Embrace the Absurdities in Corona Del Mar's "You Can't Take it With You"
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A beloved cornerstone of American theatre, You Can't Take It With You follows two radically different families under one roof who find themselves embroiled in an outrageous collision of deeply held beliefs, diverse perspectives, and unconditional love. Amid the chaos, Corona Del Mar reminds us to choose to celebrate the beauty found in our differences and in one another.

Ben Hacker commands the stage as Martin Vanderhof, brilliantly embodying an aging patriarch through a deliberate, unhurried shuffle, softened shoulders, and refined vocal projection. With a serene, carefree spirit, Hacker balances hilarious comedic beats, such as cheekily swiping a hat from an IRS agent, with grounded gravitas during his poignant speech to Mr. Kirby regarding family's true worth.

Norah Allen encapsulates the essence of Alice Sycamore with pristine poise, masterfully navigating an emotional arc from rigid restraint to radiant warmth. Early on, Allen's tucked-in elbows and brisk, controlled strides sharpen the contrast against her family's playful whimsy. Beside Tony Kirby (Tomas Villaveces), her defensive composure thaws into bashful glances and a gentler cadence until the disastrous dinner unravels. Her guarded posture melts into genuine laughter as Alice embraces the vibrant madness around her.

Injecting electric energy into the household, Austen Dang embodies De Pinna's eccentric flair. Dang executes stellar physical timing during the modeling scene, maintaining a rigid, wide-eyed toga pose before abruptly shattering his stillness with frantic dashes to the basement.

Costumes (November Firey & CDMHS Costumes Crew) sharply define the 1930s social divide between corporate wealth and creative freedom. Muted tones of silver and ivory reflect the Kirbys' icy corporate sophistication, while the Sycamores' radiant palette mirrors their unrestrained joy. In particular, Gay Wellington's rich, wine-red coat strikes a bold visual presence, amplifying her flustered, alcohol-fueled antics and theatrical flair.

Lighting designers KJ Farrell and Ethan Riccio elevate the story's atmosphere with inventive thematic detail. Delicate floral patterns bathe the living room walls, physically painting the set with Penelope Sycamore's artistic imagination. As the Act I fireworks detonate, flashing rainbow lights illuminate the backdrop to symbolize the explosive outbreak while the overhead chandelier flickers in rhythm, perfectly echoing the mayhem on stage.

CDMHS reminds us that happiness isn't found in wealth or status. Life's greatest riches are measured in shared laughter and human connection, because in the end, that is all we really take with us.