

HIGH SCHOOL Musical



September and the return to school inevitably prompts the Mercy Mounthawk school production team to begin thinking of the 2023 Siamsa production. What to do? We had an idea that there was huge interest in auditioning, and there was; we had close to one hundred students wanting to take part.

In Mercy Mounthawk, everyone is welcome to be a part of the musical production; you just need to stay the course. In the end we had 67 on stage; a magnificent number.

What musical would satisfy the abundant talent we have in Mercy Mounthawk? What musical had the rights available? After much thought and research, we decided on **High School Musical**, and what an inspired choice it was.

Director: Mr. Houlihan; Musical Directors: Ms. Giltenane, Ms. O' Sullivan; Choreographers: Ms. O' Neill, Ms. Nolan, and Ms. Foley; Costume Designers: Ms. Breen, Ms. Ryan, and Ms. O' Donovan; Resourcing and Managing Properties: Ms. Condon and Ms. Casey – all sprang into action. Mr. Redican, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Andreucetti, Mr. O. Sullivan, Mr. Mc Elligott, Ms. F. O' Connor, and the indispensable Declan Dowling,



MR. HOULIHAN



were often called on for help, and that assistance was offered willingly, and was met with deep appreciation.

The production team of every musical would say that its cast worked the hardest ever, but I maintain that no cast ever worked as hard as the cast of HSM. Rehearsal took place four times a week – rehearsals had to; with music, choreography and acting, time had to be given and it was, freely, willingly and enthusiastically.

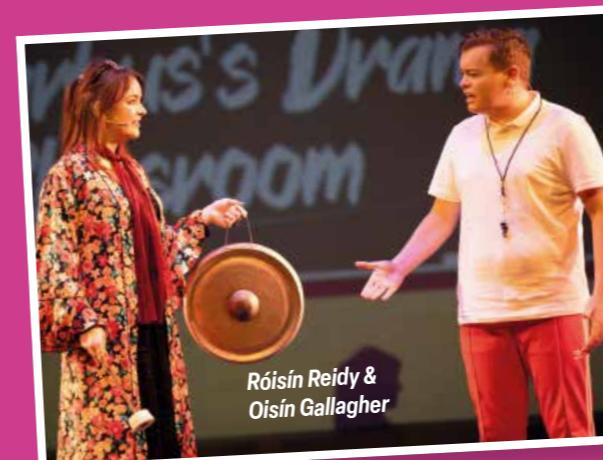
The leads of Gearóid Meehan, Lily Parker, Conor Breen, Sarah Brett, Sinéad Carr, Conor O' Sullivan, Eoin Griffin, Roisin Reidy, Adam Dineen, Amy Heaphy, Oisín Gallagher, Naoise O' Carroll, and all the cast worked so hard and with such commitment and good humour to bring a truly wonderful production to the stage. I must also mention the hard-working backstage crew who saw to it that each production ran smoothly and without a hitch.

On January 18th 2023, we opened in Siamsa Tíre and for five performances we wowed and wooed full houses. It was such a feel-good production. Everyone who left Siamsa each evening, left feeling better for having seen our wonderful production of *High School Musical*.



The standout experiences from my time in Mounthawk are without a doubt the theatre productions I was involved in.

There are plenty of schools across Tralee and all around Kerry that have fantastic reputations for their achievements in sport and academics, but for anybody whose interests lie in the realm of the arts and theatre, Mounthawk is unarguably the place to be. We are so lucky to have a huge team of teachers in this school who are willing to devote five to six months of their time to us every year in order to put together a production to be remembered. Without the efforts of Mr. Houlihan, Ms. Buckley, Ms. Condon, Ms. Daly, Ms. Giltenane, Ms. O Sullivan, Ms. Nolan, Ms. O Neill, Ms. Foley and many, many more, our school wouldn't be what it is: an environment that encourages and nurtures young talent to levels so far beyond what most people would ever dream of from second-level students. From Oscar Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' to Disney's 'High School Musical', there's something here for everyone.



Róisín Reidy & Oisín Gallagher

Every production is a new experience with new challenges and most importantly new memories to be made. When studying theatre and performance in college next year, I'll never forget where it all started and will forever wish all the best to the younger students who I know will carry on the ambitious standard of hard work, fun and dedication in our school's productions for years to come. **By RÓISÍN REIDY**

Looking back on my time in Mounthawk, I am filled with gratitude and joy for the experience I had as the lead role, Troy Bolton, in our school's production of 'High School Musical'.

Being part of this production was truly the stand out highlight of my school experience, and I will always cherish the memories and friendships that were made throughout the process.

Being cast as the lead was an honour and a challenge. It required long hours of rehearsals, dedication, and hard work. But, the reward was the immense growth I experienced both as a performer and as a person. I learned so much about myself and my abilities, and I was able to push myself out of my comfort zone with the aid of the incredible teachers involved. They pushed us all to be our best and to strive for excellence, while also offering a listening ear. Without their guidance and support, the production would not have been possible.

One of the most rewarding aspects of this experience was the friendships that were formed throughout the production. The cast became like one big family, supporting each other through all rehearsals and performances, and we truly were "all in this together". It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I will forever be grateful for and I would strongly encourage all students to give it a go as it is a great way of making new friends and, most importantly, having fun! **By GEARÓID MEEHAN**

