

## **All Time Stops for Mater Dei's Failure: A Love Story**

written by Brianna Graves, a junior at Aliso Niguel High School

Mater Dei High School presents a beautiful and heartbreaking performance of *Failure: A Love Story*, written by Philip Dawkins. The play follows the Fail sisters, who own the Fail Clock Shop. Though they are fascinated by time, their time is coming to an end as each of the Fail sisters pass away.

From the sisters to the chorus, the production runs very smoothly and is well executed. The chorus narrates the show with energy and are always on top of each other, never creating unnecessary pauses, especially in the memory scene in Act 2 when a few chorus members play clocks. Whether it's a cuckoo clock or a grandfather clock, each chorus member contributes to the scene with their distinct personalities.

Noah Dang exhibits a great range of emotion as his character, Mortimer Mortimer, falls in love with each Fail sister. Dang's professional level of acting is shown through his energized physicality, detailed facial expressions and believable emotions. While playing the piano, Dang performs beautiful songs that he and Kimmy Pidazo wrote for the production.

Arianna Ortiz and Reese Davey provide their loving singing voices to the performance as the Gramophones. While accompanied by Pidazo, Ortiz and Davey sing the songs of the gramophones throughout the performance, adding to the scene without taking focus from the characters.

With high energy and physicality, Lam Malorie Nguyen (Mae) and Riley Lewis (December) portray the birds whom John N. can connect with. Nguyen uses a whimsical persona for her character while Lewis' attitude shifts from energized to somber once her friend disappears.

The magnificent props, led by Gabby Cabada, add detail and life to the performance. Each of the Fail sisters' clocks are beautifully designed and convey each of their distinct personalities. From a handmade gramophone to all the clocks in the shop, each prop is incredibly detailed and beautifully made.

Costumes, led by Cassie Butscher and Emma Buchanan, perfectly follow the given time period of the story, especially through the consistent and detailed outfits of the chorus. Each of the Fail sisters' costumes are either altered or created by Butscher, Buchanan and their crew. Whether it's the animal outfits or the Fail sisters' dresses, the costumes exhibit each character's personality wonderfully.

From the beautiful technical elements to the amazing cast, Mater Dei's *Failure: A Love Story* is an emotional and wonderful production.