

Never too Sad to watch Costa Mesa's "Puffs"!

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What happens to the overlooked side characters when the chosen one and his friends are off saving the world? Puffs is for the unsung heroes, or rather those viewed as failures. It's third, or nothing for the Puffs and even in the chaos of a certain school of magic and magic, a trio of unlikely friends can form and go on their own dangerously silly adventures.

It's always about the boy who lived and never about Wayne Hopkins, an orphan who got sorted into the Puffs house. Beschen Dietrich ecstatically animates Wayne to life with his boisterous stride onto stage and over-exaggerated facial expressions like the Cheshire grin plastered on his face at every Cedric acknowledgement. This confidence is not for the faint of heart and is contrasted hilariously with the sarcastic Megan Jones, played by Naomi Ahara. With characteristic eye rolls and a toss of anything but a Puffs' scarf, Ahara's physicality, brooding eyes and closed off shoulders, accentuates Megan's uncertainty within herself.

Quick on their feet and constantly in motion, the Puffs ensemble serve as distinct, comedic characters in their own rights, but form a perfectly in sync collective. Waltzing onto stage, with bubble machines in hand, they complete steps and turns as they serenade their peppy, muscular leader Cedric, portrayed by Derek Becker, in the bathroom. His suave and happy-go-lucky presence exudes with each commanding step. Becker not only plays the Puffs's golden boy, but struts into the Pilates-loving Voldy in Act 2 with ease.

Leanne (Sofia Sanchez), notably the aimless and yet loving Puff, flutters with confused, stumbled steps whilst on stage, but doesn't dawdle when it comes to the light design. Not only was it her first time designing lights, but over 400 cues are utilized to create transitions into different houses with their respective colors and add to moments of love with pops of pink.

As if Puffs extended beyond the stage, CMHS's Marketing Team made print materials that made it feel as if students were at wizarding school. They hosted a sorting in the lunch quad, where students could see what house they would be sorted into!

You may need some "Puffs" tissues to contain your laughs at Costa Mesa's "Puffs!"