

A Bookworm's Tale

The Concordia spring stage production for 2010 is a hugely ambitious project. Gilbert Allan is directing the world premier production of an original two act musical penned by an Edmonton playwright.

A Bookworm's Tale is a story about the school “nerd” or “bookworm” that challenges the status quo and demands her rightful place in the school and the opportunity to enjoy the same fruits as her peers.

The most unique part of this production is that the Concordia Collegiate Drama Dept. has teamed with St. Joseph's Catholic Composite IB Drama/Music in a joint production. Mr. Allan wanted to expose the Concordia performers to other high school artists and provide them with an opportunity to interact outside the walls of Concordia.

The Creative Team

Franco Imbrogno: Producer (CCHS Drama Teacher, Actor & Film & Stage Producer)

Tom Collins: Producer (St. Joe's Drama Teacher & Technical Advisor)

Greg Dewing: Producer (St. Joe's IB Music Teacher)

Gilbert Allan: Director (CCHS Creative Director, Actor, Director, Producer)

Cara Albo: Music Director/Choreographer/Producer (National Recording artist, Singer, Songwriter, Composer, Film Producer, Actor, Dancer, Model)

Stephen Borst: Technical Director (CCHS Alumnus, Technical Director)

Sarah Borst: Stage Manager (CCHS Alumnus, Drama Major, CUCA)

In addition, there are nine other industry professionals working with the high school students, some of whom have professional credits as well. A unique and ambitious undertaking that is sure to be an excellent learning opportunity for the students at both schools. CNL sat down with Mr. Imbrogno & Mr. Allan to obtain the details.

CNL: This has never been done before. What prompted it?

Allan: We have not done a musical at CCHS since 2001. It's time. Cara Albo (www.caraalbo.com) had written this script about 6 or 7 years ago and it has not been produced. It's the kind of thing that high school student's love so I jumped at the chance to do the world premier.

Imbrogno: To be honest it's too big, too much, it's unattainable for high school students. But hey, we're Concordians. We're not afraid of anything.

Allan: He's right. 18 original songs written & composed by Cara and she has developed all original choreography. Plus additional music. Given student

workloads and commitments this project really is too much for anyone other than professionals.

CNL: What's it like to direct something like this?

Allan: Directing? Who's directing? This is a three ring circus and I'm just the clown in charge (laughs).

Imbrogno: This play is fun. It's a romp. We've done so many heavy, dark social dramas. It was time just to celebrate. This show hits all the high school clichés.

Allan: It has a taste of Grease, High School Musical, Glee.

Imbrogno: Cinderella. Every clique in high school, even a romantic triangle.

CNL: Do you think it will be a success?

Allan: Buy a ticket and see for yourself (laughs).

CNL: This is really unique isn't it? Why Cara Albo?

Allan: We've both worked with her before. We know her work ethic and level of commitment. Franco and I are seasoned vets so the students get a good foundational perspective from us.

Imbrogno: And Collins and Dewing from the Joe's end. Also Jordan Van Biert (CCHS Choir Master) has helped with a lot of coaching. This is a great opportunity for the students to taste what it's like in the industry. So many creative minds to draw upon. Great future contacts.

Allan: I brought Cara in for the relevancy. She's only 23. She is close to them in age. It's one thing for them to see Franco and I and say, "they've been doing it their whole lives. It's what they do". Instead, they look at Cara and think, hard work, dedication & commitment, I can reach my goals now. She did. It's encouraging. She relates to them. Speaks their language.

Imbrogno: Yeah. Teenage-eese (laughs).

Allan: I can't wait until you learn to speak English.

CNL: The diminutive songstress has been mistaken for a high school student, true? (Imbrogno & Allan laugh)

Allan: True. She's very petite, slender, looks like a high school student some Times. She packs a punch though (laughs).

CNL: Who stands out to you?

Allan: No way, no way. Too many. So many good things happening I could never pick one. Really. Come and see yourself.

Imbrogno: Yeah. No. Everyone is doing great.

Allan: Kristina Seefeldt was a surprise for me. I knew she was academically gifted and a great person. Very involved with community service. I had no idea she performs. She is blowing me away. You will see a whole different Kristina.

Imbrogno: Zoe Zalasky, Jamie Oscroft, Rebekah Borst will all blow you away.

Allan: The whole show. There are Joe's students that will absolutely knock your socks off. Pauline Lee, Courtney Mackay, oh the whole show. Seriously. Great people. Come on out, bring the family.

CNL: How has everyone gotten along?

Allan: I wondered what it would be like mixing two high schools. It's been amazing. The Concordians and the St. Joes Family have really embraced each other. Right from the first day. St. Joe's has been the best hosts. Now it's just a whole new family. We're...Conjoes...

Imbrogno: With Salsa !!!

CNL: And everyone gets along?

Imbrogno: Except Gil. He fights with everyone. He's so aggressive, almost abusive.

Allan: Shut up. I can't take you anywhere. You're such a....

Tickets for "A Bookworm's Tale" are \$10.00 and available at the door or by Tix on the Square. Order online. Six performances (two matinees), April 28th thru May 1st. You are invited to what promises to be an evening of fun, frivolity and celebration.