

BEHIND THE CURTAIN AT ST. MICHAELS MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL

by: Elyse Exposito in: The Arts

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The tropics come to the ES.

The **St. Michaels Middle-High School (SMMHS)** theater is bringing the tropics to the Eastern Shore with calypso music and its colorful production of *Once on This Island*, a lively adaptation of the popular fairy tale *The Little Mermaid*.

The debut production for SMMHS theater runs January 27th–29th and depicts the story of a peasant girl who falls in love with a wealthy boy in the Caribbean.

“The production has a profound message about how closed cultural minds can bear serious consequences,” says choral/theater teacher Rebecca Hale. “It’s a charming story that teaches positive lessons and can bring about change for the next generation.”



Taking advantage of all the talent and creativity at SMMHS, the production is a school-wide effort as far as students and staff pitching in to complete stage sets, costumes, and more. Art students have painted an island backdrop that will be accompanied by an active volcano, palm trees, pond, and mountains. And high school junior Kathy Mitchell will be playing piano throughout the production along with approximately 10 professional musicians. “Every minute of the show is engaging,” says Hale. “The show opener ‘We Dance’ is filled with such happiness and acceptance, while the number ‘Rain’ is completely mesmerizing and over the top. The cast’s favorite song is ‘Pray’ because it’s intense and

frenzied.”

More than 21 students from grades 7th through 12th make up the cast for *Once on this Island*, including lead roles: Lissa Einhorn (TiMoune), Stewart Mitchell (Daniel Beauxhomme), Jasper Dudley (Papa Ge), Bailey Swann (Asaka), and Emily Campbell (Erzulie).



This nonstop song and dance production depicts the strength of love against the powerful forces of prejudice, hatred, and death. “I hope the audience will take away the power of embracing differences with respect and without fear,” says Hale. For more information, visit smmhsdrama.org or call 410-745-2852.

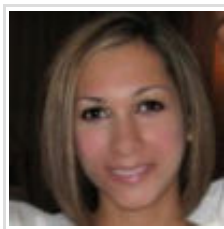
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ELYSE EXPOSITO

Contributing Arts Editor Elyse Exposito enjoys checking out the latest works from artists and theaters in her native Chesapeake region. She's currently a graphic design student and is constantly inspired by the creativity of her community. Contact her about art shows, theater productions, and

philanthropic events.

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