

Aliso Niguel's "The Passage" Boards Us on the Sailing Journey of a Lifetime!
written by Julianne Tawara, a junior at Capistrano Valley High School

A contemporary take on Herman Melville's "Moby Dick", Aliso Niguel's "The Passage" follows the epic tale of the ill-fated passengers aboard the whaling ship Pequod. With obsessive and vindictive Captain Ahab, the Pequod goes on a vengeful hunt for the great ferocity that is Moby Dick. The sole survivor of this unforgiving quest, Ishmael, narrates a story of adventure, passion and loyalty.

In an all-consuming search for the great whale, Captain Ahab's fanatical disposition is embodied by Makena Mosher. Through excessive wide eyes, a maniacal laugh and a powerful booming tone, Mosher commands the legend and mystery surrounding the eminent captain. The contrasting first mate, Starbuck (Nick Breen) represents man's reasonable side. Breen's convincing facial expressions depict his inner conflict and give Starbuck achingly real emotions that are able to connect to the audience.

Even with his face covered, the Preacher (Shay Seymour) captivates through voice and body language. In the passionate telling of Jonah, Seymour's thunderous volume and fervid diction held with an unyielding footing and animated hand movements epitomizes the vehemence of a true storyteller.

The two charming skeletons (Josie Cook and Brianna Graves) serve as comedic relief amidst the intensity in their retelling of an actually morbid story. With comedic timing that plays off each other, extensive facial expressions and lively movements, they bring to life these "dead" skeletons.

Effectively adding to the ambience throughout the entire show, lighting design's (Grace Dimapilis) use of different lights such as encompassing floor lights, sparkling led lights on the ceiling, backlights for shadowing and nautical-like searchlights, add depth and creativity consistently throughout the play.

Selma Elbalalesy's music composition was both detailed and thorough, paying close attention to the thematic concepts expressed throughout the play. The choice of specific instruments, such as the honky tonk piano in the silent film or the airy calliope in the classic circus song gave each piece a distinct style and dynamic that amplified the words and moods of each scene in a subtle way.

Choreography's (Brianna Graves) creative use of aerial silks to heighten the intensity of The Storm scene with graceful yet daunting weaves in the air which climax into a jarring ankle-hang magnifies the tragedy and silence which follows after.

Aliso Niguel's "The Passage" is a eurythmic artistic experience and a dignified student combination of both acting and tech.