

New Bedford High School Drama Club presents “The Secret Garden,” April 5-7

New Bedford High School Drama Club is perfectly poised to usher in spring with its musical production of *The Secret Garden*, this weekend only, April 5-6-7 at Pulaski School Auditorium.

The Secret Garden is a classic children’s novel, written over a century ago by Francis Hodgson Burnett (1849-1924), continues to have great popular appeal, moving audiences young and old with feelings of comfort, nostalgia, and fantasies of the English countryside.

The story, staged as a musical, centers around Mary Lennox, a young girl who has spent her childhood living in India. When her parents are stricken with cholera, Mary, played by Jayden Lima, is sent to live with her mysterious uncle at Misselthwaite Manor in London, Archibald Craven, played by Trevor Lopes. The Uncle has kept himself busy ever since his wife, Lily’s, death ten years before. He remains away from the manor, away from their son Colin, played by Aydan Sullo, and far from the walled garden that Lily loved so dearly. When Mary finds the key to the garden door, she enlists the help of her new friend, Dickon, played by Quinn Mulvey and others to make the neglected garden bloom yet again. In doing so, she discovers flowers that appear dead only need a little bit of care to flourish again – and that the same can be true of the people we love. Dr. Craven is played by Jakob Braz.

Sophomore Sara Cravo, playing the role of Lily, says that the garden is a metaphor for everyday life. “Anyone can grow from their struggles. There’s a certain point where everyone gets sad but there will always be people to lift you up and help

you grow again.” Freshman Kyanna Morse, plays Lieutenant Wright and a member of the ghostly ensemble, agrees. “Like the garden, everyone here at drama club has helped me blossom into my best self and truly express myself.”

A prevalent theme in *The Secret Garden* is the way in which our past is always with us, as represented visually by the chorus of ghosts – the ‘dreamers’ – who aid in telling the story.

Jessica Brito, a sophomore, notes “The ghosts symbolize things lost, and are a metaphor for the way your past can follow you. We all have things that we cling to, and that hold us back.” Jessica plays the ghost of Ayah, Mary’s childhood nursemaid in India.

For Drama Club co-Director Sarah Cadieux Pacheco, this musical represents a special moment from her past: “This was the last musical I performed as a member of my own high school drama club. The music is beautiful, and it has always been one of my favorite stories, so when I was thinking of a warm, family-friendly show to juxtapose last year’s dark performance of *Sweeney Todd*, this seemed like the perfect fit.”

The Secret Garden the novel is a poignant tale about embracing the past and of self-discovery. The musical is no different, as the tale of the eponymous garden is told in sweeping songs, narrated by a ghostly chorus – manifestations of Mary’s memories from her life in India, Archibald’s old family and friends, and the spirits of the garden itself. Though the story centers on the garden, it is truly about the effects of the past that we cling to, and the way we can reconnect with the people around us to help one another to fully bloom.

Production of this year’s NBHS Drama Club musical is being performed at Pulaski Elementary School Auditorium, as extensive renovations are being completed at New Bedford High School’s Bronsiegel Auditorium. Pulaski School is located at 1097 Braley Road, New Bedford, MA 02745.

Seating is limited and no tickets will be sold or reserved in advanced, so all tickets must be purchased at the door beginning 1 hour before each show. Tickets are \$10 for students/seniors and \$12 for adults. On Friday, April 5 and Saturday, April 6, performances begin at 7:00 p.m., with a 2:00 p.m. matinee performance on Sunday, April 7. The Secret Garden is appropriate for all ages and is presented with permission from Samuel French, Inc.

– By Jamie Roballo, sophomore, NBHS Drama Club

April 5-6-7, 2019

Pulaski Elementary School Auditorium

1097 Braley Road, New Bedford, MA 02745