

Stumble on Over to Costa Mesa High School's "The Drowsy Chaperone!"
written by Brooke Metoyer, a senior at Mission Viejo High School

"The Drowsy Chaperone" follows a nervous "Man in Chair" who uses musicals to transcend his loneliness. He plays his favorite Broadway record, "The Drowsy Chaperone", and walks the audience through the 1920's show as it comes to life around him. Power outages and phone calls interrupt the plot of messy relationships and archetypal characters- the imperfect listening experience prompting Man in Chair to reflect on his own nostalgia, and the imperfectness of life.

Logan Bell embodies the fervid theater nerd, Man in Chair. He is enthralled as his favorite numbers unfold around him- tapping his foot along, excitedly joining dance numbers- even moving the arms of his plush monkey to make it dance as well. Throughout the show, nervous laughs reveal a hidden sadness in Bell's character, all coming to a head when a power outage interrupts the grand finale. Hunched and grasping his cardigan for comfort, Bell meticulously delivers a tender monologue about accepting life's imperfections, eventually allowing a wide smile to wash over his face as he concludes that living and loving, even if one has to stumble, is worth it.

With rich jazzy vocals and a pointed toe, Maggie Breslin brings to life the flashy showgirl, Janet Van de Graaff. During her solo number, Breslin elegantly completes a series of tricks, posture always tall and hands consistently posed, even after eight quick changes. The costume team of Dani Lopez, Andi Lopez, Cali Ansari, and Anne Rasmussen ingeniously added magnets to her skirts and dresses to allow Breslin to change costumes with a twirl. All the actresses appear in dresses with low waistlines-perfect for the 1920s and a testament to their research.

The dashing casanova of the show, Aldolpho, played by Jaiden Ferrier, commands the stage with a gritty Spanish accent and dramatic wide stance. Ferrier hilariously makes every second count: reacting with wide eyes, and flipping between pitches in his voice while wiggling his eyebrows- a master of comedy.

Sixteen sound cues and fourteen mics are single-handedly designed and managed by Rachel Laurence. The "phone ring" sound effect is deliberately jarring to reflect the narrator's opinion of the modern phone. When the record needle drops, a slight scratch is heard- a small but immersive effect played with precision.

Don't monkey around! Make sure to catch Costa Mesa's terrific toe-tappin' cast and crew of "The Drowsy Chaperone."