**A Moment You Won't Want to Slip between Your Fingers: North Montgomery High School Presents “Mamma Mia!”**

By: Cameron Tyo
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**North Montgomery High School students will perform “Mamma Mia!” at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday in the school auditorium. Tickets are available online.**

**Photo provided by Autumn Hinders Photography**

Be prepared to be transported to the lively Greek island paradise of Kalokairi, where mystery, longing, and good vibes are at the forefront of North Montgomery High School's production of "Mamma Mia!"

When Sophie secretly invites three men who could possibly be her dad to her and her fiancée Sky's wedding to have one of them walk her down the aisle, the eventual sight

of the three men together at the island sends her mother and taverna owner Donna into a tearful frenzy.

The cast, comprising around 60 students, has put so much effort into learning the musical numbers and dances and truly embodying the spirit of their characters, which has helped immensely in their portrayal in this production.

Macee Norman, who plays Donna, said she studied different portrayals of the character to understand her emotions.

"In preparation for rehearsals for the show, I took time watching other “Mamma Mia!” productions to view other people's portrayals of Donna in order to get a feel of the character's emotions that she has due to the scenarios that arise from the men's unexpected arrival and how they interpreted these emotions into their performance. Through watching these productions, I've come to understand and respect Donna's fiercely independent nature that she commands throughout the show, even at the lowest of times, and have implemented that trait in my performance," Norman said of her character and preparedness.

As it goes without saying, portraying an adult is not easy for someone who might be younger, but even for those playing the youth in the show, measures were taken to make their characters feel more alive when required.

Owen Arthur, who plays Sky, said he needed to read between the lines to get a sense of how his character would react to the situations around him.

"Ever since getting my script, when reading my lines, I would always try to read between the lines of what was written to really understand how Sky truly felt about things progressing around him, so I could portray his interactions as genuine as someone who is feeling those particular emotions at a time would," Arthur told about the process and the complexity of his character.

On the other hand, Courtney Ratliff, who plays Sophie, explains how easy and natural it has been to perform.

"Like me, Sophie is pretty much a teenage girl who loves hanging out with the people around her, and just imagining being on a beach paradise as a teen makes performing feel not so stressful,” Ratliff said, noting how her connection with the character made acting her character easy at the get-go.

The students have worked days to find their interpretations for these characters to make this production of “Mamma Mia!” unique.

Not only do the students' acting progress the story, but what is even more prominent is the music.

"Mamma Mia!" is a jukebox musical featuring lots of songs from the group ABBA. Classics such as "Dancing Queen,” "Mamma Mia,” "The Winner Takes it all,” "Money Money Money," and many others help with capturing the messages and themes of not taking things for granted, looking forward to the future and not letting so-called bad past decisions reflect who you are as a person which are ideals that the characters struggle to grasp with it through the show.

The cast dynamics are also very tight.

"One of the best things about the show and portraying my character is that I get to hang out with my best friends essentially. Lots of the characters in “Mamma Mia!” know each other slightly, and that brings out lots of funny and heartwarming moments between people like the Dynamos and Donna, as well as the potential dads with not only Donna but also with Sophie," Noah Arthur, who plays Niko, said, reflecting on how the casting dynamics influence how the acting appears on stage
Good cast dynamics and trust in the people around you only make the process of putting on a show that much easier.

With this and that of the brilliant set and lighting that accompany everything going on stage, aided by the crew, the show becomes lively. The guidance of musical director Birk and director Melvin, making sure that each student is prepared to the point where they believe they can get, is the final puzzle piece in the process of putting together such a community-driven story.

So come and soak up the waves and sit yourself down to an extravagant set filled with heavy ensemble numbers and catchy ABBA songs, and feel the sense of self-discovery and the unexpectedness of one's life that one might find in the paradise of Greece. Just "take a chance" with it. You won't want to miss this production of “Mamma Mia!”

Tickets can be found at https://www.vancoevents.com/us/events/landing/63296

Shows are on **March 13th and 14th at 7:00,** and on the **15th at 2:30.**

**Cast:**

Donna: Macee Norman
Tanya: Lacey Conover
Rosie: Emma Brown
Sam: Nathan Woosley
Harry: Kyle Ratliff
Bill: Crew Cole
Sophie: Courtney Ratliff
Sky: Owen Arthur
Christine: Audrey Morris
Meryl: Cama Hall
Lisa: Kendra McClamroch
Ali: Ava Stephens
Kate: Lily Mycroft
Mandy: Savannah Crowe
Eddie: Camden Crowder
Pepper: Caden Tyo
Dom: Ben Oppy
Niko: Noah Arthur
Father Alexandrios: Cole Yeager
**Teen Islander:** Jayla Birge, Beth Brooks, Henry Brooks, Clayton Brown, Hailey Campbell, Rylin Harshbarger, Annie Hess, Lydia Huff, Bridgette Laws, Emrik Phillips, Charlotte Powell, Ella Redden, Natalie Schultz, Vanessa Shultz, Nathan Purcell-Sanchez
**Hotel Staff:** Guadalupe Amigon, Emily Benge, Mac Burton, Rhyan Clemence, Emma Doughty, Tyler Granson, Peyton Hernandez, Kinley McCoy, Maddi Mullen-Harlan, Taytum Snyder, Lucy Smith, Cole Yeager
**Wedding Guest:** Presslee Claycomb, Liz Ellingwood, Brooklyn Gray, Erin McKinney, Holly Nelson, Hattie Patton, Jayna Simpkins
**Chorus:** Justin Ambriz, Hanna Brown, Cash Cole, Easton Barker, Ryan Hunter, Ellis Hyams, Nate Kamakian, Faith Lightle, Carson Neal, Noah Ford
**Tech:** Owen Arthur, Noah Arthur, Beth Brooks, Henry Brooks, Annalyse Brown, Camden Crowder,
Drew Dark, Zach Denny, Emma Doughty, Tyler Granson, Cama Hall, Lucy Hess, Addi Johnson, Haleigh King, Kaitlyn Kunz, Bella Morgan, Gracie Neal, Jayna Simpkins, Katelyn Woolwine, Nathan Woosley, Brendan Young