

Aliso Niguel's "Fiddler on the Roof" is a perfect match!

written by Kathleen Shepard, a junior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Set in the quaint village of Anatevka, Aliso Niguel's "Fiddler on the Roof" follows a poor milkman, Tevye, bent on leading a proper, Jewish household. But when jealous suitors, a lovesick tailor, and one meddlesome matchmaker threaten to destroy all he has created; Tevye discovers the true meaning of sacrifice, love, and, of course, tradition.

With eyes twinkling and a carefree smile, Shay Seymour elicits Tevye's zest for life and laughter. Light on his feet, he prances across the stage in "If I Were a Rich Man," snapping his fingers, as eyes close, he chuckles gaily at his own imagination. Yet Seymour matures throughout his performance with newfound vulnerability as he pleads with Selma Elbalalesy (Golde) in "Do You Love Me?" Exchanging his booming vibrato for the frailty of a whisper, he wrings his hands and avoids her gaze to parallel the nervousness of a man in love.

Marcus Ramberg captures the transformative power of infatuation. With eyes downcast and fingers fidgeting frantically, Ramberg initially strikes a pitiful figure as he stutters to ask for Tevye's blessing. However, his confidence blossoms with his fiancée, Brianna Graves (Tzeitel), in "Miracle of Miracles." Beaming from ear to ear, he twirls Graves excitedly as he bounds wildly across the stage, shouting his delight for their future together.

Juxtaposing such joy, The Villagers ensemble portrays the poignancy of growing older; as smiles disappear, they stare blankly, and echo hushed refrains in "Sunrise, Sunset." Combined with Selma Elbalalesy's emotionally piercing falsetto, the tension of the moment is overwhelming.

With period-accurate authenticity, the ANTC Pit Orchestra brings the 20th-century town of Anatevka to life. Paralleling the popular European polka, the musicians combine modern trumpets, guitars, and others with the haunting tune of Seungyoung Oh's accordion. Integrated throughout each scene, Oh's technical ability specifically shines in "Wedding Dance" as his accordion's lively melody presents the perfect accompaniment for the Bottle Dancers.

Onstage, the Lights Crew under Grace Dimapilis illuminates the vibrancy of Tevye's dreams as, leaving the yellow spotlight of his bed, Tevye is bathed in a chaotic whirl of fluorescent blue, green, and pink spotlights. Coordinated with Ghost Christensen's (Hair and Makeup Designer) use of UV makeup, the crew captures the chaos of a nightmare.

Energetic and heartwarming, Aliso Niguel's talented cast and technicians revolutionize old traditions with their production of "Fiddler on the Roof."