

Reporting Live From Godinez Fundamental High School's Luminescent Production of "Radium Girls"

written by Brooke Metoyer, a junior at Mission Viejo High School

"Radium Girls" at Godinez Fundamental illustrates the tragic story of the real-life dial painters in the 1920s. This play follows the people at the dial factory as they deal with, and realize the detrimental effects of radium.

Christian Jimenez provides a strong and nuanced performance as Arthur Reoder, the factory's boss. Pretentiously adjusting his cuffs at the beginning of the show compared to his hunched posture, limp, and raspy voice at the end illustrate his character's journey from ignorance to regret. Jimenez glows in scenes with his wife, Mrs. Reorder played by Erika Gallegos. Mrs. Reorder tenderly holds Reorder's arm and in return, his expression relaxes- exemplifying their love and how they need each other during troubling times.

Adrian Gomez provides a moment of laughter during this dramatic show as the Lovesick Cowboy. With mere minutes of stage time, a confident smirk combines with relaxed posture and grounded stance to allow this charming and flirtatious character to explain how he will make the sick girls' final days radiant and bright.

Makeup is used by Andrea Haro, Sophia Corranza, Ebony Mendez, and Bryan Huirache Sosa to age, illuminate, and communicate the state of health the characters are in. They emphasize the natural creases and folds in the actor's faces with lines to make them appear older, tailoring each makeup look to each face. The team uses green paint that glows under a black light on the actors faces and hands to represent the radium paint- which glowed in real life. Two characters have black fingers due to handling the radium and their skin dying. The team experimented with different paints and powders to finally develop a combination that is opaque, but does not transfer onto any props.

Jayson Lopez, Lizeth Diaz, Helam Cortes, and Dulce Rubio handle the sound in this production. The clock ticking and car noises promptly and clearly play when needed. When a mic was malfunctioning in act two, the team quickly cut the mic to prevent any distractions and keep the show moving. Then, the actor, Diego Rivera, immediately faced the audience and projected his voice to fill the theater; the cast and crew recovered excellently.

With well executed tech elements, strong emotional performances with twinkles of comedic moments, Godinez Fundamental's "Radium Girls" keeps the stories of these diligent factory workers, alive and bright.