

Only fools would miss Mission Viejo's "Twelfth Night"  
written by Molly Fineberg, a senior at Tesoro High School

What happens when two twins of opposite genders are shipwrecked on a Caribbean Island? Mistaken identity, foolishness, and one strange love triangle. Mission Viejo High School's "Twelfth Night" production explores the tribulations of love, and the fluidity of gender as romance intertwines this jocular tale.

"Twelfth Night" follows shipwrecked twins Viola and Sebastian, who stumble upon the mystical Caribbean Island of Illyria during the Christmas celebration of the Epiphany. Viola begins service disguised as a man under Count Orsino, and is tasked to woo Lady Olivia. However, after Olivia mistakenly falls in love with Viola, mistaken identities follow an entangled love triangle while Olivia's cousin and attendees plot their own revenge to make a fool of her steward, Malvolio. As mischief unfolds, identities are revealed, and respective couples join in harmony.

Vibrant in grit and thunderous personalities, the dynamic between Elena Shumaker's Sir Toby Belch and Brielle Thomson's Sir Andrew Aguecheek captures the graceless spirit of this comical production. Shumaker's stinky amble dictates the gritty clarity of her booming voice, while Thomson approaches her character with sentimental simplicity. As Thomson sits in her hips, Shumaker leads with her chest, taking long strides even while strapped in gargantuan flippers. As the two banter and dance, with jutting movements of the legs and hips, the actors establish comical camaraderie.

Buzzing with versatility, Brooke Metoyer as Fool is awkward yet agile with every hop across the stage. Metoyer's raised, piercing pitch adds a sense of youth to her personality, contrasting with her gruff, gritty southern accent when portraying the priest as she lumbers around to fool Malvolio. Metoyer's portrayal of Fool is both inventive and expressive, her fluttery personality coloring the incongruencies of man.

Hair and Makeup by Maya Garcia tackles the impressive task of gender-bent roles. Garcia dresses male roles in tight updos and scruffy wigs, Sir Toby Belch's blonde to dark-rooted brown expressing his older age. Enhanced with dark lines and wrinkles, each female actor that portrays a male character is accounted for, with sprinkles of humor like the scruffy eyebrows of Sir Andrew Anguecheek. Fool's hair and makeup equally compliment her personality, with her youthful pigtails bejeweled eyes and shadow enhancing her eccentricity.

While Mission Viejo's "Twelfth Night" production may be rooted in lunacy, the cast and crew portray a sense of honesty in their deliverance. Through committed portrayals of farcical comedy, one would be a fool to miss this production.