



HOLY TRINITY
PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT
HANDBOOK

Holy Trinity Diocesan High School Performing Arts Department Handbook

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Welcome and Congratulations!

You are now part of a long history of excellence in high-school performing arts programs. This handbook is designed to answer any questions you may have about Holy Trinity's Performing Arts Department and to guide you through the program's requirements, expectations, and performance possibilities.

Mission Statement

The overall goal of our department is to teach each subject area as an art form, allowing each student to discover and nurture his or her own expressive voice. Although we present numerous productions, our focus is on the process of artistic growth. We aim to create an ensemble that nurtures a collaborative atmosphere between art forms and artists. It is important to note that this program is not a competition. We encourage cooperative learning, critical thinking and a disciplined work ethic. Our program is rigorous, offering a challenging curriculum that ultimately prepares the serious student for continued work at the college level.

Our objective is to guide the student-artist toward self-realization as well as an overall appreciation of the performing arts.

Handbook Contents

Chapter One: Curriculum

Chapter Two: Department Requirements

Chapter Three: Auditions and Extra-Curricular Performance Opportunities

Chapter Four: Production and Performance

Chapter Five: Technical Theater

Chapter Six: Travel, Festivals, and Retreats

Chapter Seven: After Graduation

Chapter Eight: Parent/Student Testimonials

Chapter One Curriculum

What does Holy Trinity's Performing Arts Department offer?

The department consists of three performing disciplines: Music, Theatre and Dance. Each offers an extensive four-year curriculum in which you will be challenged and you will increase your knowledge within a specific art form.

Music Courses:

Women's Choir	Instrumental Instruction
Mixed Choir	Music in Our Lives
Intermediate and Advanced Band	Jazz Theory and Improvisation
Intermediate and Advanced Orchestra	

Theatre Courses:

Theatre Arts I*	Repertory Theatre
Theatre Arts II*	Stage Craft (offered alternate years)

Dance Courses:

Creative Dance and Composition I
Creative Dance and Composition II*
Laban Movement Analysis/Modern Dance
Kinesiology and Imagery for the Advanced Dancer

***Tech Time requirement**

We expect every student to be a working member of the department. Students who are taking Theatre & Dance must complete a certain number of tech hours, which are accumulated by working for the department. This holistic approach educates the student as to the numerous roles that comprise any production.

Tech jobs include:

- ushering for performances
- participating as a member of a production staff (stage, running, make up, and/or costume crew)

Tech requirements:

- Freshman year: 10 hours
- Sophomore year: 20 hours
- Junior year: 40 hours

We take this requirement very seriously. Students who do not complete their tech time requirements will not be permitted to advance to the next course.

Student Grading

Students are graded as individuals and are held accountable to the standards set by the department for each course. Each student will receive a syllabus that specifies class requirements; in addition, all course information is posted on the Holy Trinity website.

Honor Societies

For outstanding work in music or theater, students are inducted into The Tri-M Music Society or The International Thespian Society during the spring of senior year. Specific requirements for each society can be found in the school calendar.

Chapter Two Department Requirements

Now that you have been accepted into the program, what can you expect from your faculty -- and what does your faculty expect from you?

Attendance for class and productions

The Performing Arts Department expects excellent attendance. In order to improve your skills and master your crafts, you must perform on a daily basis under the guidance of your teachers as well as on your own. As veterans of performing-arts training, your faculty members are prepared to share their experience and expertise in ways that will enhance your artistic growth.

To foster the sense of community that is vital to a performing arts program, we also ask that you attend every performance within our yearly season – if not as a cast or crew member then as a spectator in the audience. This sense of community instills a positive appreciation for all of the work that goes into a show.

What is the difference between class work and extra-curricular work?

Class work takes place between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:30 pm. There will be homework given in each subject area. You are expected to complete all assignments and to present your work on time. These assignments will be performed or handed in during class time.

You will find all of your assignments on the eChalk web site.

- First go to: <http://holytrinityhs.echalk.com/home>
- Look on the left for Class Pages.
- Click on that link, then look for your individual class. All information pertaining to assignments will be posted here.

All other performing is considered extra-curricular. For example, any part that you have earned in a production and any membership in a specific performing group will be considered extra-curricular. Rehearsals will take place after school and/or on the weekend and will culminate in performances.

No matter what time of day it occurs, all of your work is important! Do your best to maintain a positive attitude and a willingness to work hard.

Student evaluations

Each student will receive an individual evaluation bi-annually. The purpose of the evaluation is to make the student aware of how his or her effort is perceived. The evaluation process enables the faculty to offer specific feedback regarding how the student is faring in the program.

Dismissal from the program will result if the student is unable to meet the class work requirements. Extra-curricular work is not a substitute for class work.

Chapter Three **Auditions and Extra-Curricular Performance Opportunities**

We have a full season that includes three musical concerts, two or three non-musical plays, one or two musical productions, and a dance company concert. Each extra-curricular production requires an audition; therefore, multiple auditions will be held each year.

When are the auditions/how do I find out this information?

With the exception of the Spring musical, all shows will be cast from the September auditions. Times and locations of auditions are posted:

- in the school calendar,
- in daily home room announcements
- on eChalk (<http://holytrinityhs.echalk.com/home/> Group Pages)
- on the department call board across from the Music Room

You may also speak to any department member for details regarding auditions.

Performance groups

Jazz Band
Select Choir

Chamber Orchestra
Trinity Dance Company

How will I know what each director is looking for?

Most often, you will not know exactly what we are looking for; however, the student who is well prepared, committed, and focused will stand out. We are looking for the best person to play each part. Your personal work ethic, completion of class assignments, and attendance will also be considerations for casting.

When I am auditioning, what should I do?

For a play or musical:

Clearly state your name, your grade, what monologue you will be performing, the play that it is from, and its author. At the time of your audition, state any restrictions you may have. Make sure to prepare a monologue from a play, not from a movie, a television show or a self-written piece. For musicals, you will be informed about what style of song to sing (show tune, rock song, gospel song, etc). You may choose a song that fits the designated style. Bring your own sheet music to your audition.

For the Trinity Dance Company:

You will sign up in advance. The choreographed piece will be taught after school during the week prior to the audition. At your audition, you will present the choreographed piece with one or two partners.

For Jazz Band:

You will sign up in advance for the audition. At that time, you will receive the music needed for your audition. Instruments for Jazz band are: Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Bass, Guitar, Piano, and Drums. The sooner you sign up and receive the music, the better prepared you will be for your audition.

For Select Choir:

You will sign up in advance for an audition time. On the day of your audition, you will be asked to fill out a profile. At the time of your audition, state your name, your grade, the name of the song you will be singing, the composer and/or the source of the song, and any restrictions. Be prepared to sing one ballad and one up-tempo song, and bring your own sheet music. You will also be asked to sight-sing and sight-read rhythmic patterns, as well as to learn a short piece to be sung by yourself or with others.

For Chamber Orchestra:

You will receive audition information in class. Instruments for Chamber Orchestra include: Violin, Cello, Viola, Upright Bass, and additional instruments dependent upon music and teacher request.

What is a restriction?

A restriction is anything that would prevent you from attending rehearsals. For our plays, the entire cast usually rehearses on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule; leads also rehearse on Wednesdays. Therefore, if you are a Fall athlete you will not be able to audition for a Fall production. This would be a restriction for a Fall show, but not for the February, March or Spring productions. Similarly, a Spring athlete would not be able to audition for a Spring show.

Can I play a sport and be in a play?

Yes, if they are in opposing seasons. As stated in the example above, if you are on the football team you will not be cast in the Fall production. If you are a three-season athlete, you will not be able to do both unless you are in one of the performing groups. All performing groups rehearse in the evening or on weekends.

What should I wear to my audition?

You may audition in your uniform, but some students go the extra mile and dress as they think their character may dress. For Dance Company auditions, you should be in dance attire with your hair neatly pulled off your face.

Where are the cast lists posted?

All cast lists are posted on the call board across from the music room and occasionally on eChalk.

What should I do if my name appears on a cast list?

First of all, congratulations on your accomplishment! Write your initials next to your name to indicate that you accept the role in which you have been cast or your place in the performance group in which you have been accepted. We hope that you will react to your good news in a dignified and sensitive manner, keeping in mind the disappointment of those whose names didn't make it onto the cast list.

What should I do if my name does not appear on a cast list?

Speak to your teachers and ask about your audition. As an educational department, we are here to help you grow as an artist and performer. Knowing how to build on your strong points is just as important as learning how to overcome your weak points. View each audition as a learning experience, and view all feedback – positive and negative – as part of the learning process.

Chapter Four Production and Performance

I have made a show or performance group. What is expected of me?

The director of each production or performance group will explain what is expected of you. In addition, every production provides a contract that clearly states our requirements and expectations. We ask that you and your parent sign the contract to acknowledge your commitment to the rehearsal and performance process. Sample contracts appear at the end of this handbook.

What is a conflict?

A conflict is any event that will result in your absence from rehearsal. Details regarding the nature of conflicts appear in the sample contracts.

When does each group rehearse?

All **main stage productions** usually rehearse Tuesday 2:45-4:45, Wednesday 2:45-4:45 (usually leads only), and Thursday 2:45-7:00.

Pit Orchestra rehearses Tuesday 2:45-4:45 and Thursday 2:45-7:00.

Trinity Dance Company rehearses Saturday 10:00-4:00 and Sunday 12:00-6:00.*
*(Each choreographer will post his or her individual rehearsal schedule on eChalk. You may or may not be rehearsing every Saturday and Sunday for the entire time. Rehearsal schedules are dependent on the number of pieces you have been cast in).

Jazz Band rehearses Tuesday 5:00-7:00.

Select Choir rehearses Monday 6:00-9:00.

Chamber Orchestra rehearses Monday, Tuesday or Thursday 2:45-4:45. (The day is determined by the availability of the group.)

During the week leading up to the performance dates, most shows will rehearse on Sunday from 10:00 to 4:00 and will conduct dress rehearsals on Monday and Tuesday from 2:45 until we are finished (usually before 9pm).

On performance dates, call time is usually 5:30 or 6:00.

Insurance fee

Every student is required to pay a \$50 insurance fee, which is paid annually.

Cast T-Shirts

For both promotion and cast morale, each production designs an individual t-shirt with the show's logo on the front and cast list on the back. If you purchase a cast t-shirt, you may wear it during school hours in place of the school sweater in the week leading up to that production.

Department T-shirts

Students may purchase a shirt representing a specific discipline. These shirts may be worn every Friday throughout the school year.

Chapter Five **Technical Theatre**

I'm not really interested in being on the stage. What "behind-the-scenes" opportunities are available for me?

Production Staff Positions

- Stage manager
- Assistant stage manager
- Lighting/sound technician

Any student interested in one of the above positions should apply in writing to the director of the production. Apprentice positions are available for each position listed above. The application is available in the Performing Arts Office and should be given to the director by the specific due date.

Stage Crew

Stage Crew plays a major role in our program. It is responsible for all set building as well as lighting and sound design; in addition, the stage crew helps in the operation of all events that take place in the theatre throughout the entire year. The crew meets every Friday from 2:45-4:45; however, when a production or event is close to opening, the Stage Crew will usually be needed on other days and for longer hours.

Running Crew, Make Up, Costume Crew

These crews will work during the production week of a show. If you are interested in being a member of the running crew for a production, you should see the director and let him or her know. A running/make up crew is chosen by the director. Crew members are expected to attend all rehearsals during production week unless the director requests that the crew be available at other times.

The costume crew will work with the costume designer in the weeks leading up to production week. At times, the costume crew's hours may include weekends. During production week, the costume crew is responsible for keeping costumes in good condition.

Ushering

All of our productions need ushers! You may sign up with your theatre teacher the week prior to a production. The required dress code for ushers is black clothing with an accent of green, preferably "Trinity" green. The ushers are expected to be in the theatre by 6:45, and they will be given instructions by our House Manager.

Chapter Six

Travel, Festivals, and Retreats

Wow! Is there anything else I can expect from the Performing Arts Department?

ACIS Educational Trip to London

The American Council for International Studies (ACIS) believes that travel has the power to change lives. Since 1978, ACIS has been taking students on educational tours of unmatched quality, earning a reputation as the premier educational travel company.

With ACIS, Holy Trinity has been traveling to London with our theatre/dance students since 1995. Trip highlights have included touring the Globe Theatre with a workshop led by a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company; traveling to Stratford-Upon-Avon (Shakespeare's birthplace), Windsor Castle, Oxford, and Canterbury; touring the Pineapple Dance Studio; and attending evening performances in the famous West End theatre district.

In February 2010, some of our music students took their first ACIS trip to England. They journeyed to Liverpool, Chester, and Stratford-Upon-Avon, visiting numerous historical music sites. Their trip culminated in London, where the students observed the London Philharmonic and attended a performance of *Wicked* in the West End.

Both of our trips travel during the February break, on alternating years – theater/dance one year, music the next. The trip is only open to juniors or seniors.

Senior Rep Company Overnight Retreat

Every October, our senior repertory class participates in an overnight retreat to Camp De Wolfe in Wading River. The goal of this retreat is for the seniors to solidify as a group and to take on the responsibility of being the leaders of our department. We leave school on a Tuesday afternoon and return Wednesday after lunch.

Festivals and venues outside of Holy Trinity

Our department is always willing to take our students to festivals, workshops, and other performing-arts-related events outside of Holy Trinity so the students may be exposed to the work of other high-school students, teachers and directors.

The department may choose a particular production to represent our department at festivals. Trinity Theater students have appeared at the International Thespian Festival (currently held at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln) and the National Invitational Theatre Festival (at William and Mary College in Williamsburg, Virginia, and at the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland).

Jazz Band

Our jazz band has performed at the Division Avenue Jazz Festival for a number of years and has been awarded certificates for outstanding performances.

Select Choir

At Christmas time, the choir performs at numerous venues including Radio City Music Hall, Catholic Charities, Simon Malls, Milleridge Inn, and the Garden City Hotel. The choir has also performed on the Cablevision/MSG Varsity show *A Quick 60 with Mike Quick*.

Trinity Dance Company

The company is adjudicated and performs annually at the Annual Dance Conference at C. W. Post.

Summer Theatre

In July, we have a two-week summer theatre program. The Junior Program includes students going into 6th and 7th grade; our Senior Program consists of students going into 8th through 11th grade. Students participate in daily classes in voice, acting, and dance. The program culminates with a showcase performance on the final day.

Chapter Seven

After Graduation

After I have graduated, what else can I expect?

ALUMinate Theatre

You are always welcome at Holy Trinity, and we look forward to hearing about your accomplishments in the field. In the summer of 2006, we presented our first annual ALUMinate Theatre production featuring *The Cast from the Past*, comprised of Trinity alumni. We rehearse May through July and perform during the first week of Summer Theatre. All proceeds go toward the improvement or updating of our theatre facility and to the Performing Arts Department.

Holy Trinity Alumni working in the field

Kevin Byrne - *American Repertory Ballet*

Christina Lynch Markham - *Paul Taylor II*

Paul Scolieri Ph.D. - Assistant Professor
Columbia University

Jenna Ushkowitz – cast of *Glee*

Dennis Stowe Broadway Credits:*Shrek The Musical, Man of La Mancha, The Apple Tree,*

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Dreamgirls

Christopher Jimenez - playwright

Rebecca Kupka Broadway

Credits:*Saturday Night Fever, Jersey Boys*

Greg Balla - *Blue Man Group*

Synthia Link - *NY Radio City Rockette*

Alexa Green - *Wicked* L A production

Nancy Cassaro – performer and writer of
Tony & Tina's Wedding

Kevin Alexander – TV performer
(*Law & Order*); writer (*Finnegan's Farewell*)

Chapter Eight

Parent/Student Testimonials

In sending you to Holy Trinity, your parents/guardians are making a significant investment in your future. As a means of reassuring both you and your family of the benefits that make our school and our department uniquely rewarding, we would like to conclude this handbook with testimonials from some parents of students who have completed our program.

As a mother of three sons who graduated from the Holy Trinity Theatre program, I cannot sing the praises of this program enough. My oldest, Kevin, chose Holy Trinity because of the theatre program. Although he didn't get most involved until his sophomore year, he excelled beyond belief, getting the leading role in many of the plays. Although he would tell you he is not a dancer, the dance classes helped him move on stage, and his successes tell the story. My middle son, Brian, though not an actor, was very comfortable behind the scenes. He also benefited from the acting and dance classes enough to encourage him to try out for a show and get a part. My youngest, Sean, was so inspired by the theatre program that he continues to be involved at the college and post-college levels. The program is so well rounded that actors, dancers and singers can all benefit from the variety of classes offered.

Sue Mundy

It is very difficult for me to sum up in one paragraph my feelings for the Holy Trinity Performing Arts Program. My daughter had four wonderful years in this program. She learned the history of theater and dance and the process of staging a creative work, but most importantly, she discovered the passion of bringing the artist's vision to an audience. This was the result of learning in an environment created by dedicated, professional teachers who generously gave of their time and talents, and by the support of the Trinity community. She will ALWAYS be a part of this community. I am forever grateful.

Barbara Sloan

Sitting in the Holy Trinity Theatre awaiting the summer ALUMinate Production, I proudly watch my son as he plays the piano in the pit for the show. My mind wanders and I think back to the fall of 2006 when Bobby was just a freshman at Holy Trinity. In 2006, entering the Theatre Department was the furthest thing from Bobby's mind. He was a baseball player, 24 hours a day seven days a week and he fully intended to play baseball for the Titans. Bobby did participate in theatre in Middle School, but that was to appease his English teacher who ran the theatre group.

Upon arriving at Holy Trinity, Bobby had to audition for a choir or take a course in music. Since sitting in another class was not an option, Bobby auditioned with a song from his favorite musical, Phantom of the Opera. Much to Bobby's amazement, he was picked for the Select Choir, and the theatre department welcomed him with open arms. Bobby felt instantly at home at Holy Trinity due to the warmth and kindness of the theatre department. In his spare time he loved to hang out around the music rooms, talking with all the teachers and cultivating his love of music. I watched in amazement as my linebacker of a son took dance instead of gym and loved it! "You don't realize how hard dance is Mom!" Bobby would tell me again and again.

I will never forget the kindness of the theatre department when Bobby injured his knee playing baseball the spring of his freshman year. Bobby needed to have surgery right away, so all his baseball dreams were crushed. Bobby had a part in the spring musical also, and there was serious doubt about whether he would be able to handle the role after surgery. The teachers in the theatre department worked with Bobby so he could still appear on stage as Kenickie in Grease. This meant the world to Bobby and let this freshman know how much Holy Trinity cared about him.

The theatre department at Holy Trinity provided for Bobby and helped nurture his growing love of theatre and music. I will always look back fondly at the four years Bobby spent at Holy Trinity and I know that Bobby will too.

Alison Tomasulo

Performing Arts Department Alumnus Testimonials

The four years I spent within the Theater Dept. at Holy Trinity were 4 of the most exciting, profound, and enjoyable years of my training as an actor. Through integrative study of acting, singing, and dance/movement, I was able to develop the skills needed to continue my artistic education and bridge the gap from high school to university training and form a solid basis on which I could build my performance discipline. The level of professionalism that I was introduced to at HTHS has never left me and my work as an actor. The impressive knowledge of my teachers and their ability to impart this knowledge to me, during such formative years of my training is something I will always be grateful for.

David Rosenblatt 2004

"...The Performing Arts Department at HTHS made me into a professional, confident and well-spoken person, who is willing and able to work for a successful college career and soon, the professional world. It has given me so many gifts in just 4 quick years that I cannot express my true gratitude and thanks to the teachers and friends I met during my time there..."

William Artuso 2008

Serving as rehearsal accompanist and playing in the pit for some of Trinity's first musicals ("Mame", "Kiss Me Kate" and "The Mikado") inspired me to become a music teacher. The rigorous Music Theory courses prepared me for my college auditions and

placement exams. I am gratified to see that Holy Trinity's Fine Arts program has expanded to allow even more students to be a part of this fine tradition.

Alice Marques 1974

I arrived a kid who liked to perform and left a performer. My four years of High School were such an incredible time for growth. Not only was I physically changing but my eyes were opened and my mind so expanded. With so many opportunities to perform and create there was a constant excitement that made for such a special environment. It was a safe haven to try anything, to make mistakes and to grow and to learn. I opened myself up to new ideas and tackled new challenges. I entered the program as a ballerina and fell in love with contemporary and lyrical styles of dance that I had never studied before. I liked to sing but had never studied voice until I was encouraged to do so by my professors. There was something for everyone in the Theatre Dept. Dance shows, chorus concerts, improv shows, musicals, straight plays, and Shakespeare to name a few that I found myself a part of at Trinity. The greatest lessons we learn about acting are by doing because acting IS doing and Holy Trinity's Performing Arts Dept. creates an environment where students DO. There was always something to be a part whether I was onstage or backstage. We used to put a spin on the school's motto at the time, "A time, a place, a spirit" to "A time, a place, a tech week."

From a young age I knew I wanted to have a career performing. Trinity took me in with raw talent and left me with the tools to continue to pursue my dream. The faculty helped me put together a video audition when I was applying to Colleges. I was accepted with scholarship to The Catholic University of America in DC where I went on to receive a Bachelor of Music in Musical Theatre. I was also fortunate enough to spend a semester abroad at the London Dramatic Academy. Since my graduation from college in 2004 I have worked steadily from summer stock to regional theatre, to three national tours and projects in NY. I have traveled worldwide performing and no matter where I go the seeds that were planted years ago at Holy Trinity stay with me. I am eternally grateful for the support, the encouragement, the lessons, the laughs, the tears and the heart that I received while I was at Trinity. Deciding to pursue performing is both a dream and a hard reality. It's as much a business of talent as it is of luck. It takes dedication and tenacity and a great deal of optimism. We must constantly be working and learning and growing and refining our skills. I think having a strong foundation is the key to success in any business and for me that foundation began at Trinity.

*Melanie Waldron
Class of 2000*

I discovered my passion and potential for acting on the Trinity Theatre Stage. From Dance Concerts, to Shakespeare Shows, to Musicals, and straight plays, Trinity Theatre covered all its bases. Trinity also provided a wonderful curriculum, from dance classes that emphasized performance while also teaching technique, to scene study ranging from the classics to more modern plays. Trinity Theatre laid the groundwork and prepared me for the rigors of a prestigious college theatre program. Yes, the program itself is great but what I remember most are the friendships made and the good times that were had. The friends I made while at Trinity are friendships I still cherish to this day. Some of my best memories of high school lie within the walls of the theatre hallway.

*Jessica Tristin Daley
Class of 2003*

"Holy Trinity's teachers provided me with confidence and encouragement to help me craft and shape my talents. They saw in me potential I couldn't see in myself, cultivated it and brought it to fruition. Through guidance and opportunities to perform and learn music, dance, and theatre I would not be where I am today. Trinity's environment of professionalism and creativity is unique and beautiful and what I feel truly makes this school and its Performance department stand out amongst so many other places. I will always hold a special regard in my life for Trinity."

*Michael Rodgers
Class of 2002*

Michele Cuccaro Cain, HT alumni class of '88. Graduate of CW Post '92. Co-director of Jam Dance and Fitness Center voted Studio of the Year since 2006, in Great Neck, Dix Hills and Bellmore, NY, since 1994. Artistic Director/choreographer of InnerSoul Dance Project, a contemporary modern dance company. Recent and upcoming performances include The Joyce Theater, Central Park Summerstage with Complexions Dance Company, the Ailey Center with Kat Wildish NY Performances, and The Dance Gallery Festival In NYC .Choreographer and world tour back up dancer for recording artists, including Lil Suzy's "Take Me In Your Arms". Michele has judged numerous talent and dance competitions around the country and has taught many students who have become professional dancers who have danced with Mikhail Baryshnikov and The Knick City Dancers. Michele is the recipient of numerous choreography awards and has been named "Choreographer of the Year" by the prestigious American Dance Awards. Her piece, "The Scarlet Letter" was featured in Dancer Magazine and received rave reviews. Michele is proud to have worked as a choreographer for the Holy Trinity Theater and Dance program as well as the Trinity Alumni show. Michele is happily married to a Trinity alumnus and has 2 beautiful children and hopes to continue to INSPIRE people of all ages to... DANCE!

Final Thought

On behalf of myself and my colleagues in the Performing Arts Department, I again welcome you to Trinity Theater. Now (to borrow a line from *Pippin*), we have magic to do!

Break a leg!

Mrs. Catherine Murphy