

# THE LIGHTNING THIEF

THE PERCY JACKSON MUSICAL



18-20 June | 7pm | Big School

WHITGIFT



# THE LIGHTNING THIEF

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

At its core, *The Lightning Thief* is a story about identity, belonging, and the power of embracing who you truly are. Percy Jackson, a boy who has never quite fit in – at school, at home, or even in his own skin – discovers that the very things that make him different are, in fact, his greatest strengths. For young people navigating the complexities of adolescence, this message is not only resonant, but vital.

The musical also explores themes of friendship, resilience, and standing up for what is right, even when the odds feel insurmountable. In a world that can often feel uncertain and overwhelming, *The Lightning Thief* reminds us that young people possess extraordinary strength, voice, and value – and, crucially, that they deserve to be heard. Their perspectives matter, their stories matter and their place in shaping the world around them is important and essential.

What makes this musical particularly special is its ability to blend myth with modernity, humour with heart and fantasy with very real human truths. It invites us to reflect on who we are, where we come from, and what we are capable of becoming.

The show's theatrical style has also offered us a unique opportunity to celebrate the

magic of live performance. With maximum imagination, our students have used physical theatre, puppetry and multi-roling to conjure a world that is as epic as it is inventive. This approach not only embraces the spirit of creative storytelling but also empowers young performers to take ownership of the stage—proving that with enough heart and ingenuity, anything is possible in theatre.

It has been an honour to work with this company of performers and the creative team. During rehearsals, our performers have thrown themselves into this world of gods and monsters with passion and purpose. They've

tackled complex characters, learned challenging music, and supported one another with generosity and care. For some, this has been their first experience of participating in a large-scale production at Whitgift; for others, a chance to lead and inspire. Either way, they have all brought ancient myth to life, made us laugh, moved us to tears and reminded us of the importance of finding, and owning, our voice.

Keep telling your stories. The world needs them.

**EO Spedding**  
Director

*'It invites us to reflect on who we are, where we come from, and what we are capable of becoming'*



# THE LIGHTNING THIEF

## MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*The Lightning Thief* isn't your average musical. It's loud, funny, chaotic – in the best way – and powered by a band that doesn't just sit in the background, it drives the whole thing like a freight train (or maybe a rampaging minotaur!). Rob Rokicki's score is a wild mashup of styles – heavy rock in *Put You in Your Place*, which comes marked with the brilliant instruction "Aggressive Hair Metal!"; disco-funk madness in *D.O.A.*, and my personal favourite, the southern-fried groove that is *Drive*. That one comes with the direction: "Eastbound and Down, y'all" – which says it all!

But it's not all noise and chaos. Some of the most powerful moments are the quietest. *The Tree on the Hill*, sung beautifully by Grover (James Li), strips everything back to just guitar and voice. It's raw and real – a moment of memory, guilt, and friendship under the branches of Thalia's tree.

At the heart of it all is Rahul as Percy. He's rarely off stage, carrying much of the show's emotional and musical weight through ensemble numbers, trios, duets, and a standout solo – *Good Kid* – which gives voice to Percy's inner turmoil as he tries to make sense of the world and his place in it. It's a demanding role, and Rahul meets it with honesty, stamina, and a lot of heart.

**'This show is loud, heartfelt, and completely unashamed of how much fun it wants to have'**

Reya, too, brings the house down with "My Grand Plan." It's a tough song – changing styles, moods, and keys – and she handles all of it with power and confidence. The song shows every side of Annabeth: ambitious, clever, vulnerable, and brave.

The band deserves serious credit. This isn't a traditional pit – it's a rock outfit with serious chops. One minute they're chugging power chords, the next they're sliding into a sleazy funk groove, or a sweet ballad, or something straight out

of punk rock. They bring Camp Half-Blood to life, in all its weird, wonderful glory.

Huge thanks to Ms Whitten, my brilliant assistant MD. She's been key in shaping the ensemble sound and keeping things tight and energetic. Couldn't have done it without her.

This show is loud, heartfelt, and completely unashamed of how much fun it wants to have. It's a story about identity, legacy, and what makes someone a hero – and it answers those questions with music that refuses to sit still. I hope it hits you like a lightning bolt and stays buzzing in your ears long after the final note.

**SL Morrison**  
Musical Director

## THE MUSICAL MESSAGE

Whilst not many kids fight a minotaur, discover their dad is the God of the Sea before venturing into the underworld to hunt down the Lord of the Dead to prevent a war between the Gods wiping out the human race; lots of kids relate to Percy Jackson and co. Not many kids can relate to being expelled because they had to fight their substitute teacher who grew wings and tried to kill them, but many neurodivergent kids can relate to getting into trouble for a rash decision whilst feeling like a victim of their surroundings.

**'Many neurodivergent kids can relate to getting into trouble for a rash decision'**

Percy Jackson was a normal boy from New York, who found school difficult because of his A.D.D and dyslexia. Due to this, he gained a troubled disciplinary record and naturally struggled with school. His A.D.D was a burden on his shoulders until he saw it from a different angle. Instead of it being an inability to concentrate, it was A.D.D induced battle instincts that intuitively told him when to swing, or dive, or block.

For the first 18 years of your life you go to school, which is difficult for many even without A.D.D. Percy acts as a symbol for many neurodivergent kids who struggle to sit in a classroom and absorb the drone of the teacher, even if they work twice as hard as the person sitting next to them. Albert Einstein once said, "if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid"

and this was never proven truer than when Percy arrived at Camp Half-Blood.

There are countless examples of depictions of neurodivergent kids being utter geniuses who lack social skills, but not all neurodivergent people are the same. All the campers at Camp Half-Blood have these "battle instincts" but don't let it define them. All suffering from A.D.D

and dyslexia: Percy is different to Clarisse, who is different to Grover, who is different to Silena, who is different to Luke, who is different to Annabeth. Percy Jackson: The Musical sends a message to kids that they shouldn't let anything define them as by letting your neurodivergence limit you, you have accepted defeat.

By Patrick Carswell



# THE LIGHTNING THIEF

## THE COMPANY

<i>Percy Jackson</i>	Rahul Chakravarty
<i>Annabeth</i>	Reya Shah
<i>Grover</i>	James Li
<i>Luke</i>	Julien Gande
<i>Sally Jackson</i>	Jessie Holder
<i>Mr Brunner aka Chiron</i>	Michael Shi
<i>Clarisse</i>	Amelie Punjani
<i>Mrs Dodds</i>	Kai Galliet
<i>Gabe Ugliano</i>	Rupert Noble
<i>Poseidon</i>	Joe Sigrist
<i>Mr. D</i>	Eden Moore
<i>Silena Beauregard</i>	Rose Clark
<i>Katie Gardner</i>	Badejoko Ogunade
<i>The Oracle</i>	Leila Nijahwan
<i>Greyhound Passenger 1</i>	Zebulon Duffy
<i>Greyhound Passenger 2</i>	Ethan Roberts
<i>Squirrel</i>	Adriano Bibby
<i>Aunty Em</i>	Jessie Holder
<i>Train Conductor</i>	Kai Kazemi
<i>Echidna</i>	Alfie Roberts
<i>Newscaster</i>	Krish Patel
<i>Farmer</i>	Monty Moffit
<i>Ares</i>	Vienne Punjani
<i>Bianca</i>	Max Kan
<i>Kronos and Bus Driver</i>	Euan Miller
<i>Thalia</i>	Badejoku Ogunade
<i>Charon</i>	Leila Nijhawan
<i>James Brown</i>	Benjamyn Gnanaseharam
<i>Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart</i>	Alex Ostrovehkov
<i>Kurt Cobain</i>	Caspar Larizadeh
<i>Janis Joplin</i>	Corban Butler
<i>DJ Cerberus</i>	Rory Reynolds
<i>Hades</i>	Patrick Carswell
<i>Fury Sisters</i>	Benjamyn Gnanaseharam & Alexey Kosovan
<i>Dance Captain</i>	Michael Shi

## Chorus

Maitreya Adhage, Daniel Ampleford, Samuel Chapman, Reilly Chen, Edi Hackman, Michael Holder, Zachy Javaid, Ameer Lunga, Sam McIntyre, Xander McMillian, Tomisin Oguntola, Elliot Schroeder, Emilian Stan

## BAND

<i>Guitar 1</i>	C English
<i>Guitar 2</i>	L Taylor
<i>Bass</i>	A Malseed
<i>Drum kit</i>	O Peszynski

## CREATIVE TEAM

<i>Director &amp; Choreographer</i>	EO Spedding
<i>Musical Director</i>	SL Morrison
<i>Choreographer</i>	AE Weddell
<i>Producer, Props &amp; Scenic Element Design</i>	E Mulligan
<i>Technical Director</i>	DP Jenkinson
<i>Costume Designer &amp; Stage Manager</i>	CO Aluko
<i>Assistant Musical Director</i>	AME Whitten
<i>Sound</i>	AJ Hill
<i>LED Set Dressing</i>	Party Doctors
<i>Chiron Legs Design &amp; Creation</i>	CD Clipston
<i>Medusa Head Design &amp; Creation</i>	MN Hinds
<i>DJ Cerberus Heads Design &amp; Creation</i>	AL Trantor
<i>Mrs. Dodd's Wings Design &amp; Creation</i>	Olaf Baranski Ehsan Saggars
<i>Production Technician</i>	DO Olufowora
<i>Lighting Operator</i>	Arjun Kashyap
<i>Costume Assistants</i>	AL Eynard, J De Jesus Dias
<i>Follow Spot Operator</i>	Magnus Tibbalds
<i>Sound No.2</i>	Aryan Vasdev
<i>Assistant Stage Managers</i>	Marcos Byrne, Kobi Watson

Photography by AJ Hill

# THE LIGHTNING THIEF

## AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS OF 'THE LIGHTNING THIEF' AND THEIR LINKS TO ANCIENT GREEK MYTHOLOGY

**“Who’s got two turntables and three sick heads? Make some noise for DJ Cerberus!”**

**Cerberus**, the forceful three-headed dog from Greek mythology, has a name that means “demon of the pit.” Fitting for his role as the guardian of the Underworld, he fulfils his duty by devouring any dead soul that dares to escape his control. The idea of making him a DJ bridges the gap between contemporary society and ancient mythology. A DJ has the power to manipulate a crowd with rhythmic beats, mirroring Cerberus’s role as a guardian – but now controlling the Underworld through music instead of physical intimidation.

**“(But the Minotaur is stronger. He pushes Percy to the ground, injuring him. He advances...)”**

**The Minotaur** is a monster born to Queen Pasiphaë of Crete after she coupled with a bull. It has the head and tail of a bull and the body of a man. Every nine years, Athens was forced to send seven boys and seven girls to Crete as a tribute to King Minos, a punishment after losing a war. These children were fed to the Minotaur, which lived in the Labyrinth – a maze designed by Daedalus.

Theseus, the son of the Athenian king, volunteered as a tribute, vowing to end the sacrifice. With help from Princess Ariadne, who gave him a golden thread, he navigated the Labyrinth, found the Minotaur, and defeated it using strategy and agility. He led the other tributes

to freedom, following the thread back out. He took Ariadne with him – but abandoned her on the island of Naxos while she slept (some say Dionysus, god of wine, intervened and made her his wife).

**“My true name is Chiron. And my real job is training demigods. Half-bloods...like you.”**

**Chiron**, the wisest and most righteous centaur in Greek mythology, was the immortal son of Kronos (Kronossss!) and Philyra. Unlike other centaurs, he had a gentle, wise nature and a unique form. Living on Mount Pelion, he became a renowned teacher to many great heroes – Achilles, Jason, and Asclepius among them – teaching medicine, hunting, music, and more.

In the musical, Chiron is Percy’s mentor. Though his actor complained about not having many scenes in the play, Chiron’s role is pivotal. He’s a guide, showing Percy the way and offering help when it matters most. He also consulted the Oracle ahead of time and knew Percy was different from other half-bloods – that’s why he trusted Percy to take on such an important quest.

**“You know, the ferryman thing is just a day job. My real passion is music. Do you wanna hear my demo?”**

**Charon** (not Chiron) is the ferryman of the dead in Greek mythology, working under Hades. He transports souls across the river Acheron in his boat. The dead must pay him with an obolus coin placed in their mouths at burial.

In art, he’s often shown as an ugly old man with a crooked nose, wearing a conical hat and tunic, and holding a pole. The Etruscans identified him with their own underworld spirit, Charun, who was even more grotesque – with blue-grey skin, a tusked mouth, and a double-headed mallet.

“Charon’s got this totally charming vibe, but man, her song’s presence is straight-up fascinating! Total favourite of mine.”  
– Grover

In *Percy Jackson: The Musical*, Charon is transformed into a soulful singer – adding a modern, musical twist to the character. This choice makes her more engaging and fits with the musical’s tone, using music to enhance the eerie, surreal atmosphere of the Underworld.

**“With every war, his own empire expands...?”**

**Hades**, ruler of the Underworld, is often perceived as evil, aggressive, and crafty. But this is a common misconception. In mythology, Hades isn’t evil – just feared. His role is necessary to maintain cosmic balance.

In *Percy Jackson*, Hades is reimagined with flair. He’s introduced like a glam-rock icon – complete with leather, style, and attitude. His dramatic entrance preserves his intimidating presence but

adds humour and depth, portraying him as misunderstood and sidelined by the other gods.

**“Where is my bolt?!”**

**Zeus** – the authority himself – is the god of the sky and king of all gods. He’s powerful, terrifying, and quick to punish, enforcing strict rules on gods and mortals alike. His control of lightning has become his signature – thunder marks his presence and power.

In the musical, Zeus’s lightning bolt has mysteriously vanished. Furious, he threatens war if it isn’t returned – and Percy Jackson becomes the prime suspect.

Fun fact: Zeus is notoriously unfaithful. Though said to have over 100 children, only 5–10 of them were with Hera!

**“You’ll know his sign by his shoes with those wings.”**

**Hermes** is the messenger of the gods and the god of travel, communication, boundaries – and, intriguingly, thieves and trickery.

In *Percy Jackson*, Hermes is portrayed with weary charm and a quiet sense of guilt, especially regarding his son Luke. Though Hermes doesn’t appear often, his identity shapes Luke’s feelings of abandonment. Always on the move, Hermes is rarely

**‘Hades is introduced like a glam-rock icon – complete with leather, style, and attitude’**

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present – contributing to one of the series’ core themes: how the gods’ flaws ripple through the lives of their children.

## “You got a problem with that?”

**Ares**, god of war, represents the violent, chaotic side of battle. Impulsive and bloodthirsty, he’s referred to in Homer’s Iliad as the “most hateful” of the gods – for good reason.

In the musical, Ares is updated as a biker gang leader – leather, sunglasses, motorcycle and all. His deep-voiced swagger and thunderous entrance reflect his recklessness, aggression, and intimidating presence. He’s a modern embodiment of violence made stylish and visceral, up close and unforgettable.

## “What belongs to the sea...”

**Poseidon**, Percy Jackson’s father, is one of the “Big Three” gods (alongside Zeus and Hades). He is ruler of the seas, wields a trident, and controls waves, tides, and all ocean creatures. Like Zeus, he’s known for his moody temperament.

## THANK YOU...

Mounting a theatrical production in such a busy school requires the help and goodwill of a great number of people. We would like to thank: the Headmaster and the Governors for their support; Mr Osborne for his support of Drama; subject teachers for their patience and good faith in helping the performers to balance their studies with rehearsals; the Marketing team for compiling the programme and advertising the show; the Catering team for their food during show week and for organising interval refreshments; Ms Pennicott for managing the box office; the cleaning staff for cleaning up after long rehearsals and finally the parents of the cast and crew for supporting their sons through line learning and exhausting rehearsals.

In *The Odyssey*, Odysseus blinds Poseidon’s Cyclops son, so Poseidon retaliates with a storm that nearly kills him.

In the musical, Poseidon is portrayed as mysterious and distant – wearing a Hawaiian shirt, as though constantly on holiday. Rather than emphasizing his divine power, the production highlights his emotional absence and Percy’s perspective of having an irresponsible, unavailable father.

By James Li and Michael Shi



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