

Davis, Alton High School 'Thrilled' To Present 'Little Shop of Horrors' in April

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The Alton High School Theatre and Music departments are thrilled to present live performances of the original off Broadway musical "Little Shop of Horrors" after several months of COVID-19 Pandemic alterations to the schedule.

Alton High School Director of "Little Shop of Horrors" Anne Davis said the show is crazy fun to produce.

"It's a small cast of humans with a large cast of plants!," she said. "Garrett Cooper plays Mushnik, the Skid Row florist who is ready to close the shop. Jaron Ammon plays Seymour Krelborn, the lovable, awkward orphan who lives in the shop. Makenzie Jones plays Audrey who wants nothing more than to be loved by some sweet guy who will take her out of Skid Row. Lorian Warford is our comic's comic. He plays the part of the dentist, Orin, as well as multiple other minor characters in the show. You will be surprised every time he shows up as someone else!

"Our Trio of girls is played by Morgan Palmer, E'Niya Fields and Corrine Jones. They act as a Greek Chorus throughout the show to help move the story along. Jovon Ammon is the booming voice of the Audrey II plant and Madison Ingram is the puppeteer working very hard to make the plant come to life. Kaden Gilligan and Taylor Holtzclaw act as customers in the florist shop."

Davis said things in the world of theatre have changed dramatically in 2021.

"For the first time, Music Theatre International is providing the opportunity for schools to produce a virtual performance to be shown through ShowTix4U.com," Davis said. "Megan Fairless, of Megyme Productions will film the Thursday night performance to be posted on Sunday. This will provide an opportunity for all of our out of town friends and family and for those who are not able to attend in person to see the show. This is a Scheduled Content and can only be viewed at the designated time. This year, the Royalties for the show will be paid directly from ticket sales."

Davis said here are many things to consider when choose a show - especially for a high school cast.

"I chose Little Shop of Horrors this year because it is a small cast and a short run time of about an hour and half," she said. "There were so many unknowns for us this school year. Last year we were disappointed to be two weeks into rehearsal for 'Into the Woods' when everything was shut down due to COVID-19. I wasn't really sure if we were going to be allowed to perform this year.

"There are several challenges for the show this year. First and foremost is the ever present knowledge that things could change at any minute and our show could be cancelled. I think we are all still living under the weariness of the pandemic. We want to be able to do things as normal as possible, but still realize there are so many factors that we cannot control.

"The biggest challenge of 'Little Shop' is the enormous amount of props in the show. There are four different plants for the Audrey II. Each one gets larger and more difficult to animate. I have not directed this show before. I like the challenge of a directing a different show. I was asked if I would want to choose to do 'Into the Woods' this year since it was cancelled last year. But for me, I had already directed the show in my mind and did not want to try to re-create what we had attempted last year."

Davis said the public will definitely enjoy the cast in the upcoming production.

"All of the students are stars in their own right," she said. "There are so many one line jokes throughout the story. I think one of the opening songs 'Skid Row' is probably my favorite number in the show. It features all of the leads. Another of my favorites is 'It's Just the Gas.' It is performed by Lorian Warford and is very funny! Lorian then plays several other comedic characters throughout the show – you never know where he is going to show up next."

Davis closed by saying her favorite part of directing the shows for Alton High School is the students.

“I have been teaching for a long time and it’s always the students that keep me returning to AHS,” Davis said. “We have a very talented cast and crew. We had a low turnout for auditions for this show so I was concerned about casting it. But as it turns out, we have just the right students cast in just the right roles for a perfectly funny show.”

Alton High School will present three live performances at 7 p.m. on April 22,23, 24, at the AHS Auditorium and one scheduled virtual performance at 2 p.m. on April 25. Tickets will go on sale through ShowTix4U.com on April 15.

"Under current guidelines, we are limited to 50 audience members per each live performance. However, adjustments will be made to the number of seats available as mitigations change. Last-minute tickets, if available, can be purchased at the box office at 6:30 p.m. as standby and cash only.

Tickets for the live performances are \$12 for adults and \$5 for students. Tickets for the Virtual Performance will be \$15 per single view and \$40 for family view. This is an honor system for viewers.

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