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While the set is sparse, the courtroom drama is palpable in Coventry High's production of "12 Angry Jurors," running this weekend at CHS.

American classic staged at CHS

'12 Angry Jurors' an adaptation of all-time great court drama

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COVENTRY — The Coventry High School Drama Club is preparing for their fall performance this weekend, called "Twelve Angry Jurors." The well-known production is considered to be one of the greatest courtroom dramas of all time, said Drama program director and CHS teacher Myke Wilkinson.

"Twelve Angry Jurors" is the mixed gender version of "Twelve Angry Men." The play is frequently performed in high schools throughout the country and on stages on Broadway and in Hollywood. Wilkinson said that for some literacy classes, the story is part of the curriculum.

"Usually I choose plays that have big lights, sounds and underscores but this is nothing of that, just a deliberation room," Wilkinson said. "I wanted these students to really learn the importance of minimalistic acting and the use of their voices. It is a nice master class in the art of acting."

The story revolves around a homicide trial where a jury of twelve people is deciding the fate of a teenage boy accused of murdering his father. The defendant, who already has a criminal record, will be sentenced with the death penalty if he is found guilty.

Toward the beginning, the jury has a near unanimous decision but with one dissenter, the play turns into a case of reasonable doubt.

There are 18 students participating in this year's production, including the cast and stage crew.

For freshman Jake Chaves, who plays a court guard, this play

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Classic hits the stage at CHS

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has been a great learning experience during his first year at Coventry High School.

"I am able to be fun and be myself while I'm up there," Chaves said during a dress rehearsal on Monday. "This is a good production and although I would like a bigger role next year, it has been a good experience."

One dedicated student and devoted drama student, Gavin DiFranco, shaved his head for his role as Juror #12. The usual stage manager turned actor, DiFranco said he wanted to show off his acting talent in his senior year at Coventry.

"I usually manage the shows and oversee everything. This year, I wanted to focus on acting," DiFranco said. "It can be strange sometimes, being on the other side as an actor, but I really enjoy doing it."

DiFranco plans on continuing his passion for acting by attending the University of Rhode Island next fall, to work with Wilkinson's wife in the university's theatre department.

Wilkinson wanted to utilize some technology in this year's simplistic yet dramatic play and did so by using a projector to show the judge as the backdrop during specific scenes. In the original play, the judge was played as a narrator.

Teacher Jason Gomes will act as the judge.



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While some know the play as "12 Angry Jurors," it has been modified throughout the country to allow for students male and female to play roles in stage productions.

The students in this year's drama club, The Talented Company, include Amber Lacombe, Joseph Lachance, Max Cinquegrana, Delaney Ryan, Kyle Dante, Raymond Thibeault, Lissy Shortall, Quentin Martel, Rob Petrarca, Isabella Regine, Gavin DiFranco, Devlin Cook-Hines, Jake Chaves, Sabrina Peltier, Katie McCarthy,

Guin Furtado, Allison Vanasse and Hannah Booth.

The production will be put on at the Coventry High School auditorium on Nov. 12, 13 and 14 with curtain call at 7:30 p.m. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. with tickets costing \$10.