

Witness Irvine High School's imaginative production of *Murder's In The Heir* full of laughter, intrigue, and of course, murder.

written by Karissa Beltran-Jimenez, a sophomore at Corona del Mar High School

Written by Billy St. John, the play centers around the Starkweather family and staff following their disinheritance. Over the course of a single night, each member of the family and staff arouses suspicion and contemplates murdering Simon Starkweather before he can alter his will. When Mr. Starkweather is found dead, detective Mike Davis conducts an investigation to uncover the murderer; however, it was the audience who got to decide who done it.

Meaghan Fisher skillfully built up a charismatic presence on stage through their ability to launch into interactions with the cast. Brooke Strongs' uniform accent work and mobility on stage when engaging with characters brought Paula Thompson to life.

Maddox Kreil delivered a beguile performance of Jordan Starkweather on stage. Often interacting with the set, Kreil brought forth his character's blasé manner by leaning on furniture or resting his feet atop the table. Abby Schmude's high-pitched accent and delicacy when she handled props like her book or pill bottle, was a stark contrast to Kreil, adding dynamic to the characters as they played mother and son.

Herrera entertained the audience with his dumbfounded expressions and languid movements when portraying Rufus Jones, one of the Starkweather members of staff. Grace Gibson, never failed to make the audience laugh with her articulate Scottish accent which gave a colorful nature to her character Mrs. Trent.

Meant to be an audience interactive play, the show was executed creatively; the intentional bloopers, while at times prolonged by the delivery of lines, effectively engaged the audience who laughed enthusiastically at the interruptions.

Most impressive were the hand-painted wooden floors; their realistic appearance exuded detailed craftsmanship from the set design team and added character to the 90s-inspired set. At times throughout the show the actor's lines were briefly muffed due to mic issues, however, the team responded quickly. Synchronized with the lighting, sound effects filled empty silence with background thunder and music. The lighting team exhibited such attention to detail: precise lighting cues during bloopers, spotlight, and dimming during flashbacks, adjusting lighting outside the estate french doors distinguishing night and day, further the immersed production.

Join the mystery of *Murder's in the Heir* at Irvine High School where audiences decide who done it.