

# ARTS & VARIETY

## NATS 2018: CSP Students Participate in Singing Competition

BY ETHAN LANGEMO

EVERY YEAR, the Minnesota National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) hosts a singing competition. Vocal students from around Minnesota, such as University of Northwestern, Concordia Moorhead, Bemidji State, and Concordia-- St Paul, gather at St. John's University to compete. Two competitors from CSP, freshman Zach Fluegel, and sophomore Nathan Ausk, made it to finals.

The competition has two categories: classical and musical theatre. Both categories have a round of auditions where each competitor performs their selections. For the classical category, competitors must prepare a song in English, an Italian aria, and then another song in a foreign language of choice. In the musical theatre category, competitors select three musical pieces from Broadway or Off-Broadway shows.

The following day, after the auditions, singers in the top third of their section move on to a round of semi-finals, with the top three singers performing at finals in the afternoon. The winners of the competition are ranked and receive prizes. Fluegel placed first in musical theatre, and Ausk placed second in classical.

On his victory, Fluegel commented, "Winning my division was a great honor and a shock. It was a relief to know I'm doing something right." He also mentioned that auditions were nerve-wracking, but the feedback from the judges was very helpful.

In total, nine students from CSP competed at NATS: Freshmen Zachary Fluegel, Brittany Ringsdore, Ethan Langemo, and Jesse Meyer, and sophomores Riley Peltz, Nathan Ausk, Aaron Rossow, and Emily Woodhall, and senior Maurice Williams. Fluegel and Ringsdore were the only two from the school to compete in the musical theater category, while the rest competed in the classical category. Additionally, CSP Professor Shari Speer is an officer for NATS, as part of the auditions committee.

Sophomore Riley Peltz reflects on her learning experience from the past two years competing, "Both years I competed in the Women's classical section and have enjoyed every minute of it. NATS has helped me grow my technique and learn a wide range of music while also allowing me to see my fellow colleagues perform and show their talents."

Though many hope to move on from auditions to semi-finals and beyond, for most people, it is a chance to have fun, perform in front of friends and judges, and learn.

One important thing to consider about a performance (whether it be a stage play, a recital, or a competition) is that there is an entire process going on behind the scenes beforehand, requiring hard work and patience, taking place over weeks, months, or even years. When it comes to becoming a better performer, what matters more than how you perform is that you have learned in the process. †

## FEBO Performance Recap

BY MATTHEW IUNG

THERE ARE TWO TABLES. One is covered in laundry and has a picture of a happy couple; the other is a condensed kitchen. In between those table stands a man who is baring his soul to an audience of complete strangers. His name is Anthony Febo, and if you didn't have a chance to see him on campus, this article would pale in comparison to his words and insight.

Febo touches on a lot of subjects, and I would have to describe his show as a poetry revival. Febo is touring his performance titled, "On Finding Joy," his hybrid seminar/spoken word event and poetry workshop. The show is named as much for the artist as it is the audience. It is part of Febo's search for happiness,

through which he wants to try and surface whatever happiness he can muster.

I would have to describe Febo as kinetic. There was a palpable motion to the way he speaks. While this is something that most slam poets should be able to invoke in a listener, Febo's style and timing have been honed after years of being dyed in the wool of lyricism.

His story began in Massachusetts, where eventually discovered hip-hop. During high school, he had an honors English class where a teacher recommended he enter a poetry competition. It was there that he heard a friend speak. Febo describes his style as being a lot like what he heard that evening. It was about what you could convey, as opposed to batting on a track or trying to rap someone.

Through poetry, Febo had found a place where egos were set aside and love and acceptance were the worlds to walk by. Eventually, he started Slamming in 2007 and coached young people for close to ten years.

Febo spent some time writing love poems until he, "started re-addressing the way [he] thought about love." The writer states, "I spent four months writing one poem, and I was like, 'I don't think I want to do that again.'"

In the wake of all of this, Febo realized that writing was a way to wade through his emotional turmoil. It was a way to process, heal, understand, and grow. That being said, Febo's poetry has tangible anxiety. This tends to run straight to the heart of issues like trust, skin color, toxic masculinity, and the relationship we have with our parents.

The vulnerability that Febo has constructed into his poetry leads his listeners feeling utterly enlightened and inspired. †

## Upcoming CSP Theatre Productions

BY MATTHEW IUNG

AT THE END OF THIS MONTH, Concordia's theater department will be presenting Bremen Town Blues, written and directed by Mark Rosenwinkel and opening on November 29<sup>th</sup>. This is a charming musical that takes its inspiration from the Grapes of Wrath and the Grimms Fairy Tales Musicians of Bremen Town. This is an all ages show that is bound to make you smile. The show is about several downtrodden animals that decide to form a small blues band and pressure their dreams. Though the road ahead of them is fraught with misfortune, they are determined if nothing else.

Concordia's theater department will also be presenting its student lead one-acts on December 15<sup>th</sup>, with shows directed by students who are in the directing class. They assigned cast members earlier this year and take roughly five weeks to prepare and rehearse. Even on this short timetable, the young directors have opted to take on a wide range of challenges and genres.

Kally Joe Ashmen has decided to put on a puppet show of the beloved children's book The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister. She is not only be adapting the story into a puppet show but designing and building the puppets as well.

Marja Bjornstad is directing a two-woman show called Night, Mother, by Marsha Norman. This is a moving show about a mother and daughter that find themselves having a conversation neither of them expected.

Chelsea Wolf has chosen Lost in Yonkers by Neil Simon rounding out the performances with a dramatic comedy about new surroundings and adolescence.

In the coming months, the theater department will display a range of diversity in productions and even though most of them come in under an hour that doesn't take away from what they have to say or teach the audience about the world around them, or the people sitting next to them. Like all of Concordia's shows Bremen Town will have a flat 5 dollar admission, and as always students get in free. The student directed one-acts will have free admission for all. †