

8<sup>th</sup> January, 2009

No. 023/08-09

Drama News 2009

Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends,

Happy New Year 2009!

Firstly, a great big thank you to all the pupils, staff and parents who helped to make our first school production such a success. 'A Christmas Carol', adapted by Miss Johnstone from the Charles Dickens short story, and directed by Miss Johnstone and Mr. Hirst, was performed at the end of the Christmas term to all the S1, S2 and S3 students, as well as an invited audience of elderly folks from a nearby home who enjoyed it greatly, and then to a large public audience of dignitaries, VIPs, parents and friends. There were many challenges along the way both technically and artistically, but the smooth cooperation and generous support of advice and time provided from colleagues made this a truly memorable production for Mr. Hirst and Miss Johnstone. Particular warm thanks are due to Principal Chan, Miss Lilian Lai in the Office who acted as Technical Manager and Mrs. Bannon in the Library, all of whose support was absolutely crucial.

Secondly, as Miss Johnstone actively continues to develop the Drama curriculum in cooperation with the English Department and we look to further exciting school productions in the near future (watch this space!), we are starting to build up the college's drama collection of props, costumes, hats and furniture. As Chinese New Year fast approaches, we are aware that many families will be clearing out old clothes and accessories, and we gratefully ask that you please donate any such items in reasonable condition to the school via Miss Johnstone or Mr. Hirst. They will come in very useful for both Drama and English lessons, and, in the future, for college musical and dramatic events. Thank you!

We also strongly urge you to take your sons and daughters to go and see a new movie, widely showing now in local cinemas: "Forever Enthralled", which in Chinese is called "梅蘭芳". Directed by celebrated Chinese director Chen Kaige and starring Leon Lai and Zhang Zhi Yi, the story is about Mei, widely credited for raising the status of Peking opera and promoting the art form on the international stage. He is also known as a patriot for his refusal to perform during the Japanese occupation of Beijing between 1937 and 1945. Approaching the spectacle he achieved with his Golden Palm-winning "Farewell My Concubine" over a decade ago in Cannes, Chen Kaige once again invites the audience into a world that he portrays so well, the traditional art of Peking opera, set against the nuances and social mores of times past. We believe that this film will prove to be rich in historical, artistic, and cultural resonance and a wonderful dramatic experience for the audience. It will also deeply enrich the study of history of the theatre and theatre forms in your child's English and Drama lessons.

We are really looking forward to the start of the new Drama ELA next term in which we will be preparing for our next exciting HKUGA College production.

Have a wonderful 2009!

**[Please click on the link to view the video](http://www.hkugac.edu.hk/departments/drama/A_Christmas_Carol.wmv)**

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Yours sincerely,

Miss Johnstone and Mr. Hirst