

AMHERST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
OPERETTA'S 75TH ANNUAL PRODUCTION

Les Misérables™

SCHOOL EDITION



A GUIDE

UNDERSTANDING THE PLOT
& CHARACTERS

ABOUT THE PLAY

Set in 19th century France, Les Misérables follows the life of Jean Valjean – an ex-convict who seeks redemption despite being hunted for decades by his rival and ex-guard Javert after breaking parole. In his quest for absolution, Jean Valjean agrees to take care of Cosette – the daughter of tragic factory worker Fantine – changing his life forever. The pair travel across France avoiding the wrath of Javert until they find themselves in Paris during the French revolution. Despite the social and political struggle, there is love, passion and courage to be found. But dreams can be broken and adoration unrequited. So how will it end for these poor souls?

75 YEARS OF OPERETTA

This production marks a significant milestone in the history of the Amherst Operetta. For 75 years, the high school has staged an annual musical to perform well-known Broadway shows. The selection of Les Misérables (School Edition) as this year's production puts a very popular show on stage and showcases the extraordinary talent of the cast, stage crew and orchestra.

PERFORMANCES

Feb. 9, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 10, 2024 at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

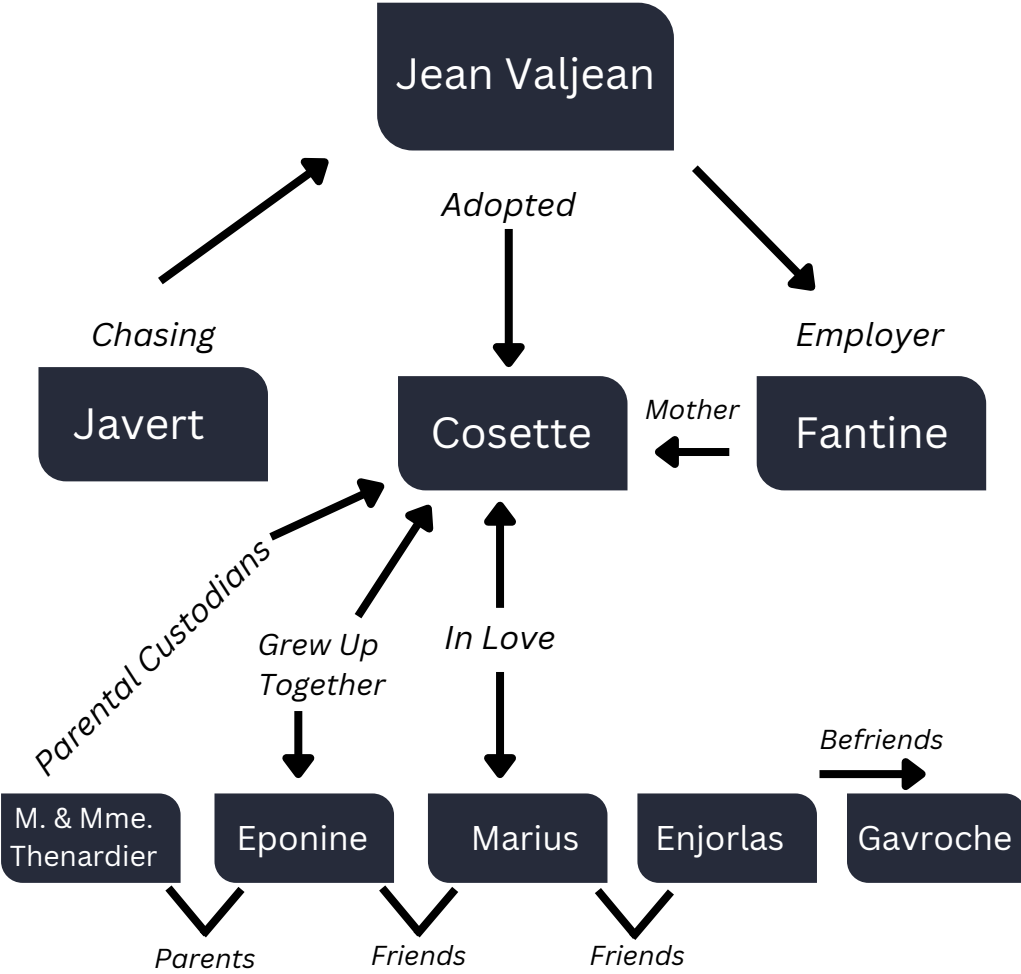
Tickets: \$12.50 - adults; \$10 - seniors and students.

Amherst Central High School, 4301 Main Street, Amherst

Online Tickets - <https://amherstoperetta.ludus.com/>

Cover Art Design: Chloe Camping, ACHS Class of 2024

WHO'S WHO
The Principal Characters





Connor Hesch, ACHS Class of 2024



Jack McLaughlin, ACHS Class of 2024

Jean Valjean

Jean Valjean is the hero of the show. It is his life journey that we follow. Valjean is an ex-convict who becomes Cosette's adopted father. He was sent to prison for 19 years for stealing a loaf of bread for a starving child. As an ex-convict, Valjean is an outcast in society, which motivates him to break his parole and, with some help from the benevolent Bishop of Digne, assume another identity, leaving behind his former life of crime and hatred. His new life is prosperous; he finds fulfillment in raising Cosette with love and care and in helping those in need, which he does even at the risk of his own wellbeing.

Javert

Javert is the inspector who serves as antagonist to Jean Valjean. After releasing Jean Valjean from prison, Javert learns that Valjean has broken his parole and so begins to hunt Valjean down with pious obsession. Javert is incapable of compassion or pity and unswerving in his belief that men cannot change for the better. "Once a thief, always a thief" is his mantra. Therefore, in his eyes, Valjean will always be a criminal who must be brought to justice.



Sophia Giordano, ACHS Class of 2025



Megan Guercio, ACHS Class of 2026

Fantine

A tragic figure in the story, Fantine is a working-class girl employed in a factory owned by Jean Valjean and a single mother struggling to earn enough money to care for her daughter, Cosette. After her co-workers find out she has an illegitimate child, Fantine is fired from her job. In desperation, she turns to prostitution in order to pay the Thénardiens, who have agreed to raise Cosette and provide her with room and board. She represents the destruction that nineteenth-century French society cruelly wreaks on the less fortunate.

Cosette

Fantine's daughter, who lives as Valjean's adopted daughter after her mother dies. Cosette spends her childhood as a servant for the Thénardiens in Montfermeil, but even this awful experience does not make her hardened or cynical. Under the care of Valjean and the nuns of Petit-Picpus, Cosette ultimately blossoms into a beautiful, educated young woman. She finds fulfillment in her love for Marius. Cosette is innocent and docile, but her participation in Valjean's many escapes from the law show that she also possesses intelligence and bravery.



Christopher Dow, ACHS Class of 2025



Emma Pfordresher, ACHS Class of 2024

Thénardier and Madame Thénardier

Thénardier and his wife Madame Thénardier are amoral opportunists who look out for only themselves. They are greedy, crafty, and tough, yet they are irresistible as they ooze with suspect charm and undeniable humor. For a while, Thénardier and his wife run a small inn, where they raise their daughter Éponine, whom they spoil, and the young Cosette, whom they mistreat and use as their servant. When their unscrupulous dealings finally catch up to them, the family ends up living on the streets where they survive through thievery. A cruel, wretched, money-obsessed man, Thénardier extorts money from whomever he can, and he frequently serves as an informant to whoever will bid the highest. His schemes range from robbery to fraud to murder, and he has strong ties to the criminal underworld in Paris. Blinded by greed, Thénardier is incapable of loving other human beings and spends every minute in pursuit of money.

M. Thénardier's wife. Mme. Thénardier is just as evil as her husband and takes special pleasure in abusing Cosette. In later years, she becomes her husband's most devoted accomplice and is particularly enthusiastic about his schemes to rob Valjean and Cosette.



Lilian Patterson, ACHS Class of 2025



Noah Hester, ACHS Class of 2025

Eponine

The Thénardières' eldest daughter. Eponine is a wretched creature who helps her parents steal. She is also sensitive and vulnerable in certain situations, especially when it comes to her friend Marius for whom she feels an unrequited love. Her family later ends up on the streets, where she is forced to fend for herself and learns to become street-smart and tough. She proves that no one is beyond redemption, and she ultimately emerges as one of the novel's most tragic and heroic figures.

Marius

Although he is a member of 'Friends of ABC', a group of students who are itching for a revolution, Marius is not as passionate about the cause as some of his peers including his close friend and leader of the group, Enjolras. Marius is the son of Georges Pontmercy, a colonel in Napoléon's army and grows up in the home of his grandfather – a monarchist. Despite his wealth, Marius befriends Éponine who is of a lower class and lives on the streets. He is unaware of Éponine's affection for him, and instead falls in love with Cosette. Marius learns why he was separated from his father and embarks on a path of discovery.



Max Goldhirsch, ACHS Class of 2025

Enjolras

A young, handsome, and confident political radical who is the leader of a group of student insurrectionists called the 'Friends of the ABC'. He leads the insurrection at the barricade and fights courageously.



Jane Rodgers, Amherst Middle, Grade 6



Robert Creighton, Amherst Middle, Grade 6

Gavroche

The Thénardiers' oldest son. Gavroche is kicked out of the house at an early age and becomes a Parisian street urchin. He is a happy-go-lucky child who enjoys the small pleasures of life and demonstrates unusual generosity toward those even less fortunate than he is. He is also fierce and brave, and plays a decisive role in the barricade.

Young Cosette

Fantine's (illegitimate) daughter who, as a young girl, was raised by the Thénardiers along with their own daughter Éponine.

**AMHERST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL OPERETTA
ASSOCIATION'S PRODUCTION OF**

LES MISÉRABLESTM SCHOOL EDITION

Performed entirely by students.

A musical by ALAIN BOUBLIL and CLAUDE-MICHEL SCHÖNBERG.

Based on the novel by VICTOR HUGO.

Music by CLAUDE-MICHEL SCHÖNBERG.

Lyrics by HERBERT KRETZMER.

Original French text by ALAIN BOUBLIL and JEAN-MARC NATEL.

Additional materials by JAMES FENTON.

Adapted by TREVOR NUNN and JOHN CAIRD.

Original Orchestrations by JOHN CAMERON.

New Orchestrations by CHRISTOPHER JAHNKE, STEPHEN
METCALFE and STEPHEN BROOKER.

Originally Produced by CAMERON MACKINTOSH.

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