WISHTREE

THE PLAY

APRIL 23RD

HARRISON HIGH SCHOOL

ALL IN THEATER COMPANY

2024-2025

ADAPTIVE THEATER



WISHTREE

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Adapted for the stage by Kathy Morrow
Adapted for HHS Adaptive Theater 2025 by Leah Moore

CAST

Alessandro Rosales	Lewis, the Kitten
Anon Yoshimura	Louise, The Owl
Arata Ono	Harold, the Owl
Flynn Williams	Moe, the Crow
Gianna Aubry	Francesca
Jacob Bevilacqua	Flash, the Opossum
Jacob Terrana	Bongo, the Crow
Jane Ceglio	Agnes, the Owl
Jessica Santorsola	Clark, the Kitten
Jessie Vukel	Jo, the Crow/Mother
Krista Vella	Samar
Koen Reiff	You 3, the Raccoon
Laura Novak	Big Ocean, the Possum
Lindsay Rosenbaum	You, the Raccoon
Maddie DiFiore	Rolo, the Owl
Matthew Cirillo	Hairy Spiders, the Opossum
Max Cirillo	You 2, the Raccoon
Mia Petrozza	Pepper, the Skunk
Moustafa Elgallad	Hot Buttered Popcorn, the Skunk
Neeve Kenny	Police Officer Sandy, Toddler
Nicolas Gomez Coronel	Stephen
Rosella Paniccia	Gertrude , the Owl
Samuel Saes	Red, the Oak Tree
Flynn Williams	Moe, the crow
Timothy Yu	Fresh Baked Bread, the Skunk

ORCHESTRA

Beverly Kang, Composer
Mizuki Horiuchi
Sami Ramierez
Oliver Schenk
Zayden Williams
Megan Torre

TECH CREW

Ron Blaustein
Carol Brandt
Benji Ferris
Gabriella Pasqua
Lily Vallieres
Nick Pelliccio

THE STORY OF WISHTREE

The play is an adaptation of Katherine Applegate's novel, Wishtree. It centers on a magical tree named Red as he listens to the hopes of the people and animals in the neighborhood. Red watches as a new neighbor, Samar, moves into the neighborhood and struggles to feel comfortable in her new home. The animals hear her wish for a friend and want to help make this come true.

When Red is vandalized with the word "leave," Samar is confronted with her loneliness. Red, determined to help, breaks the rule that trees are not allowed to talk to humans, and helps to create a friendship between Samar and her neighbor, Stephen. Through storytelling, Red reveals the tree's history as a symbol of love and unity, rooted in the diversity of the neighborhood.

The community comes together with a plan to save Red after a plan arises to cut down the tree. The story reminds us of what can bloom when people are accepting of one another.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

When brainstorming what text should be used for our first production in Adaptive Theater, I knew it needed to capture both the spirit of the course and our Harrison community at large. With messages of fostering a strong community and cultivating inclusivity, Wishtree by Katherine Applegate was a clear frontrunner.

The great oak tree, Red, reminds us of the importance of listening, collaborating, and sharing our stories. Today's production is a culmination of these ideas. The partnership with our teaching artists, Kathy Morrow and Adam Swartz, provided a thoughtful adaptation of the script and captivating puppetry, turning the show into a sensory experience for our students.

Then, the real work began. During our Adaptive Theater class, the actors explored the themes and characters of the play, brainstormed personal wishes, and their favorite songs so we could incorporate them into the show. The adapted script celebrates each student's individual mode of communication. We worked for three months with guest student actors, getting to know one another, laughing and learning - even practicing our lines in the hallway. Additionally, our teaching assistants and aides, Cindy Cho, Andy Espinal, Jennifer Garcia, Jennifer Inglis, with special help from Christiane Nakad and Daniela Crupi, brought our story to life with their patience and guidance.

Every aspect of this show has been created through a partnership among the students. Additionally, I am so proud to showcase the artwork of our student body, from the collaboration of the program to the Wishtree installation in the library. Even these director's notes received a careful conference in the Writing Center. Through the support of our music department, an original score has been composed for our production. Our audience is filled with students who have participated in workshops to learn about neurodiversity. From the sets to the staging, this is entirely the work of the students of Harrison High School.

Our group, the All In Theater Company, welcomes you to the beautiful world of Wishtree. We have loved transforming our space into a place where community flourishes because people authentically listen, celebrate individuality, and support a diversity of stories. As Sammy's character, Red, reminds us, "We can tell stories". On behalf of the cast and crew of Wishtree, we feel the same.

- Enjoy the show! Leah Moore

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Alessandro Rosales - (Lewis, the Kitten): Alessandro loves the color red, walking, and watching tv. HIs favorite character is Sonic. He likes to be in the play because of the singing. He wishes for time to travel.



Anon Yoshimura - (Louise, the Owl): Anon is a junior and excited to participate in Wishtree. She loves to dance, read, and crochet. She wishes for a pet dog.



Arata Ono - (Harold, the Owl): Arata loves to play video games, eat apples and strawberries. His favorite movie is Monsters, Inc. He wishes to go on a trip on an airplane.



Benji Ferris - (Tech member): Benji has been working very hard on this play. He enjoyed his time meeting the cast and can't wait to see his classmates give their best on the final day!



Beverly Kang - (Conductor): Beverly is a junior and loves to learn music, play golf, and spend time with her dog, Peanut. Her favorite colors are blue and pink. Beverly wishes for better grades.

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Carol Brandt - (Tech crew member): Carol Brandt is a sophomore at Harrison High School and is helping out as tech. She currently enjoys doing the HHS productions, and was previously in Radium Girls, Mary Poppins, Midsummer Night's Dream, and Mean Girls. She wishes the best luck to the cast!



Ella Zamek - (Assistant Director/Narrator): Ella Mae Zamek is a junior who likes to sing, dance, and hang out with her friends! Her favorite color is yellow and she loves to watch Gilmore Girls with her mom. She wishes for summer and to always have music in her life.



Flynn Williams - (Moe, the Crow): Flynn is a sophomore who likes to read, listen to music, and debate. His favorite color is blue and when he's bored, he watches netflix. He wishes for a more compassionate world with kindness.



Gabriella Pasqua - (Design/Tech crew member): Gabriella is a sophomore that enjoys digital creativity and design. She enjoys helping in and out of her school community and wishes for the success and positivity of those around her.

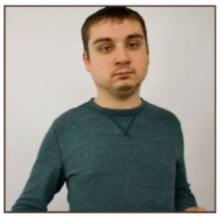


Gianna Aubry - (Francesca): Gianna is so excited to help out with this amazing project and loves to sing, dance, and do anything art-related. She wishes for more music!

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Jacob Bevilacqua - (Flash, the Opossum): Jacob loves Paw Patrol, the Grumpy Old Troll from Dora, and the color purple. He likes to see fire trucks and go to the pool. He wishes for snow.



Jacob Terrana - (Bongo, the Crow): Jacob's favorite songs are Happy and Can't Stop the Feeling. He loves to watch Monsters, Inc and swim. He wishes for more time with his family and more Christmas.



Jane Ceglio - (Agnes, the Owl): Jane's favorite characters are Sonic and the Ninja Turtles. She loves the color pink, and she wishes for more time to watch Sonic the Hedgehog.



Jessica Santorsola - (Clark, the Kitten): Jess loves to watch the movie Monsters, Inc and play on her IPad. She wishes for more time to play with her favorite yellow beads.



Jessie Vukel - (Jo, the Crow): Jessie is a junior who loves to read and play tennis. She is so proud of everyone in the show and excited she could participate. She wishes to do God's will in her life.

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Krista Vella - (Samar): Krista loves the color orange and to go horseback riding. Her favorite characters are the Disney princesses Tiana, Mulan, and Ariel. She loves being in the play because of singing, clapping, everyone cheering, friendship, and hugging. She wishes for love, families, puppies, toys, and travelling.



Koen Reiff - (YOU 3, the Raccoon): Koen is a hard working sophomore that loves playing lacrosse and swimming. His favorite movie is Good Will Hunting. He wishes to continue to help others.



Laura Novak - (Big Ocean, the Opossum): Laura is a sophomore and loves learning about sign language. She believes ASL is a powerful way to express herself and expand both her creativity and understanding of the world. She wishes for kindness in her heart and to always have a smile on her face.



Lily Vallieres - (Tech crew member): Lily is proud to be part of the tech team, working behind the scenes to bring the production to life and make sure every detail runs smoothly.



Lindsay Rosenbaum - (You, the Raccoon): Lindsay loves the colors pink and purple. She loves to go outside and swim. Her favorite character is Elsa. She loves to be in the play because of all the singing. She wishes for more hugs.

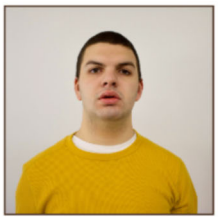
CAST AND CREW BIOS



Maddie DiFiore - (Rolo, the Crow): Maddie is a junior at Harrison High School. she is so excited to be apart of the play! Outside of the school, she enjoys science, journaling, and reading.



Megan Torre - (Orchestra member): Megan contributes to the live music for this production as a member of the orchestra, helping to enhance the atmosphere and support the performance. She can't wait to see the final result!



Matthew Cirillo - (Hairy Spiders, the Opossum): Matthew likes going for walks. His favorite colors are red and purple. He likes to write long numbers on his talker. He wishes for more curly fries.



Max Cirillo - (YOU 2, the Raccoon): Max's favorite color is red. He loves to play on the IPad at home and take naps. His favorite character is Barney. He loves to be in the play because he loves to be silly. He really wishes for more hats.



Mia Petrozza - (Pepper, the Skunk): Mia is a sophomore who enjoys helping out in her community. She has a bunch of animals too! She wishes to continue helping out others in the future.

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Mizuki Horiuchi (orchestra member): Mizuki is amazed by the incredible ideas coming together for the play! She's proud to be part of a group of students working hard to present their talents and give the audience a memorable experience.



Moustafa Elgallad - (Hot Buttered Popcorn, the Skunk): Moustafa loves the color green and playing on the computer. His favorite show is Rugrats and his favorite movies are Tangled and Sonic the Hedgehog. He wishes to take a road trip.



Nichollas Pelliccio - (Tech Crew member): Nick enjoys reading, writing and playing the guitar. He wish for a Sicilian pie from L. And B. Spumoni's in Brooklyn.



Neeve Kenny - (Police Officer Sandy, Toddler): Neeve is a junior and she has been involved with theatre her whole life. She is involved with the HHS Playhouse and Footlight players here at HHS. She has loved helping out with this production and is very proud of everyone involved and she is so happy she got to have this experience! She wishes for happiness.



Nicolas Gomez Coronel - (Stephen): Nicolas's favorite color is pink. He likes to go outside to color. He likes to watch the show Mia and Me because it has unicorns in it, which are his favorite. He wishes to live in Paraguay with his Grandmother. He hopes the audience likes the play and hears when he says, "I wish for a flying skateboard." He is proud of himself for being in the play.

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Oliver Schneck - (Orchestra member): Oliver, a senior, is assisting in the production by playing an instrument and adding more magic to the play with the sound of music.



Ron Blaustein - (Tech Crew member): Ron is a sophomore who enjoys hiking, baking, and creating things (ike the set). Ron is glad he could help out with the show and is excited to see the results of the cast's hard work. He wishes for nice weather so people can spend time in nature.



Rosella Pannicia - (Gertrude the Owl): Rosella, a Junior at HHS, has seen the effort everyone has been giving to accomplish this play! She believes all the students will enjoy this experince!



Samantha Ramieriez - (Orchestra member): Sami, a senior, is glad she is a part of this.. Her violin skills will bring shivers to the crowd! She can't wait to see it all put together on the final day!



Samuel Saes - (Red, the Oak Tree): Sammy loves the color blue, going for walks, and watching TV. His favorite characters are the Avengers. He wishes to fly on an airplane to go to Brazil.

CAST AND CREW BIOS



Timothy Yu - (Fresh Baked Bread, the Skunk): Timmy loves to play on his IPad and sing songs. His favorite characters are the Wiggles and Ariel. He loves to be in the play because he loves music. He wishes to listen to “How Far I’ll Go” and for it to be Christmas.



Zayden Williams - (Orchestra member): Zayden is glad to work with his classmates on this special project. He knows the final project will be amazing!

EXTENDING THE STAGE: THE WISH TREE AT HHS

In concert with the production, the HHS Library has been turned into a Wish Tree. The entire HHS community is invited to place wishes on our “Tree” throughout the days and weeks following the play. The library installation was designed and installed under the leadership of Matt Carrea as president of the HHS Art club with the unflagging support of club advisor Sarah Rowe. Many others helped and their names are listed in the Thank you’s.

For more information about the book, the production and the Wish Tree tradition check out the HHS library's resource page: https://researchguides.harrisoncsd.org/WishTree

A NOTE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

I have learned so many things throughout this process, but the most important lesson has been that even though this is real life, wishes can come true. A wish is a desire, a hope, a light that leads us through our darkest times. By sharing our wishes we are able to share a part of ourselves, a piece of our identity that is crucial to understanding who we are. By listening to the wishes of others we help each other to feel seen and heard. Through our production we show that communication comes in many forms such as writing, facial expressions, using AAC devices, sign language, spoken word, and music. One of our greatest wishes was to put on this play and share our stories, and through working together we have been able to make this happen. Our community will rally around people when they need help, and collaborate to create something bigger than ourselves.

Being able to work with these actors every week has been a highlight of my year and I am so grateful for the opportunity to grow together. We start almost every theater class by saying and signing the words “everyone is welcome”. We feel deeply that there is a place for everyone in our community, and as the wishers show by placing the word “stay” on the Wishtree, acceptance and inclusivity are integral in growing a diverse community such as the one at Harrison High School. Like a tree, the branches of kindness extend into every aspect of life. By lifting our voices, a chorus of stays can make the world of a difference against one unkind word.

I hope you enjoy the show and in the wise words of Fresh Baked Bread, The Skunk, “Goodbye everyone, boom sha boom; we were together, boom sha boom!”

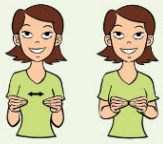
- Ella Mae Zameck

A NOTE FROM THE COMPOSER

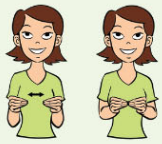
Music has a unique ability to unite people. Throughout my journey at HHS, I have had access to extraordinary opportunities like performing in the pit orchestra, playing in NYSSMA Majors, and learning to compose music through the IB Music Program. Composing for the Adaptive Theater production of Wishtree has been an honor. I was so excited to collaborate with the students in the production and the talented musicians in the pit orchestra. The composition is intended to capture the whimsical and dreamy environment of the production, evoking a sense of nostalgia that words can often fail to express. I hoped to bring the Adaptive Theater class's creativity to life through a different medium. Playing a small part in this wonderful production has been such a pleasure. I am so proud of the students who have come together to perform and share their talents.

- Beverly Kang

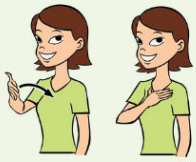
WISHTREE SONG
'THE MORE WE GET TOGETHER'

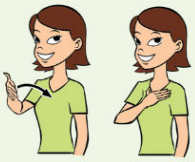
The **more**  We get **together** 

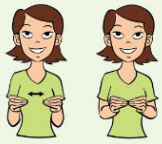
Together
Together 

The **more**  we get **together** 

The **happier**  we'll be.

'Cause your **friends**  are **my**  **Friends** 

And **my**  **Friends**  are your **friends** 

The **more**  we get **together** 

The **happier**  we'll be.

GOODBYE SONG

JOIN US AS WE SING ONE OF OUR FAVORITE SONGS...

Goodbye Everyone,
Boom Sha Boom.

We were together,
Boom Sha Boom.

Let's get the rhythm of the hands
We've got the rhythm of the hands.

Let's get the rhythm of the feet
We've got the rhythm of the feet.

Let's get the rhythm of the head
We've got the rhythm of the head.
Let's get the rhythm of the Hips
We've got the rhythm of the hips.

Let's Get the rhythm of the whole body
We've got the rhythm of the whole body.

Goodbye Everyone,
Boom Sha Boom.

We were together,
Boom Sha Boom.

THANK YOU!

Dr. Louis Wool
Dr. Lisa Mulhall
Dr. Brian Ladewig
Timothy Whipple
Kim Beukema
Larry Mastrota
Maria Pace
HHS Custodial Crew
Kathy DeCarlo
Rebecca Salerno
Liz Lifrieri
Andy Nicol
Jennifer Toscano
Antonia Simao
Matt Royal
Dr. Jaimie Kanter
Catherine Johnson
Sarah Rowe
Noah Platte
Deanna Loertscher
Bianca Mollicone
Brittany Pickel
Lindsey Reilly
Judi Ford
Liz Bruns
Zara Young
Liz Hill and the Friends of Rachel
Karen Rondon
Jenny Park
Karen Oyola
Dr. Drew Patrick
Monica DeBold
Zachary Moore
Mona Witman
Katie Martucci
Gabriella Pasqua
Nick Pelliccio
Laura Novak
Ella Zamek

Jason Douglas
The students in PACE
Anon Yoshimura
Beverly Kang
Sarah Palefsky
Matthew Carrea
Carter Welfer
Emma Agosto
Nichole Reiff
Harrison Food Pantry
Adeena Naeem
Ms. Rowe's Visual Arts students
Andy Espinal
The HHS Tech Crew
Christiane Nakad
Jennifer Inglis
Daniela Crupi
Cindy Cho
Jennifer Garcia
HHS Security
HCSD Board of Education



Thank you
to our guest teaching artists:
Kathy Morrow and Adam Swartz!