

Fountain Valley's "The Miracle Worker" is an Inspirational Expression of Perseverance written by Taylor Bitton, a senior at Capistrano Valley High School

"The Miracle Worker" retells the inspiring story of Helen Keller, whose disabilities trap her within her mind, isolating her from her family. Desperate, the Kellers summon Annie Sullivan. Annie becomes more than Helen's teacher; she is the key that unlocks Helen's humanity through love and language, proving that perseverance can accomplish the impossible.

With blank stares and bursts of physical torment, Lizzy Doan masterfully accomplishes the demanding role of Helen. Her talent transcends a need for lines, as Doan embodies the intricacies of Helen with fierce shrieks and hints of mischief. Annie's (Katie Bell) determination is evident through her sharp retorts and assertive strut. Doan and Bell impress with their skilled execution of sign language and intense physical struggles where grunts jolt the silent stage.

With a poised posture and loving looks, Kate Keller (Sophia Pedersen) creates a tender persona for Helen to melt into. Juxtaposing Pedersen's compassion is Captain Keller (Kyle Smith) who commands attention as he trembles with rage and bellows with conviction. Pedersen seems paralyzed as Smith's portrayal of masculinity overpowers her, yet flickers of contempt shine through her forced smile, conveying complexity through expressions alone.

The blind girls grasp one another for guidance as they stumble hesitantly across the stage, their twinkling laughter reverberating through the somber atmosphere.

Stage Management (Adrianna Nowak, Landen Dang, Tyler Rose Bohle) effortlessly calls countless cues. Scene transitions are swift and enhanced by the commitment of the actors to remain in character at every moment, never breaking the illusion.

Props Crew (Landen Dang, Ella Marbut, M Ehrlich, Jocelynn Sizemore) enhances crucial dinner scenes with plates of fake food that add pops of color to the deconstructed stage. Their functioning water pump is an impressive feat, making water cascade over Helen in her pivotal moment.

Katie Bell, Sophia Pedersen, and Addison Mirrotto fabricate impressive looks through hair, makeup, and costumes. While Kate hides beneath the sophisticated expectations of society with rosy cheeks and an elegant updo, Helen's bare face and long plaits are as plain as people perceive her to be. Kate remains in a hopeful blue as the rest of the family fades to dejected neutrality. When Helen finally overcomes her limitations, she cleverly appears in a lacey periwinkle dress, personifying Kate's fulfilled dreams.

Passion, precision, and proficiency pierce the stage in Fountain Valley's powerful production of "The Miracle Worker."