

## **Portola High School's The Iliad, the Odyssey, and all of Greek Mythology in 99 Minutes or Less' is Un"Apollo"getically Hilarious!**

written by Bellise Sacchetto, a senior at San Juan Hills High School

In their comical production of "The Iliad, the Odyssey, and all of Greek Mythology in 99 Minutes or Less", Portola High School races against the clock and takes their audience on a convivial journey where love stories are a dating show, Greek tragedies are sports highlights, and the creation of mankind is a botched mad scientist job, and proves to be an outlandish and riotous distillation of Homer's epic poems and all of Greek mythology.

McCoy Carioso's Zeus is pretentious and self-assured. With his head held high and chest out, Carioso encapsulates Zeus' bragadocious personality through physicality, swaggering across the stage. Whether commanding the Gods to carry out a task or slyly cajoling an audience member to go on a date with him, Carioso captures the essence of his placid yet ostentatious character.

Nora Nyquist fulfills the role of the strepitous, gaudy goddess, glittery as the self-indulgent Aphrodite. With pouty countenance and sarcastic retorts, Nyquist struts across the stage and whines for beauteous jewels.

Ainsley Johnston delights as Pandora. Johnston ardently explodes into the room with idiosyncratic cackles. Preparing to open an ominous wedding gift given by Zeus, Johnston uses subtle shifts in her face and frenzied mannerisms to portray her eager disposition and discombobulation towards what could potentially be inside the box. However, Man's--Pandora's cynical husband (Andrei Szczedrin)-- apprehension toward the box tranquilizes his wife's giddy nature, repressing Johnston's effervescent intonation and bubbly bouncing.

Among the cast are several standouts. Aidan Stringer amuses as the austral Coach Oedipus, the rugged vocal inflections parallel his character to a hillbilly. Nicholas Sanchez barges onto the stage as Thor, his character proudly owning his vitality and pulchritude. Jasper Scott dashes across the stage, each time passionately chanting his motto, "Diomedes rules!"

Lighting design by Seogyung "Karen" Han and Yuki Yu differentiates the settings within the show, helping the audience follow each individual story as it jumps around. Set Design by Atlaf Abdulla and Isaac Yang is minimal but dynamic, focusing on the actors and the story being told.

In a modern portrayal of these celestial caricatures, Portola High School's "The Iliad, the Odyssey, and all of Greek Mythology in 99 Minutes or Less" revitalizes these archaic adventures into contemporary classics.