

Tesoro's "Lend Me a Tenor" is Commedia Dell'Smarte!
written by Leilani Obana, a senior at San Juan Hills High School

Tesoro presents a whirlwind of farce fun when the world-renowned tenor, Tito Merelli, fails to make an operatic appearance. With mistaken identities and hilarious scandals, Tesoro brings this fast-paced comedy to life.

The pressurized Max (Dawson Henry) must step into the limelight. Henry emits an anxiety-ridden energy through loose and ebullient mannerisms, and a furrowed brow of determination. Patch Patcha as Saunders captivates a bound-to-burst anger through gritty tones and glaring snarls as he plods towards Henry. As Patcha's assistant and prospective son-in-law, Henry bounces back through nods of desperation and loose cannon sprints across stage.

The Pagliacci star, Tito Merelli (Deven Grover), oozes confidence through a puffed-chested strut and consistent Italian dialect. Grover pops his blazer collar open and saunters with an undeniable swagger. Maria Merelli (Ariana Gomez) pointedly storms away from her nonchalant husband with upthrown hands and infuriated grunts.

Opera patron Julia (Molly Fineberg) flits across stage with a delicate shuffle and sing-song voice while Maceo Vadas as Bellhop charms an excitable nature through a puppy-like prance. Both hilariously characterize a pronounced admiration for Tito through gleeful grins and bursts of enthusiasm. An intricate element to this ensemble's jovial success is their quick wit and fast-paced responses to one another.

The story of these operatic fiends would be incomplete without Ariana Gomez' set design. In mid 1930's art deco style, the hotel room aesthetic is created through elegant teal and gold wallpaper, and glistening gold doors to match. In the classic chaos of the comedy, the actors prance in circles through one door and slamming another. Gomez's clever door placement and understandable room dimension immerses the audience into this stationary grandeur.

In tandem, stage management and audio fabricated a smooth and connected environment on and off stage. Management by Gavin Worch, Aliya Liao, Kaylie Gaytan, and Raiya Almomani perfected the timing for such a fast-paced show through well-executed cues. Lauren Rigby and Micalyse Gates (audio design) crafts an over-the-telephone, "blah blah blah," cue, with a phone call quality; this adds a hilarious opportunity for the actors to actively react to the other line.

Through diligent artistic technical works and an electric energy amongst the cast, Tesoro's production of "Lend Me a Tenor" is a well-tuned masterpiece.