

Los Alamitos preaches community in "Godspell"

written by Emily Freeborn, a junior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Within a group of conceited, phone-obsessed teens, Jesus himself must return to foster a community of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Melding ancient New-Testament tales with modern humor, Los Alamitos engages audiences with playful storytelling and commendable technical direction in its production of "Godspell".

As Jesus, Amira Aiad carries herself with a dignified and meditative composure while maintaining a youthful purity with bright eyes, effervescent grins, and adorable giggles. Aiad weaves through each lesson like a patient teacher, good-naturedly shaking her head or taking time to dance with each of her disciples. In the second act, Aiad's desperation begins to mount in a despondent "Alas For You" and progresses as her sunny disposition becomes nuanced with disappointment, peaking in a grief stricken prayer before her crucifixion.

Lacing her lines with cynicism and sinister undertones, Tori Peterson is arrogant and broody as Judas. Slinking across the stage with her head held high, Peterson counters Aiad's open stance and radiant smile with crossed arms and haughty smirks. In the moments before the crucifixion, Peterson desperately races to Jesus with an agonized expression and clings to her, then drags Aiad to her doom.

The ensemble maintains its infectious, upbeat energy throughout the show. Among its dynamic performers are several standouts. The hilarious Lily Gomoljak serenades her friends with sarcasm in "Learn Your Lessons Well," transforming her petulant sneers into eager pleas to follow Jesus.

Sophia Soule stumbles onto center stage with a panic-stricken expression, but quickly eases into her performance of "O Bless the Lord My Soul" as she dances lightheartedly and impresses with powerful vocals.

Meekly approaching the messiah, Lizzy Legere bears a small smile and chuckles nervously as her voice dances tantalizingly along the high notes in "Day by Day".

Alexandria Magana struts the stage with melodramatic flair, sending the audience sultry smirks while showing off her impressive range in "Turn Back O Man".

Stage Manager Mady Lopez practices what the show preaches by ardently ensuring that cues are called on time. Prop designer Christina Morris creatively crafts puppets from clamp lights and dryer ducts. Colorful converse selected by costume designer Summer Rogers pair with each character's personality and are featured in the retro posters designed by Publicity Designer Louie Gallagher.

Los Alamitos creates a heartwarming atmosphere of friendship and forgiveness in a divine production of "Godspell".