

## The Upper School Fall Play, “248 Miles”

Thursday, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – Saturday, Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

*248 Miles* explores themes of isolation, loss, and the social pressures of high school. The play follows a number of characters who are all in different points of crisis as they return to school after Thanksgiving break. Among the struggling students are:

- Edie has caused controversy due to a politically themed online posting.
- Ozzy is being bullied by two boys and has no friends to turn to.
- Greta is questioning how her friends treat her.
- Turner is struggling with how to grow into the man he expected to be.

And at the center of the hurricane is Mikaela, who is returning to school after being out for a month. Mikaela was diagnosed with clinical depression after she took too many sleeping pills a month ago and was rushed to the hospital. Mikaela is working hard to regain her health and her footing, but has lost all of the social connections that she used to rely on.

While there is some discussion about Mikaela’s suicide attempt, the discussion never turns gratuitous and the play does not glorify her actions. In fact, Mikaela very clearly regrets her decisions and is working as hard as she can to make amends and reconnect with her peers.

Mid-way through the story, a classmate dies due to a congenital heart defect. The characters, already in crisis, must figure out how to find the personal and emotional support that they are desperate for. Ultimately, the positive connections they make with one another is what saves them, leaving them at the end of the play on the path to recovery.

The play contains some strong adolescent language. If you have any specific questions, please contact Director of Arts Tracey Foster at [Tracey\\_Foster@fa.org](mailto:Tracey_Foster@fa.org).

***248 Miles*** was written by Andrew Geha. Andrew has a Master’s Degree in Educational Theater from NYU. NYU’s Groundbreaking Educational Theater program emphasizes using theater and theatrical structures to explore and educate about social and emotional challenges to communities. Before coming to Friends Academy, Andrew worked with the Creative Arts Team at NYU, The New Victory Theater, and the Delaware Theater Company. He has been a teaching artist in a variety of educational settings including Riker’s Island. Andrew has taught theater at Friends Academy for 18 years. During that time he has developed a playwriting curriculum for Middle and Upper School that has been widely recognized. He has been asked to present various aspects of the curriculum at the National Convention for the American Alliance of Theater and Education for the last four years. His curriculum and our program here at school will be included in *Dramatic Navigation* by Dr. John Newman, a book about playwriting being published in January 2019. Friends Academy has had the privilege of producing many of Andrew’s new plays, including his current work, *248 Miles*. His most recent musical, *Standing in the Current*, won the AATE Unpublished Play Reading Project Award last August and his middle school play, *In Dreams, I am Invincible*, won the 2018 Aurand Harris Memorial Playwriting Award awarded by the New England Theater conference.