The Specialist Visual and Performing Arts (SVAPA) program is a unique program that promotes excellence across the Arts. It provides an educational journey that enriches students’ learning through the development of Arts ideas, skills, processes, creative and critical thinking. The Arts’ culture offered in SVAPA is about learning based on contemporary practices of working in multiple art forms.

The SVAPA course at Mount Lawley Senior High School blends the four Arts forms of Drama, Media, Music and Visual Arts. Students are able to specialize in their main Arts’ interests during Year 10 and are encouraged to continue in the strong Senior School Arts Program in Years 11 and 12.

Exciting links have been established with Edith Cowan University (ECU) and Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts (PICA). Senior students have the opportunity to audition for Certificate IV courses in Jazz and Classical Music at the WA Academy of Performing Arts. We are also a pilot school in the Spark_lab project with PICA and ECU. Certificate II in Creative Industry Events is available as part of the Year 9-10 program.
SPECIALIST VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM
@ MOUNT LAWLEY
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

BACKGROUND
The first students entered the SVAPA programme in 2001 and graduated from the school in 2005. Each year since many SVAPA students have successfully graduated and some have continued with their studies in Visual Art, Drama, Music and Media at a tertiary level. Their initiative, creativity and commitment model the benefit of an arts' enriched education. SVAPA students have been elected regularly as Head Girl or Boy from 2005.

In 2003 and again in 2008 the program was endorsed by the Department of Education as an Arts Specialist Program (ASP) and since 2005 we have recruited students across the metropolitan area.

SVAPA SCHOLARSHIPS
One student from each feeder primary school will be offered a scholarship toward their fees.

COMBINED ARTS’ FOCUS
The particular aspect of the specialist art programme at Mount Lawley Senior High School is that it provides a broad-based arts course, requiring the students to participate in the 4 arts areas of Drama, Media, Music and Visual Arts.

All students take all 4 arts in Year 8 and Year 9. In Year 10 students may specialise their arts’ interest as a pathway into Senior School Visual and Performing Arts’ courses.

In both Years 8 and 9 there is opportunity to work in a combined arts focus.

YEAR 8: THE DRAMA
The course is inspired by Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, but explores the imagination and provides a place to dream and be idealistic. A theatre production at the start of the year is a highlight. Other Arts areas relate to these themes and yet the main concern in Year 8 is to develop arts skills and ideas.

YEAR 9: WHAT IS BEAUTY?
THE ODYSSEY
This is a journey of creative and critical thinking that engages with philosophical questions and social issues. The Odyssey project brings the 4 arts together in a polymedia celebration. Other Learning Areas are encouraged to become involved over the year.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

SVAPA CAMP
Year 8 & 9 SVAPA classes attend an annual camp at Point Walter. This is to allow the two groups to work together and to introduce the Year 8s into the 4Arts’ flavour of the SVAPA course. The teachers and the students develop creative arts’ practice and friendship.

EARLY MORNING ENRICHMENT CLASS
Year 8 & 9 SVAPA students choose performance or visual art classes each term. They are weekly on a Thursday or Friday at 7.30am. The students work in mixed Year 8 and 9 groupings and extend their arts’ skills with experts.

SCA @ SVAPA
In the past students from Year 9 & 10 SVAPA have worked with students from the School of Contemporary Arts at ECU under direction of their lecture on joint projects. It is a wonderful, ongoing learning experience for our SVAPA students.

COMMUNITY ARTS’ FESTIVALS
We encourage involvement in community festivals such as the Awesome Children's Arts Festival. Artists work with students and teachers to develop the projects.

10 SVAPA PROJECT CLASS
All SVAPA students are encouraged to take a semester of SVAPA Project class where they work on combined arts’ projects with artist-mentors. This also links with the Certificate II VET qualification that will be available only for SVAPA students.

ENRICHMENT WORKSHOPS
It is valuable to maintain and extend the link between the two year groups and in four terms there will be a day (usually Saturday) of workshops with artists from the 4 arts areas of either performance (drama and dance), film, visual art or music. Dates will be available at the beginning of the year.

SCHOOL FESTIVALS
The Arts Festival Day is held at the end of April or early in May. It involves the whole school in an afternoon of arts’ activities and events. It culminates in a rock concert with a well-known local band. The SVAPA 10s help to manage the event. The SVAPA presence is clear as all students
and arts’ teachers wear their SVAPA t-shirt for the event.

Arts with Attitude is the annual MLSHS arts’ festival. It has a Senior School focus with the school production, the art exhibition, music performances and Echidna film awards.

SPARK_LAB PROJECT
Through our close links with Edith Cowan University we were invited to be a pilot school in the Spark Lab project that is run by PICA. Already in 2011 our Year 10 students have been involved in workshops with visiting international artists and have been invited to participate in a performance at PICA with a professional artist and local performers. In 2012 we will enjoy the talents of resident artists through this program. ECU is researching the concept of how future innovators are developed through an arts’ rich education program.

CERTIFICATE II in CREATIVE INDUSTRY EVENTS
(CUE20103 Theatre and Events and CUF20107: Certificate II in Creative Industries (Media) and CUV03 Visual Arts, Craft and Design).

This qualification will be embedded in the SVAPA Project Class and will take into account all the extra events that SVAPA students support, attend and develop. It begins in Year 9 with a portfolio and should be completed by the end of Year 10. This begins in Trimester 3 2011 with the devised performance in Drama.

SENIOR SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES
Success in Senior School arises from interest, developing excellence and a joy of learning that is nurtured by the SVAPA pedagogy. We offer visual and performing arts’ courses in Year 11 & 12. Since 2003 Certificate courses at TAFE and at ECU have given students some very exciting options. Certificate 3 Design courses are offered at TAFE and Certificate 4 Jazz and Classical courses in conjunction with WAAAPA are available at ECU.

SVAPA SUCCESS
Students in SVAPA enjoy the enrichment workshops and being in classes of creative, keen peers who respond enthusiastically to the heightened expectations of their specialist teachers. SVAPA students are ready to do more and to be more involved, interested, experimental and explorative within the culture of success that is encouraged in SVAPA @ MLSHS.

SELECTION PROCESS FOR SVAPA
1. An A4 portfolio which includes:
   • A cover page with name, photo, address, phone number and attending primary school.
   • A letter, hand written by the candidate, explaining why they would like to be involved in the SVAPA program.
   • The latest school report.
   • Any related PEAC reports.
   • A reference from the Year 7 teacher.
   • 2-3 recent Visual Art examples, i.e. drawing, painting, computer graphics/photo shop, and any 3D examples should be photographed. (copies are fine).
   • Two examples of creative writing, i.e. poetry, script, story.
   • Any certificates of excellence or achievement.
   • An example of filming could be included.

2. Drama Workshop: all candidates take part in a workshop which will demonstrate their ability to work with others and their performance capacity.

3. Visual Art Workshop: students will have a set exercise in an hour-long workshop.

4. Music Test: aural test, no previous experience necessary, simply aptitude not ability.

5. An interview with student and parents may be requested.

Dates for the selection process are found on the application form.
For Further Information contact
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