

You'll Beg For "One Day More" at Dana Hills' Les Miserables

Cries of resilience ring out as the iconic red flag of revolution waves over the crowd of Parisians. One thing is clear: rebellion is here, and it's time to join the fight for freedom.

Les Miserables tells ex-convict Jean Valjean's story of redemption through loving sacrifice. Interwoven with his tale is a heart-wrenching love triangle between the young Marius, Cosette, and Eponine, and a noble rebellion for workers' rights led by students.

From a cold and bleak Paris street, the warm, powerful vocals of Isaiah Medina (Jean Valjean) resound. Even as Medina's confident strides fade into an unsteady stagger as Valjean ages, he maintains complete command of the stage through upright posture and vibrato rich with authority.

The intricate emotional web between Marius, Cosette, and Eponine is thoughtfully portrayed by Tristan Theard-Garcia, Kinsley Kirkpatrick, and Alyssa McHenry, respectively. In "A Heart Full of Love", Theard-Garcia's delicate tone beautifully blends with Kirkpatrick's smooth high soprano, underscored by a lovesick Eponine's resonant low notes rife with pain. The trio crafts the bittersweet double-edged sword that is young love.

Tankards raised high in celebration, the uproarious ensemble is on full display in "Master of the House". The Thenardiers (Elliott S. Nathan, Jessica Beutler) weave throughout the crowd of patrons serving and swiping valuables from unsuspecting customers. Beutler smiles in shock as she spins around at the hand of her husband, gripping on to her flowing skirt for dear life— one of many hilarious moments during the lively number.

Costume designer Teya Linde single-handedly managed 120 costumes for the production. Her careful consideration is especially evident in both the Student and the Lovely Ladies ensembles. Each group retains uniformity with the same clean-cut silhouettes, yet each member still possesses individual flair through a uniquely-colored vest or corset. Not only are these costumes effective in characterization and storytelling, they are quick-change-friendly.

Charcuterie boards are sold in a deliciously-clever publicity stunt, headed by Evelin Chavez, infusing the show's French roots with an inventive tactic to stir sales and excitement. Tiktok manager Gabby Badgwell's knowledge of timing and trends allowed the show to reach an impressive audience of over 500,000 online.

What lies at the heart of the story of Les Miserables and the DHHS company is one and the same: a committed found family that takes on challenges with compassion, resilience, and triumph.