FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Rhapsody – Gershwin, Copeland, Moneverdi

I think the music staff and students should be very proud of themselves it was a well-received and triumphant concert on the very last Friday of term 3.

I had many positive comments and two are worth repeating. One visitor with a friend said “I would pay $120.00 to see that performance” and another “I am going to remember September 16 2016 as the time I saw that boy play, it is one of the best performances I have ever seen”. As far as I know it was our first standing ovation, very capably led by Sung Won Choi’s many friends in our school. He deserved the accolades.

Students have told me how much they enjoyed working with Warwick Stengards who is our guest conductor this year. His work with the orchestra on Copeland’s Appalachian Spring – Suite and Rhapsody in Blue was fantastic. One of the marvels in our school is the ability for students to work with and learn from a really interesting range of music professionals. My sincere thanks to him. Of note was the work of Concert Master Yim Loh in the Copeland.

The Choral Selections were lovely and showcased many of our fine voices and created good opportunities for the Associate Artists including 2016 Outstanding Soloist Leo Mares. They hop stepped us through several eras of music and it was highly enjoyable and well received, Dermott Tutty again showing he is one of the best musical Directors in the country.

To work with Marshall McGuire and Ludovic’s Band in that interesting early music space is a joy, and I thought the music so amazing. We don’t hear enough early music. To have one of the world’s best harpists, creative directors, alumni and original Hall of Famer was significant for us. The handing on of music traditions from one generation to another was beautiful to watch, let alone within the VCASS family. Dermott Tutty’s Direction on the choral component was really great as always.

Rhapsody In Blue capped the night; I am not sure the orchestra has sounded better or captured the audience more. We were transported to 1924 New York, Sung Won masterful on the Steinway and Sons Piano, working hand in glove with Warwick and all the performers and Concert Master Ally Cho. I must admit about 11 minutes into the work the music just captured my heart and when that solo violin takes over before the orchestral crescendo I was taken away and deep in the musical experience. My personal thanks for that to our students, like all of us I was tired at the end of the term but that sublime moment gave me a treasured memory and made me very happy.

My heart felt thanks must go to our faculty, to our Head of Music Michael Sargeant, Assistant Head of Music Mary Jo Kelly (who looked after the production), Dr Julie Haskell – who imagined this event with staff one year ago, Sue Lyons, Jenny Gillan, Dermott Tutty, Ian Whitehurst, Gabriella Ibbott, Anne Lewitzka, Kim Beissel and Louisa Breen. My thanks for all the work Daniel Holden and Assistant Principal Hilary Bland complete behind the scenes to keep us a professional as we are.

And finally to our music students, who remain the inspiration for our work, with so many performances framed around what you bring to our school, feeding our love of teaching and creating magic with us.

The Thursday night before the end of term saw Hilary Bland and myself supporting our Australian Ballet School students at their Showcase 2016. It was a technically strong and beautiful show which sees the Director Lisa Pavane’s vision of live music at performances having a hue impact. To see dancers with musicians is always a joy and adds much to performances. We were very proud of the ABS students and excited as many of them are about to commence their careers are dear to us.

Term 4 sees us in serious planning for 2017, making sure the year 12 classes is supported right until the end and undertaking many activities, examinations, performances and concerts still. I urge all students to put their best foot forward this term and complete a very satisfying 2016.

I look forward to welcoming new students and their families to the school next Tuesday evening and announcing our most important awards in a few weeks.

COLIN SIMPSON
Australian Bursary
Australian Bursary will be held on Sunday November 6th at the VCA School of Dance, St Kilda Road. Coaching will be held each Monday 5.45 – 7.15 and Saturdays 2.00 – 3.00pm

JANNE BLANCH
RAD COORDINATOR
Email: blanch.janne.j@edumail.vic.gov.au

MUSIC
A few years ago VCASS Music students were involved in filming some musical games and classroom segments for the documentary, "When We Sing." This is work that explores Zoltan Kodaly's approach to music teaching and what this looks like when in the hands of Australian educator, Dr James Cuskelly. This documentary has now been released and will be showing in Melbourne soon.

The Kodaly approach to music education is the way musicianship is taught at VCASS and you will see featured in the documentary former teachers Anna van Veldhuisen completing training in this method and Lis Viggers, who is interviewed fairly extensively. The film is rated PG, with occasional strong language.

It would be a worthwhile experience for music students to see the documentary and observe a wider context for what we do at VCASS. "When we Sing" explores the importance of singing and music literacy in music education and the powerful impact well trained and enthusiastic teachers can have on generations of students.

More about the documentary can be found here: http://fineandclearproductions.com/whenwesing/

Melbourne Screenings are at ACMI, Melbourne.
Saturday 15th October 4pm
Saturday 22nd October 4pm
Saturday 29th October 4pm
Saturday 5th November 4pm
Tickets available at the door or online

JENNY GILLIAN
MUSIC TEACHER

RAD Dance Challenge
Thank you to all students who were involved in Dance Challenge for your hard work and especially for your beautiful performances in the semi-finals last Sunday at the Australian Ballet Centre. VCASS will be well represented at the finals in Sydney on December 10th by Level 3 Finalists, Milei Lee and Ethan Abud-Schimming and Level 4 finalist Amelia Menzies. (see photo)

Spring School
Well done to students who participated in Spring School during the Term break and congratulations to those who received awards: the Intermediate Scholarship was awarded to Milei Lee, Encouragement Award to Ethan Gusman and Honourable Mention to Luca Deller. The Advanced One Encouragement Award went to Kate Farley. The Advanced Two Scholarship was awarded to Laura Ruether and the Encouragement Award to Alexandra Miller.

Session 2 Examinations
The Exam session will be held at VCASS on Saturday 22nd October. Exam times and information have been distributed to students this week.

Christmas Demonstration
Our combined RAD and Cecchetti Christmas Demonstration will be held on Saturday November 26th at 1pm. A reminder that students wishing to participate must attend ALL Saturday classes as rehearsals will be conducted during these classes.

Kathleen Gorham Memorial Scholarship
This event, open to all students who have taken an examination during 2016, will be held at the Australian Ballet Centre on Sunday November 13th. Entry forms have been circulated with entries due on Try Booking by Monday 24th October. It would be great if ALL exam candidates from this year could enter so that VCASS is well represented.

Solo Seal
Solo Seal, the highest award offered by the RAD will be held at VCASS on Saturday 15th October at 7pm. All welcome to attend. Come along and support our VCASS candidates, Luke Dimattina, Olivia Castagna, Holly Frick and Lily Folpp. There will be 8 candidates in all. Bookings through Trybooking.