

Arguably the most popular musical of all time, *Les Misérables* has inspired millions across the globe with its unforgettable music and timeless story of love and redemption. Floyd Central Theatre Arts is pleased to present this incredible musical the first two weekends of November. Based on the novel of the same name by Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* tells the story of Jean Valjean, a convict who breaks parole in search of a better life. Inspired by a single act of kindness, Valjean alters the course of his life and touches the hearts of the individuals who come into his life. In the midst of 19th century France, a country torn apart by political unrest, poverty, and illness, the story of Valjean makes sense out of life's most disturbing tragedies and brings to light the greatest joy of the human experience; what it means to love another person. "Although we are fortunate to live in a relatively peaceful and safe community, *Les Misérables* is an important piece to do because it echoes the cries for compassion and justice that are still very real in many corners of our world today," says Director of Theatre Arts, Robbie Steiner. "The story of *Les Mis* may take place in the 1800's, but its oppressed, ill, and desperate characters are still with us. Now more than ever, we need the compassionate and empowering message of *Les Misérables*." Until a few months ago, the only productions of *Les Misérables* in the United States have been produced by the official Broadway and touring companies. With the exception of an abridged "school edition" of the show that was made available about a decade ago, the show has not been available to schools and other theatre groups. Floyd Central will be one of the first schools in the country to produce the complete version of the show, along with brand new orchestrations that were created for the most recent international tour. "It is a challenging show, but the opportunity to sing such brilliant music is exciting," said Collin Jackson, who plays Marius. With a full orchestra along with a cast of 67 of the schools most talented singers and actors, this production is sure to be nothing short of inspirational.

In this production, Floyd Central students have the unique opportunity to work alongside two experienced actors in the roles of Jean Valjean and Javert. Alonzo Richmond (Valjean) and Phil Thomas (Javert) are both experienced in the world of professional theatre as well as theatre education. Mr. Richmond performs regularly in the Kentuckiana area and is also the Director of Theatre Arts at Silver Creek High School. Mr. Thomas, Band teacher at Highland Hills Middle School and Adjunct Lecturer at Indiana University Southeast, last appeared on the Floyd Central stage in 1999 as "God" in *Children of Eden*. As one of the nation's leading high schools for theatre, Floyd Central makes a point to give students the opportunity to collaborate with individuals who are experience in the theatre industry. Most often, this collaboration is done offstage but Floyd Central has a history of incorporating guest performers as well. "Working with guest artists in a school production provides students with tremendous learning opportunities to observe and learn from professionals who have mastered their craft," says retired Director of Theatre Arts, Chris Bundy. Clay Gulley, who plays Thenardier, explains, "Working with Mr. Richmond and Mr. Thomas has inspired me to be concentrated on what I'm doing. You can tell that they go home and put in great preparation after each rehearsal."

The production is directed and designed by Robbie Steiner with choreography and additional direction by Megan Bliss and Bette Weber Flock. Angel Hampton, Choral Director for Floyd Central, is the musical director and is assisted by the Highland Hills Choral Director, David Stone. The orchestra, which consists of both students and adults, is conducted by Jon Ledgerwood. Michael Nevitt is the lighting designer, assisted by junior Lydia Villiger. Performers include junior Madeline Coffey (Cosette), senior Collin Jackson (Marius), senior Jade Dailey (Eponine), junior Allyson Nicole Jones (Fantine), senior Clay Gulley (Thenardier),

junior Mary Hayes (Madame Thenardier), and junior Ryan Bickett (Enjolras).

To purchase tickets, call the box office at (812) 542-2284 or visit www.floydcentraltheatre.org. We are pleased to introduce a new online ticketing system with this show. While you may still purchase tickets over the phone or at the box office, tickets are now available online as well. Perks of online ticketing include being able to pick your tickets using an interactive seating chart as well as the option of printing your tickets in the comfort of your own home. Although we now offer this fun and convenient way to purchase tickets online, you can still expect the same friendly service from our box office volunteers both over the phone and in person.