Travel through a Timeless Tale with SJHHS's production "Our Town"
written by Sophia Patel, a freshman at University High School

In an innovative and culturally rich bilingual adaptation, this production reimagines Thornton Wilder's classic text. As two families are brought together through the romance of their children, Emily and George, the narrative traces their transition from innocent childhood to mature adulthood in their small town. Through minimalistic staging and an unexpected love story, San Juan Hills's "Our Town" explores the beauty and fragility of human life.

With the obliviousness of a young teen in love, Sophia Sabad as Emily Webb, encapsulates the awkward nature of a crush. With her quiet giggles, sly smile, and flushed cheeks, she demonstrates the nervous energy surrounding her relationship with George Gibbs (Sai Chintamaneni). As the two get to know each other, her "know-it-all" personality was flawlessly complemented by George's shy embarrassment, which he conveyed through his fidgeting hands, swaying body, and darting eyes.

Adding comic relief to all of her scenes, Madyson Macabale hilariously portrays the town gossip, Mrs. Soames. Her exaggerated nature in both her over-the-top facial expressions, and dramatic vocal inflection adds a new level of depth to the production. Her loud, emotional reactions beautifully contrast with the other characters' composed natures effectively breaking the scene's mounting tension, highlighting the joyful chaos of a community celebration instead.

As Emily revisits a childhood memory from her afterlife, the set and lighting teams expertly work together to create a feeling of intense isolation and pain. With a glowing spotlight shining warm amber lighting directly onto an intricately detailed kitchen, the rest of the stage is pitch black, allowing the viewers to empathize with the loneliness, desperation and agony Emily feels in the moment. The vibrancy and brightness of the "memory" enhances the bittersweet moment creating a heartbreaking, somber mood.

Adding their own unique touch to the classic production, San Juan's costuming team weaved the cast's individual cultures into each clothing article. In Act III, actors are adorned in flowy, but ordinary faded white clothing, making them look both ethereal and emotionless. Each character also wears a pop of color, whether it be a Mexican Folklorico skirt, or a shawl inspired by Filipino fabrics, breathing new life into the traditional staging, to bring a multicultural, intimate feel to the production.

Through their emotional production of Our Town, San Juan Hills' cast and crew remind you to appreciate the little things in life.