

## **Unlocking the glistening mystery of love at Santa Margarita's "The Fantasticks"**

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"The Fantasticks" is a beloved and timeless story of love and coming of age. With both whimsy and charm, the eccentric commedia dell'arte style of this musical creates lively and captivating pictures. Two loving parents, Hucklebee and Bellomy, decidedly fabricate a feud to coax their children into loving each other romantically. Upon this journey, the characters learn valuable lessons of love, pain, sorrow, reality, and the heart.

El Gallo, the story's narrator, is portrayed by Octaviano Roges IV. His captivatingly suave physicality and vocal qualities demand attention. "El Gallo" is defined as "The Rooster" in Spanish, and Roges develops his character upon this foundation with heightened posture and bold confidence. The Mute is characterized by Brianna Velez, and her non-speaking, overarching connection through the musical provides magic and illusionary theatrical effects. With beautiful dance techniques and graceful movement, Velez is vital in providing the musical's world and environment. Her engagement in the story around her creates further immersion into the story.

The two children, Luisa (Sarah Clarke) and Matt (Daniel Troyan) exude child-like innocence and naivety through their emotional connection and playful dynamic. With girlish charm, Sarah Clarke skips across the stage with a dainty exuberance. Both flirtatious and effusive in manner, Troyan creates a character of yearning with his physicality. With poetic verse and bright, excitable tones, Troyan builds upon his character's investment towards Clarke. Clarke and Troyan emote an undeniable connection through their eager and desiring gazes.

The utilization of colorful and intricate fabrics by costume designers Delaney Giraudi and Danielle Reyes create the whimsical feeling of The Players in the ensemble. Each player is made individualistic in character with billowy or tiered silhouette, frills, and unique patterns. Additionally, the hair and makeup designer, Sophie Pennell, handcrafted masks for every player, made distinctive by an abstracted creature and emotion. Jester-like in inspiration, Pennell chooses white base makeup with specific emotion accentuating each player's eyes and eyebrows. With The Players in commedia dell'arte style, Matt and Luisa emerge in stark white and blue to present their innocent and naive characters. This clever color choice provides guidance towards the central themes of this musical.

Each technical facet and acting choice illuminates the glittering excellence of this production at Santa Margarita Catholic High School.