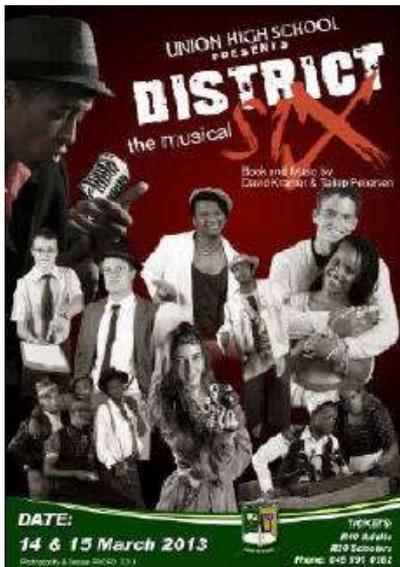


# Senior Production 2013

## Union's Production of District Six an Outstanding Success



District Six is a love story set against the forced removals of a community by the Apartheid regime in the 1960's.

Mary, a young songwriter and her boyfriend Cassiem audition for Mr Goldman, owner of Star Tone Records. Sandy, Mr Goldman's granddaughter who is visiting from London catches Cassiem's eye. Mr Goldman would like to contract Mary but Sandy persuades him that Cassiem would be a better bet. When Sandy's camera is stolen by a street child, Cassiem offers to escort her around the District.

District Six is declared for "whites only" and people start receiving letters from "The Board" offering them alternative accommodation on the Cape Flats. Nines, a local gangster is apolitical to begin with, but he slowly starts to understand the implications of the Apartheid laws through the mentoring of Damaka, a blind herbalist. Nines has a crush on Mary and when he discovers the developing relationship between Cassiem and Sandy he betrays them to "the Law".

### REVIEW

Union High triumphs once again with an outstanding production staged. Their highly professional and entertaining portrayal of David Kramer and Taliep Petersen's District Six left us as the audience, amazed and moved. The musical tells a love story set against the forced removal of a community by the Apartheid regime in the late 60's and the story was so well presented that right from the start we felt we were right there in District Six experiencing all the emotions of the characters.

Giving an astounding performance as "Nines", the gang leader, Jason Vers was undeniably the star of the show. Coming to the stage straight from the rugby field, he easily slipped into his role and lead his gang of "mobsters", who never once dropped their pose and had the audience rolling with laughter at their antics.

From the moment the curtains opened, Davian Koetaan as Oom Henry Afrika captured the hearts of us all as he went about selling his fruit and vegetables. He had the audience cheering and clapping every time he took to the dance floor showing amazing rhythm and attitude.

The romantic leads of the show, "Cassiem" played by Julio Abels and "Mary" played by Sandiso Matshikiza easily handled their difficult duets, showing a high standard of musicality as well as giving very credible acting performances, having us all loving them as a couple. Christine Offerman's whimsical portrayal of "Sandy", the other woman, made it hard for us not to like her regardless of the part she played as the "villain".

Siya Mkapeni gave an impressive performance as "Damaka", the old, blind herbalist. He portrayed his part so well that he had many of us questioning whether he was really blind or not. His sidekick, Broertjie, the street urchin, (Benedict Speelman) stole our hearts with his beautiful voice and sad story. Many of us will look at street urchins differently after listening to the song "My Broertjie", beautifully sung by Jason and Bennie.

Sive Jacobs as Anty Hester was a delight to watch as she tried to control her irresponsible husband, but the highlight came when she led the Farewell Song, singing acapella and bringing into it so much emotion that none of us could leave at the end of the show unaffected by the reality of this time in our history.

Other noteworthy performances came from David Forbes as "Vosloo", the government official tasked to collect details from the residents, and Sheade Rudman as "Mr Goldman", the owner of the Star Tone Record Company. Although not each character can be individually mentioned it was clear that all took their parts seriously and contributed to the authentic reflection of life in District Six. From the opening market scene to the Malay Choir and Klopse Dancers, what really stood out was the immense fun the actors were having throughout.

However we also realise that a show like this cannot happen without a skilled backstage, sound and lighting crew. Of note was that all these areas were run solely by the pupils and they should be congratulated on a job well done.

This was one of the most remarkable plays ever produced by Union High School - a testimony to the awesome

talent of the cast as well as the skill and hard work that Mrs Avrille Putter and Mrs Rozanne van Wyk put into the show. Bravo!

