

Capistrano Valley's "Hamilton"- I Mean "The Play That Goes Wrong" Goes Perfectly!
written by Delaney Giraudi, a senior at Santa Margarita Catholic High School

Capistrano Valley's wildly raucous production of "The Play That Goes Wrong" follows the Cornley Drama Society's play "The Murder at Haversham Manor", a 1920's melodrama following Chris as Inspector Carter (Noah Reynen) as he attempts to catch a killer. This play within a play delivers on its title with tumbling sets and characters knocked out cold, eventually descending further into madness.

Robert (Evan Nowack) commands the stage, oozing drama through a wide-legged stance and hands firmly squared on his hips. He exaggerates every action, with eyebrows raised to the heavens in a mask of shock, or his shoulders sagged alongside his leg bouncing anxiously after another error. Adding to the ridiculous drama that is his lines, Nowack elongates every vowel in an extravagant British drawl.

Max (Will Mayer) feeds off audience reception, finishing each line with a proud, puppy-dog smile begging the audience for reassurance. He commits to every joke, including a wild stage-kiss with Trevor (Dylan Kalaie) that leaves the audience roaring with laughter. Annie (Mckenzie Cahill) undergoes a wonderful transformation in the show. She begins with stiff shoulders and a deadpan voice, eyes pleading for anyone to get her off stage. Eventually she finds her footing, adding grand gestures complementing her new ridiculous accent. Cahill's eventual fight with Sandra (Ryland Henderson) is a wonderful culmination, her shoulders brimming with confidence as a gleeful smile lights her face when she punches Henderson.

The set by Alyssa Ivory and Jackson Garcia is expertly built to fail. A feat of craftsmanship, they showcase historically-accurate hand-painted decals and portraits, and utilize hinges and other contraptions allowing for whole walls to tumble down seamlessly. The set also delivers on the grandeur of the manor, while the use of practical effects such as a secret door behind a clock make it beautiful and functional.

The stage managers, led by Hannah Kirby, deliver perfectly mis-timed cues. They work as a well-oiled machine, every cue running seamlessly even when perceived to be "wrong". There is a close attention to the pacing of the play, with dramatic lights coming in a beat too late and a perfectly timed Bon Jovi interruption, allowing for the comedy of the moment to flourish.

Overall, Capistrano Valley delivers a play full of hilarious mistakes and supreme coordination that make it a joy to witness.