

Laguna Hills High School's Production Of "Fiddler on the Roof" Will Bring You To Life!
written by Samantha Marie Reyes, a freshman at Irvine High School

Set in 1905, the musical follows the story of Tevye, a caring yet conflicted father in the small Jewish town of Anatevka. As times grow more progressive, Tevye struggles between traditional values and keeping his daughters happy.

Beginning with a strong and resolute performance of "Tradition", the ensemble emphasizes the beat, stomping in time while holding their arms and chins up firmly. Their jovial and enthusiastic dancing and singing in "To Life" compels the audience to join in with thunderous clapping and cheering. From their eerily frantic movements in "The Dream" to their solemn melancholic tone as they sing "Sunrise, Sunset", they set the various moods of Anatevka.

Tevye (Nicolas Fuller) commands the stage, mastering the portrayal of various emotions. With his grandiose gestures and shimmying shoulders as he powerfully sings "If I Were A Rich Man", Fuller captivates the audience, drawing chortles as he dramatically mimics different farm animals. His relaxed posture as he leans on his easily transportable milk cart demonstrates his openness in the beginning of the show. In juxtaposition, he sings softly with a raw tone in "Do You Love Me?", complemented by the pink lighting to express his vulnerable moment with Golde (Lizzy Calvano). Fuller reveals another side of him when he raises his volume as he yells at Chava (Aleena Estrada), imposing a dominant presence that instills silence into the room. Estrada skillfully adds to the tension, begging with a wobbly voice and collapsing to the ground, sobbing as she doesn't leave a dry tear in the audience.

With bright eyes, Hodel (Sarah Hall) sings dreamily in "Matchmaker", twirling around and dancing with Chava as she delves into her innocent fantasy. Similarly, her tense posture as she dances with Perchik (Joseph Mulrooney) dissolves into cautious joy as she relaxes. This childish freeness is contrasted by Hall's despondent performance in "Far From the Home I Love" as she hugs Tevye tightly, torn between Anatevka and Perchik.

The props team brings together various items like challah bread that pay homage to the story's Jewish roots and accurately match the time period. Meanwhile, stage manager Audrey Masson expertly calls over 600 cues for the 3-hour show.

Heartbreaking, bittersweet, and comedic, the cast and crew of "Fiddler on the Roof" create a timeless production capturing the essence of Jewish tradition.