

## **LOCAL SCHOOL PRODUCTION OF CHILDREN'S THEATER: THE MUSICAL SPECTACLE THAT LEFT AUDIENCE'S HEARTS AGLOW**

by Yuan Morales



*Opening musical scene of A Christmas Carol (Photo credits: Matthieu Casiño)*

Last December 8, 2023, the 11th-grade students of Montessori Integrated School of Antipolo performed their own rendition of the classical musicals entitled *The Wizard of Oz*, and *A Christmas Carol*. With only almost two months of preparation, these 11th graders managed to pull off the musical spectacle that left its audience wonderstruck. One would observe that the audience — mainly catering to preschoolers and kindergarteners — were most definitely enjoying the visually immersive experience that they were seeing.



*Scenes from The Wizard of Oz (Photo credits: Ryan Tipon)*



*Another photo from the opening musical scene of A Christmas Carol (Photo credits: Matthieu Casiño)*

The production was featured in the school auditorium, which provided the producers and actors the opportunity for an intricately designed stage. Set designs incorporated good use of the lighting and sound mixers, creating a more immersive imagery. The cast donned costumes that were crafted and fit for what they ought to be. The flow of the script, while heavily based on the source material, still managed to execute the core components of what made the original productions a success.



*Rafee Balbuena as Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz (Photo credits: Matthieu Casiño)*

Behind the scenes, the success of the theatrical production was driven by a collaborative effort focused on technical excellence. It is noteworthy that both musicals were carefully planned out only by the students themselves. While teachers at times provided suggestions to guide the production, it was ultimately up to the students' wit and hard work that led to the success of both plays. Technical director Josef Morales stated that despite the tiring practices and internal struggles within the set, it was a delight to have created something that made people happy (because it would mean a higher grade for their finals). Nonetheless, this only showcases the vision that the school lives by: 'the total development of self-reliance and independence in the individual'.