



## **Peter and the Starcatcher - Loudoun Valley High School**

This show made me feel like a kid again! Peter and the Starcatcher was a wonderful experience, filled with hearty laughs, down-to-earth lessons, and mischievous fun. So without further ado, let's think some cheerful thoughts and dive into this incredible production!

Peter and the Starcatcher was originally a novel written by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson. It was adapted for the stage by Rick Elice, debuting as a stage production in 2009. It quickly got to Broadway in 2012, winning 5 Tony awards. Two ships were sent out from port in late-19th century England. Queen Victoria has requested special cargo be shipped to Rundoon, so special in fact that the queen employed a decoy ship, called the Neverland. However, when cargo gets swapped, and children save the day, Peter Pan goes from an orphan to the famous character we all know and love.

Peter Pan, played by Abigail Landes, was very believable. Abigail had very natural movements and did a great job showing their character's negative experiences in orphanages through their acting choices: acting distrusting of the other characters at the beginning of the show. Abigail slowly opened up her character when the show introduced and developed Peter's and Molly's, played by Elliana Cruise, relationship. Their childlike relationship was really believable, as they both allowed themselves to soften and become loose following their new circumstances in Act Two. Elliana, in particular, had a difficult acting transition, shifting from acting with decorum to becoming a confident character, helping to convey her character getting mature. Blackstache, played by Ben Demase, and Smee, played by Charlotte Abbe, kept their characters immature, getting laughs through well-delivered lines and dynamic character acting. Ben, in particular, was very animated in his physical acting, while Charlotte played the straight man. The dynamic between these two gave the show's main source of comedy a surprisingly sincere relationship, helping build the show's emotional maturity to be higher than that of a typical comedy. Overall, the entire cast managed to switch between dramatic and comedic scenes in the show effortlessly.

Tech also switched between the show's dramatic and comedic scenes easily, by managing to both stun, and sink to the background when needed. The props, made by Dylan Tricarico and Abigail Crowley, were incredibly inventive. For example, a

pineapple, which was seen as a complete prop for the entire show, was somehow sliced open mid-air during the show's titular showdown. For the alligator, the ensemble held up many different rings, PVP pipes, and cleaning equipment in order to symbolize the lifelike, large, and terrifying alligator. These props shined in comedic moments, adding to the show's visual impressiveness. The sound however, done by Wil Shank, was really impressive during dramatic scenes, playing background noises such as dripping water and waves to make scenes more realistic. They also timed action cues, such as the sound of a whip, perfectly with the show's dramatic moments, making the tech as dynamic as the acting scene on stage.

Peter and the Starcatcher is all about trusting your friends and working together, which Loudoun Valley took to heart onstage and off. Every person in that show was very high energy throughout and worked together in order to make a show that was better than the sum of its parts. While they will all grow up sometime, Loudoun Valley will always remember the friendships they made through their wonderful performance of Peter and the Starcatcher.