream of affordable theatre education for all!

Descendants was an exploration of more modern shows, as has been a trend for the MainStage program. This show presented the directing team and cast with some new creative challenges, and they absolutely rose to the task. Despite our battle with Chilliwack's annual January snowstorm, this team put on as many amazing performances as they could around the Cultural Centre's closures. In the coming year, we will be continuing our modern show trend with *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*. The themes of these shows speak to current young audiences and highlight the importance of our student matinees. Not only are we working to bring theatre education to our own students, but also we are bringing positive theatre experiences to young audiences, which promotes theatre attendance in our community.

CSOPA's Spring Festival for all the classes was a huge success! We had record breaking attendance this year. We watched with so much pride as students showcased all their hard work this year to such passionate audiences. The growth of the school has definitely presented new logistical challenges in how we schedule our festival, but what a great problem to have. We are working to make sure that ticket prices give audiences similar length shows without wearing out students or over-tasking our backstage workers—

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who are our Senior Stage students. It is exciting to see students supporting each other and to have such a school led festival.

Luckily after the hiccup of last year, we received the Canada Summer Jobs grant again this year. This meant we got to support one current CSOPA senior student and one Alumni in leading some stunning summer camps. We welcomed so many students for four separate weeks of theatre fun, and were overjoyed when many of them decided to stay for the rest of the year.

We offer a huge thank you to all the brilliant instructors, amazing students, and wonderful friends and families that made this 2023-2024 season so great. With our team continuing to grow and evolve, we are so excited to continue building what this place has to offer alongside our student body. The student body lets us know what they want to learn and we grow and adapt based on trends we see. Ultimately, it is the support of our students that leads our growth.

As a non-profit, CSOPA couldn't exist without the contributions of the generous community surrounding us. We ask for everyone's continued support to help us keep this place available to everyone. In an ideal world, we would love to be achievable for more families. The more sponsors we have, the lower our tuition could be. We hope you'll continue to help us foster this incredible sense of community and give your extraordinary students a space to tell their stories and joyfully create in the midst of life's unexpected.

Sincerely,

Kyra Esau-McGahey
Artistic Director

Adrienne Reitsma
Administrative Director