

The Best People Step in Time to Capo Valley's "Mary Poppins!"
written by Griffin Croft, a senior at San Clemente High School

As the rebellious Banks children keep driving out nannies, an advertisement must be sent to all crooks and crannies. The children find Mary Poppins to play the game and jollily holiday at Cherry Tree Lane. Her tutelage results in many twists and turns, and the family cannot wait until Poppins returns.

With practically perfect vocals and poise, Maiya Stigall glides through the air as Mary Poppins. In "Brimstone and Treacle (Part 2)," Stigall battles Miss Andrew (Mckenzie Cahill) over Cherry Tree Lane. As Cahill impressively trumpets her harsh punishments, Stigall serenades the children with her soaring soprano vocals and casts off Cahill with a wave.

Narrating the show, Evan Nowack, as Bert, ambles across the stage with carefree vocals, head nods, and clever jokes. Nowack leans against the stage's side to regale the audience with sweeps of his hand and his rich baritone. In "Step in Time," he enthusiastically joins the ensemble to tap dance and flips midair on the fly rail.

Sara Murray as Mrs. Brill and Domenic Puccio as Robertson Ay create a humorous duo as the Banks family's overwhelmed servants. Puccio stumbles through his jobs while Murray laments her life with crossed arms and exasperated remarks. As she gently dusts a family heirloom, Murray commands Puccio to stand still without breathing, resulting in him panting on the floor.

In "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious," the ensemble superbly executes their precise and energetic dance to spell out the greatest word in the world. Bella Cherney and Cameron Rahman especially stand out with their expressive facials and fluid movements.

Props, led by Rachel DeGhetto, bring the performance's magic to life with objects like Poppins's bag. During "Practically Perfect," Mary Poppins must pull furniture out of her small bag, so its bottom opens to allow large items to pass through it. Other props also add to the show's whimsical nature, such as homemade kites, paintings of foreign lands, and magically appearing flowers.

Costumes, led by Arbel Ben-Abraham, convey Poppins's marvelous impact on life. When Poppins walks onstage, neutral-toned costumes suddenly disappear in favor of bright, shiny outfits. With ninety costumes and many quick changes, the crew excels at transforming parkgoers into animals such as goats, swans, and penguins.

With genuine acting and magical costumes, Capo Valley's "Mary Poppins" instructs on how to live with good character, look past appearances, and strengthen familial bonds.