

Trabuco Hills Says "I Do" to "The Drowsy Chaperone"

written by Rebecca Supran, a sophomore at San Clemente High School

With the scratch of a record and a spark of imagination, a quiet living room transforms into a Broadway dreamscape. At Trabuco Hills, the playfully absurd musical, "The Drowsy Chaperone," springs to life as a spirited love letter to the golden age of musical theater.

When a devoted musical theater fan drops the needle on his favorite record, a glittering 1920s wedding bursts into motion and quickly spirals into comic disaster. Featuring a showgirl bride, a clueless groom, and a parade of eccentric guests, the story races through disguises, mishaps and perfectly timed pandemonium.

As the Man in Chair, Braden Berg anchored the production with wit and charm. He connected effortlessly with the audience through direct eye contact, sharp comedic timing, and broad physical humor. As scenes unfolded around him, he stayed animated by dancing along, mouthing lyrics, and mimicking choreography as if stepping into the record himself. His lively presence kept patrons invested throughout the show.

At the center of the matrimonial mayhem, Paige Taino infused Janet Van de Graaff with exaggerated glamour, striking elegant poses while embracing the role's over-the-top charm. In "Bride's Lament," their vocals balanced comedy with sincerity, grounding the character amid the absurdity. Opposite them, Matthew Pettay matched their energy as Robert Martin, and their playful chemistry energized each scene. Pettay's vocals shone in "Cold Feet," and his portrayal captured Robert's nervous sincerity. He also impressed with crisp tap work and confidently tackled the blindfolded roller-skating sequence with remarkable control- showcasing both skill and stage presence.

Trabuco Hills' technical teams constructed a lively world as playful as the performance itself. The set crew, led by Sam Chavez, crafted an impressive two-story set resembling a cozy home packed with personality, featuring a functional Murphy bed, a vintage-cluttered kitchen, and both a fridge and rotating bookshelf that cleverly doubled as entrances. Shelves of musical theater records added nostalgic detail. Led by Rose McPherson, the costume crew brought the 1920s to life with sleek suits, dazzling showgirl dresses, pearls, and long gloves. They coordinated each couple's look with distinct color palettes, helping differentiate characters while maintaining visual cohesion. Their work stood out in "Show Off," where three quick changes were executed with precision and flair.

With chaos at the altar and laughter close behind, THHS' "The Drowsy Chaperone" keeps the spirit of musical theater sparkling long after the curtain falls.