

Soaring Over Stereotypes In Orange Lutheran's "High School Musical"

written by Emi Nishida, a senior at University High School

In the halls of East High, theatre is drool, basketball is cool, and, most importantly, cliques don't mix. When basketball stud Troy Bolton and new student Gabriella Montez decide to challenge that rule by auditioning for the school's winter musical, the school's social hierarchy turns to confusion, and the pair must learn to break free of the status quo. The company of Orange Lutheran's "High School Musical" performs the iconic 2000s piece with passion.

Hands in his pockets and head in the game, Chase Liefeld portrays a laid-back yet dedicated Troy Bolton. Liefeld skillfully depicts Troy's nonchalant jock personality, twirling a basketball endlessly on his finger, while also presenting his true, more self-conscious self in his private moments with Gabriella (Katrina Reta). In the tender "What I've Been Looking For (Reprise)", the two trade shy glances and sing together in harmony, successfully creating a flirty dynamic emulative of that of a teenage love story.

Flamboyant and fabulous are Taylor Furlong and Connor Jones as Sharpay and Ryan Evans. Furlong struts with her nose to the sky and chest forward, communicating her dominating personality, while Jones imitates the same confident posture as he trails behind his sister. As they shimmy and shake their way through "Bop To The Top", the duo step in synchronization to effectively establish their identity as twins.

Meg Rocha shines as the timid pianist and "playmaker" of the theatre, Kelsi Neilson. When interacting with bossy Sharpay, she cowers and clutches her music, meekly burying her face beneath her hat and glasses. However, when rehearsing with Troy and Gabriella, she becomes more open and excited about her work, showing her giddiness by bouncing her feet and lifting her head with self-assuredness.

All company members come together as cliques form camaraderie in the energetic "We're All In This Together". Group choreography is executed smoothly as members of the brainiac, skater dude, cheerleader, thespian, and basketball player ensembles all bob to the beat and clap in unison.

Marketing and Publicity by Sydney Prebe, Meg Rocha, and Avery Warren impressively incorporates classic cliches of high school into a well-executed campaign. From notes left in lockers to a full-on pep assembly, the team creatively calls for widespread Wildcat support.

Full of pep and promise, Orange Lutheran