

# Performing Arts news

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The Performing Arts Department had a very busy end of Term 3, and Term 4 has begun with preparations for the many events this term. We are looking forward to our regular events – our Junior School Ensembles Concert, Music Under the Stars, Musical Theatre Showcase, Family Carols Service, Junior School Prize Giving, and Senior School Speech Night. We have also held very productive rehearsals in preparation for our Europe Music Tour in December. Our Music and Drama students continue to represent Meriden with excellence and a commitment to their craft.

At the end of Term 3, our Year 12 cohort of Music and Drama students performed the practical requirements and submitted the major work components of the HSC. We were very proud of all the girls who worked consistently on their repertoire and projects throughout the course. Many girls achieved OnSTAGE and ENCORE nominations for their outstanding performances.

We look forward to hearing the selections for the final concerts at the Seymour Centre (Drama) and the Sydney Opera House (Music), as well as the results of the HSC major work submissions for Drama projects, Music compositions, and essays.

## Drama HSC

We received some excellent news from NESA regarding our Year 12 HSC Drama students. 15 students were nominated for OnSTAGE, the showcase of exemplary performances from this year's HSC practical exams.

Individual nominations included:

- Ella Cho for her heartwarming performance, *Journey*.
- Abbie Elzinga for her powerful performance of *The Literati*.
- Anastasia Ibrahim for her performance of Christine from *Phantom of the Opera*.
- Eva O'Dell for her moving portrayal of Angela in *Natural Shocks*.

Three of Meriden's Group Performances also earned nominations. They were:

- Mila Burdett, Abbie Elzinga, Arshia Nanda, Eva O'Dell and Keira Rippon for their satirical performance, *The Federal Underground Committee of Knowledge and Espionage*.
- Joyce Chung, Louise Kim, Mikhayla Lobo and Celeste Ryan for their witty take on Renaissance artists in *The Art of Sabotagio*.
- Ella Cho, Josephine Graham, Grace Hargreaves, Sara Hawley and Angelina Joannou for their hilarious exploration of libraries and AI in *Shhh! Secret Society of Scholars*.

Congratulations to all the Drama students and to Miss Graetz for her wonderful teaching and organisation of this large cohort.



Abbie Elzinga



Ella Cho



Eva O'Dell



Anastasia Ibrahim



Louise Kim, Celeste Ryan, Mikhayla Lobo and Joyce Chung



Arshia Nanda, Eva O'Dell, Keira Rippon, Mila Burdett and Abbie Elzinga



Ella Cho, Josephine Graham, Angelina Joannou, Grace Hargreaves and Sara Hawley

## Music HSC

In Music, 11 students were nominated for ENCORE. This is an outstanding achievement for all the girls, ably led by Mrs Fienberg, Miss Hann, and Mrs Cassar who continue to provide exceptional guidance in the subject. A huge thank you to Ms Cook and to Mr Cassar for accompanying and organising external musicians for the performances. This was a large cohort for Music, and both staff members are highly valued for their expertise.



Josephine Graham - Voice (Music 1)



Alina Yuan - Violin (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Amanda Zhong - Flute (Music 1)



Maddy Wood - Violin (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Ingrid Benz - Piano (Music 2)



Selina Wang - Violin (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Joyce Chung - Piano (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Molly Grogan - Oboe (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Annabelle Desmond - Viola (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Ellie Dong - Piano (Music 2 and Music Extension)



Meredith Xu - Cello (Music 2)

## Amadeus

At the end of last term and in the holidays, several Amadeus students participated in a variety of competitions, concerts and festivals

Year 9 student, Symphony Shi, recently returned from China after being selected to participate in the Tianjin Juilliard Piano Festival. This festival aims to bring Juilliard's artistic and educational mission to a wider audience. Symphony had the opportunity to perform in solo recitals and masterclasses with outstanding educators such as Boris Slutsky from Yale School of Music, and Professor Yoheved Kaplinsky, Chairperson of the Piano Department at The Juilliard School.

The festival also celebrates collaborative music making and Symphony had the opportunity to rehearse and perform the first movement of Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 14* with the QingXin Ensemble, a professional chamber music ensemble in China comprised of graduates from Juilliard.



Symphony Shi, Year 9



Emma Rose Koeswandy, Year 9

Emma Rose Koeswandy, Year 9, travelled to Germany to participate in the Pianale Piano Festival. Here, she had the opportunity to perform in beautiful venues such as the Hochhaus Museum and the Vonderau Museum. She also learnt from a range of outstanding professors. A highlight for Emma Rose was performing Chopin's *Ballade No. 3* in front of Professor Alberto Nosè, one of the distinguished Chopin competition adjudicators.

Some very exciting news for Sharon Zhao, Year 11, who earlier in the month won the John Curro National Youth Concerto Competition. This was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this prestigious event which has celebrated Australia's finest young string players, launching the careers of many who have gone on to achieve national and international acclaim. Past winners have included Richard Tognetti, Nicholas Milton, Emily Sun, Ray Chen and Meriden Old Girl, Teresa Yang. It is wonderful that Sharon has now achieved this amazing accolade along with the \$3,000 prize money. Sharon was also awarded the Veronika Butta memorial prize.

Sharon was very busy over the holidays, along with Symphony, who were both selected as NSW State Finalists in the 2MBS Fine Music National Young Virtuoso Award and in the holidays performed in their radio studios.



Sharon Zhao, Year 11

## Recent Eisteddfods

### Sydney Eisteddfod

#### Connie Liu

First Place String Sonata (15 Years and Over)

#### Alice Wu

First Place Violin (12 Years)

#### Gabriella Wu

Second Place Open Age Cello

## **Symphony Shi**

Alf and Pearl Pollard Memorial Award

## **Wollongong Eisteddfod**

### **Catherine Meng**

First Place Junior Piano Championship Solo (12 Years and Under)

First Place Baroque Piano Solo (12 Years and Under)

Second Place Piano Solo (12 Years and Under) Second Place Sonata Solo (12 Years and Under)

Second Place Australian Composer Award (12 Years and Under)

## **St George Eisteddfod**

### **Andrea Jin**

First Place Piano (12 Years and Under)

First Place Study (12 Years and Under)

Second Place Sonata (12 Years and Under)

### **Sarah Lin**

First Place Open Piano (13 -16 Years)

### **PeiQing Ling**

Studio 65 13-15 Years Encouragement Award

## **Ryde Eisteddfod**

### **Cynthia Bui**

First Place Organ Competition

Best Baroque Performance

Invited to perform in a recital at St Andrew's Cathedral

## **Music performance opportunities**

Year 5 student and exceptional harpist, Bella Sun, has been invited to perform with the Ku-ring-gai Youth Orchestra and will feature as a solo harpist in the Sydney Harps Recital at the iconic Sydney Opera House this November.

## **AMEB outstanding results**

Emma Rose Koeswandy achieved her LMusA on violin in the holidays. This is an outstanding achievement for Emma Rose on top of her piano studies.

Our Junior School students are excelling in higher level AMEB examinations. Well done to Clarice, Bella and Constance on this amazing level of performance.



Bella Sun, Year 5

### **Clarice Zhong, Year 4**

Grade 8 Cello, A+

AMusA in Piano

## Bella Sun, Year 5

Grade 8 Harp, A+

Grade 8 Comprehensive Piano, A+

## Constance Gus, Year 5

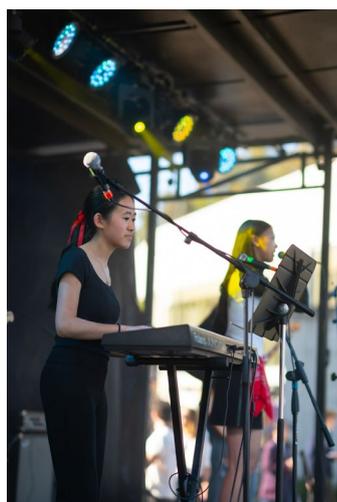
AMusA in Violin

## Rock Band

Last month, five girls from our Year 10 Rock Group - Cynthia Bui, Katherine Fanning, Joanna Li, Bella Nguyen and Chloe Rae - competed in Barker's College's first Battle of the Bands as part of their Spring Fair celebration.

The competition saw a total of 35 band entries from a range of schools in the Sydney area playing a variety of rock repertoire including, Paramore, Pearl Jam, Kiss, AC/DC and Green Day.

Performing to a sizable crowd of afternoon revellers, our girls performed a technically tight and energetic performance of *Tear in My Heart* by Twenty One Pilots, complete with matching red bandanas. The girls' hard work and dedicated practise paid off, with effective textural changes, a swing-section style shift, and varied dynamics. The addition of a spot of pyrotechnics and stage smoke collectively enhanced the whole performance experience, with our girls doing Meriden proud while clearly having a great time performing.



## Sydney Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra

On Saturday, 13 September, Year 10 students, Yolanda Dolenac and Tina Dong, along with Elaine Huang, class of 2024, performed with the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and Orchestra at the Sydney Opera House. The oratorio, *A Child of Our Time*, is a modern classic inspired by the Passions of Bach and Handel oratorios, combined with African American spirituals. It is wonderful to see the Meriden musicians performing such significant works in a professional orchestra.



Elaine Huang (Class of 2024), Yolanda Dolenac and Tina Dong

## Symphony Orchestra



Mr Fabian Russel

Last month, renowned conductor Fabian Russell worked with the Symphony Orchestra, Tour Orchestra, and Chamber Strings. Mr Russell, who first adjudicated our orchestra at the Sydney Eisteddfod two years ago, flew in from Brisbane to spend two hours in a comprehensive workshop.

Based in Melbourne at the Australian National Academy of Music, Mr Russell was highly impressed with the quality of the girls' playing. He noted that:

"In my travels, Meriden is one of the most impressive senior school music programs I have encountered in the country. The high level of your musicians along with their maturity and discipline is commendable. It was a pleasure to work with such an exceptional cohort of young musicians."

Well done to all the girls in the orchestras, and a special mention to Yolanda Dolenac and Tina Dong for fitting in a rehearsal at the Opera House immediately after the workshop.

## Theatresports

We are thrilled to announce that our Meriden team won the annual Meriden and Trinity Theatresports Competition!

It was a fantastic afternoon that included an improv workshop followed by a three-round competition. A special thank you must go to our dedicated Meriden supporters in the audience. As any performer knows, the energy of a great audience plays a huge role in the success of an event. Our supporters generated a magnificent atmosphere that the team undoubtedly fed off to produce their winning, magical performance.



## Ms Jodie Spooner-Ryan

Director of Music (P-12)