

Mater Dei Enchants Audiences with a Brilliantly Beloved Rendition of “Beauty and the Beast” written by Alyssa Brown, a sophomore at Irvine High School

Once upon a time, a young prince made a daring mistake, cursing the lives of himself and his servants. With his time slipping away as rose petals fall, the Beast (DJ Clancy) journeys through a tale of love and transformation in the hopes of becoming human again.

Although trapped in an enchanted castle, Belle’s (Piper McClave) compelling voice seeks freedom as it soars through the air. Angry at being held captive, McClave’s rigid posture and stone-set faces as she comes to terms with the members of the castle and her situation. Utilizing her magnificent facial expressions and creative physicality, McClave elevates Belle’s attitude toward the world to another level.

Reeling from a stunning blow, Lefou (Shyler Satina) lands with a flop before springing back for another whack. Amusement shines on Satina’s face as he backs up Gaston (Adrian Antonio) in his attempt to capture Belle’s heart, humorously working himself next to the duo to get in on the conversation. Finding himself Gaston’s personal punchbag, Satina commits to his stage combat to produce realistic hits and kicks. Throughout his appearances, he captures laughs with impeccable comedic timing.

Leaping across the stage, Lumiere (Ty Bragalone) splits his face with a smile as he begins “Be Our Guest” in dazzling fashion. Waving candlesticks rapidly, Bragalone’s physicality and presence fills the castle with the light of his saucy enjoyment. Although using an accent, Bragalone’s words are never lost with impeccable diction while relentlessly staying in character.

Quickly and quietly, Catherine Eddy’s deck crew smoothly transitions the set between scenes. With limited numbers, Eddy’s crew persists, keeping the performance moving with little downtime. The Mater Dei deck crew moves chairs, couches, and new bicycle inventions on and off stage with remarkable speed to maintain the flow of the show.

Marieke Erhard and Natalia King (Hair and Makeup) accentuate each character’s personality with highlights and suitable prosthetics. Lumiere’s face shines like his candlesticks while Cogsworth’s (Thomas Mitchell) clock hand mustache excellently complements his timely and clock-like character. Though experimenting with wigs for the first time, the hair and makeup team executes seamless fits.

With strong presences on stage and a powerful technical team to back them, the cast and crew of “Beauty and the Beast” at Mater Dei exemplify a beautiful unison of talent.