

Tenaflly Public Schools
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Tenaflly High School Performs Original Production “21st Century Broadway Musical Project” for Live and Streamed Audience

Students perform for live parent audience and stream production for community

For Immediate Release

Tenaflly, NJ – June 14, 2021 – Tenaflly High School brought Broadway back to life on May 13th with its original production *21st Century Broadway Musical Project*, performing for the first time in more than a year for a live audience comprised mostly of parents and livestreaming the event for the community. The show, a compilation of modern Broadway tunes from a range of shows, including *Hamilton*, *American Idiot*, *Spamalot*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, and more, included original dialogue primarily written and performed by senior Sam Vukic.

“I thought it would be interesting, as all of the songs were from different musicals, to have the story be that this was a pitching session,” said Vukic. “But I also wanted it to be a pitching session that wasn’t going very well. The script ended up being around eight pages of continuous monologue, which was a lot to memorize. But I’m really happy that through this musical I was able to highlight a lot of my favorite musicals and gush over them for an hour.”

The concept created by theater director and teacher Samuel Ahn-Cooper was combined with Vukic’s idea to create a show that highlighted a range of musicals, providing the students more musical choice.

“This show really enabled the students to showcase their interests and skill sets,” said Ahn-Cooper. “This included Sam writing the dialogue to tie the performances together and then performing the dialogue. It was a great show to do as our first show to both a live and streamed audience.”

Other cast and crew members included seniors Jaden Salmon, Vukic, Naomi Zafirir, and David Zhitkov; juniors Luca Ahn-Cooper, Rayea Jain, Hank Jennings, Jordan Kluger, Sadie Lehrfeld, Arden Segaloff, Rebecca Teall, and Ziv Zaifman; sophomore Nina Bogosian, Karis Cho, Juliana

Fukui, Gillie Halfone, Valentina Orozco-Herrera, Micaella Ramirez-Cruz, Taleen Torosian, Michela Wallach, and Sivan Yoskowitz; and freshman Grace Chung, Arpineh Halajian, Mika Harari, Arda Oral, Jake Pleva, and Mira Shah.

In addition, everything about the show was digitized, from the livestreaming to the online programs accessed via a unique QR code. Teacher Andrew Graziano worked with Ahn-Cooper on behind-the-scenes production work and creating the online program for the show, which allowed the streamed audience to view the same program as the live audience. The QR code provided instant access to the program for everyone.

“This truly was a collaboration of our amazing performing arts team,” added Ahn-Cooper. “Our Director of Choirs and Orchestras James Millar conducted and played with our band and string quartet and taught the music to the actors. Our media and television broadcasting teacher Steve Moger worked his magic on creating the simple, clean, and edgy set and lighting that worked for each individual piece. And former parent and still volunteer Rob Paustian is a professional sound designer who helps us with all the mics and sound boards for the performances. He makes it all sound professional.”

The show, which opened with Vukic and the ensemble performing “American Idiot” from the show by the same name, and closed with the ensemble performing “17 Reprise” from *Heathers*, also included songs from *Fun Home*, *Spamalot*, *Waitress*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Once*, *Last Five Years*, *Urine Town*, *Spring Awakening*, *Avenue Q*, *Hamilton*, *Songs for a New World*, and *Urine Town*.

For more information on the Tenafly Public School District, please visit the district website at www.tenaflyschools.org.



Tenafly High School senior David Zhitov performs *Run Freedom Run* from the show *Urine Town* at the high school’s spring musical production.



Tenafly High School senior and show emcee Sam Vukic wrote the entire dialogue for the school's spring musical, "21st Century Broadway Musical Project", to tie the show's varied musical numbers together in a fun and interesting way.



Tenafly High School sophomore Nina Bogosian performs *Stars and the Moon* from the show Songs for a New World at the high school's spring musical production "21st Century Broadway Musical Project."

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