



The school production – musical, dramatic, or otherwise. It is an undertaking in a school that at the time we wonder 'why do we do this?' But at the end, we are always glad we do. Why? Because for some children it may be the only time they are involved in a large-scale production, for others it may ignite a lifelong interest in the performing arts.



I spoke with Chris Murphy at Methven Primary this week who said a 'production' was part of their term, it is here at Mt Somers Springburn as well, and I believe Mt Hutt College are in rehearsals also.

Being interested in musical theatre myself, I think back to my primary school days at Methven, and the first production I was involved in at school was 'Oliver'. I was in Standard 3 and played 'Mr Bumble' (probably because I was the right shape!). For me it led to a lot of time on stage at high school under the direction of Mr Corbett, Mr Harper, Mrs McKay and Ms Ponweiser, through to Methven Choral Society Productions, Oamaru Operatic, and now with Variety Theatre Ashburton, currently being in rehearsal for 'Miss Saigon'. Why do I do it? For the same reasons I played sport I guess. The social interaction, the discipline involved, challenging myself, taking risks, learning new skills. The list goes on. And the list goes on for the people involved in such a production. For 'Miss Saigon', there is a cast of 40 onstage. This will be backed up by an orchestra of 15, stage hands numbering 20, wardrobe, make-up, lighting and technical crews, front of house, promotion, etc that sees around another 50 added to the other lists. For those who don't like to be on stage there are a number of technical skills they can offer to make a production successful.

For schools, it offers a gateway into the Arts via the curriculum and especially in addressing the Key Competencies of thinking, using language, symbols and texts, managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing.

I know as parents, grandparents, caregivers and friends, many of you will be called upon to use your skills of costume design and making, set building, make-up, crowd control, and much more.

Thank you, for what you will do, to give our pupils these opportunities, as these are the things that many of us remember from our school days as the highlights.

Of course, none of these 'productions' happen without an audience, so get along and enjoy what is on offer. We have some incredibly talented individuals that are provided with great opportunities through organisations like The Big Little Theatre Company, Mid Canterbury Children's Theatre, Methven Theatre Company, Variety Theatre Ashburton, DanceWorx Ashburton and the list goes on. This term we add a number of schools to that list.