

## AN INFESTINGLY GOOD TIME!

CHATEAU LA ROACH, brought to life by the exceptionally talented students of Oak Park High School, transcends the realm of mere performance, evolving into an immersive journey that intertwines the very essence of the audience's experience. This theatrical endeavor leaves a mark on the hearts, minds, and souls of all who witness it.

As the curtain rises on "Chateau La Roach" by Lauren Wilson, the stage is set for a captivating narrative filled with comedic chaos within the walls of hotel the Chateau LaRoche. Guided by the dynamic partnership of Francois LaRoche and Mimi LaRoche, the hotel is thrust into an unexpected ordeal: a cockroach infestation coinciding with a fully booked guest list.

The brilliance of Olin Spencer's Francois LaRoche and Ava Broermann's embodiment of Mimi LaRoche is nothing short of extraordinary. Their seamless on-stage banter breathes life into the two characters, and their excellent chemistry makes for an utterly believable couple. Spencer's use of body language and facial expressions adds depth to his character, drawing the audience deeper into the unfolding drama.

In the integral role of Roskel T. Goomey, Rhys Wilson exhibits a profound understanding of his character's intricacies. Through meticulous attention to speech patterns and physicality, Wilson infuses vitality into Roskel, employing props and impeccable comedic timing to ensnare and captivate the audience. Equally commendable is Tristan Young's portrayal of Lola St. Britannia, seamlessly weaving into scenes with subtle yet impactful actions, such as the use of her cellphone prop. Flesh out her three-dimensional character.

The meticulous craftsmanship of Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu's costume designs not only establish visual bonds between characters but also serve as a mirror reflecting their individual personalities. From the refined elegance of Francois and Mimi LaRoche to the relaxed charm, embodied by Robin Wren's bellhop attire, each sartorial choice contributes to the storytelling, enriching the audience's comprehension of the characters' identities. The consistent presence of pink accents among the hotel staff underscores a sense of unity amidst their individuality, emphasizing the cohesion of Chateau LaRoche's workforce as a singular entity.

While the production maintains a cohesive narrative, occasional inconsistencies in accents among characters may momentarily disrupt the audience's immersion. Furthermore, the slapstick humor in Act One could potentially benefit from more impactful physical execution to truly amplify the comedic moments. Despite these minor critiques, this play stands as a monumental and enthralling showcase of theatrical brilliance.

"Chateau La Roach," as brought to life by Oak Park High School, resonates deeply with audiences of all ages and backgrounds, leaving an indelible imprint that extends far beyond the final curtain call. Its legacy endures, inspiring and captivating generations to come.

by Makenzie Brown of Grain Valley High School

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## BIENVENUE LA ROACH

Looking for a place to kick back your feet after a long day of travel? Are you searching for a welcome stay, a foreign flair, and the sweet company of six-legged friends? Look no further than Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH; the only hotel where your booking comes with the exclusive appearance of the friendliest arthropods in America!

This award-winning play by Lauren Wilson showcases the brilliant slapstick comedy of both the bothersome infestations of insects and invertebrates alike. When French couple François and Mimi LaRoche discover a cockroach problem within the very walls of their hotel the week the health inspector is scheduled to arrive, they call upon an equipped and rather dedicated exterminator. But the owners only realize the extremity of his methods when guests start to file into their infested establishment, prompting a series of absurd blunders, frantic shenanigans, and desperate measures in order to keep the spirit of their hotel alive, even with a life-sized pest in their midst.

Exceptional, bright, and rather amusing, Olin Spencer as François LaRoche animates his expressive personality with a crisp accent and dynamic inflection, easily taking center stage. Complete with energetic delivery and a skillful presence, Spencer's ability to embrace the exasperation of conflict and amplify his character's theatrical flamboyance heightens the farcical manner of the narrative. A master of physical comedy, Natalee Seitz's portrayal of Robin Wren achieves an unfaltering streak of entertaining gags through quick execution and charming disposition, representing the clumsy and quirky traits of this engaging hotel staff member.

With so many supporting characters creating this "piece de resistance", it would be a level 7 dilemma if their talent wasn't recognized. Clueless and wildly hilarious, Andy Mast as the charismatic Nigel Havic doesn't hesitate to give a comical over-the-top performance packed with an infectious personality of blissful oblivion. Madame Zillinda, played by Allison Stockton, bewitches the mind with her ludicrous physicality and hypnotic sense of humor. Fresh from her beauty sleep, sarcastic and snarky Tristan Young never fails to deliver witty banter and strut her stuff with every appearance of Lola St. Britannia. At first glance, a giant 6-foot roach may not appeal to the eye, but Drew Chamberlin charms the hearts of the audience with his clever comedic timing and amusing relatability amongst the humans of this production.

With a fluid to its blocking and exciting direction, the direction of Jenna Holland and stage management of Elleanna Miera is nothing short of "magnifique". Behind the distraught mayhem and rambunctiousness of the cast, it is evident that truly meticulous detail is imposed for this show that gives it a shine like no other. Katie Slattery, in collaboration with Alex Shaumeyer and Mason Sloan provide a detailed rendition of the kooky corner this hotel is tucked into. With exterior backdrops, decorative windows and a highly interactive world for the actors to utilize,

it's the small things that immerse the audience into the charm of this wacky French escape. "Finalement", makeup designers Mia Zambrano and Tristan Young showcase excellent understanding and execution of their vision; from exaggerated bags under the eyes, to extreme injuries, there's a sense of realism to this cartoonish concept that brings the lovable actors to life in their portrayals. While this cast has high energy, their enthusiasm seemed to diminish as the performance drew on, but they made an astounding "finition" nonetheless.

At Oak Park High School's rendition of CHATEAU LA ROACH, you are sure to have a "bon voyage" in this fabulously entertaining night of tomfoolery, hilarity, and insanity.

by Sydney Sullins of Platte County High School

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#### SPAGHETTI AND COCKROACHES WITH A PINCH OF PESTICIDE

Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH leaves the audience howling in their seats as everything from snobby child stars to giant singing roaches take the stage. With a combination of witty acting and masterful tech, this show is an experience to remember.

From the creative mind of Lauren Wilson, CHATEAU LA ROACH follows a once-in-a-lifetime weekend for the Chateau LaRoche's hotel staff and guests. When a small roach problem turns into an evolutionary infestation, owners Francois and Mimi LaRoche employ the help of renowned exterminator Roskel T. Goomey. As Goomey observes the steady development of the roach society within the Chateau's walls, guests such as young actor Ronnie Zircon, rich widow Enira De Can with her psychic companion, Madame Zillinda, along with many more, begin to arrive. The show's farcical nature appears when the hotel staff tries diligently to remove the roach problem while keeping the guests unaware, but ultimately end up in a hilarious standoff between man and man-sized insect.

Olin Spencer gives a solid performance as hotel owner Francois LaRoche. Starting with the pre-show announcement, Spencer establishes a clear French accent and vocal choices that distinguish his character from the rest. Throughout the play, he exhibits strong acting decisions that fuel the show's comedy. While there would be moments of small diction errors, Spencer quickly compensates with clearer pronunciation and bolder physical choices. His physicalization throughout the show is hilarious and well-developed. With each scene, he leaves room to develop over the play's action. Overall, a very well-done job on a difficult character.

Katharine Robbins as Gina Retch captures the show's comedy and exhibits clever acting choices throughout the production. She demonstrates a deep understanding of the comedic moments in the play and contributes to the energy of each scene, which makes for an entertaining performance. Another standout actress among this talented cast is Tristan Young who plays Lola St. Britannia. Like Robbins, she fully embodies her role through movement, the way she walks, gestures, and uses facial expressions. She establishes a connection with the audience and utilizes

it throughout the show to emphasize her character's attitude and boldness. Overall, both actresses do an incredible job in their roles.

Alongside Robbins and Young, Drew Chamberlin and Andy Mast also deliver wonderfully hilarious performances as the Roach and Nigel Havic. Chamberlin, though having less time on stage, he embodies energy and comedy in every moment in front of the audience. He also displays beautifully unexpected vocals and strong characterization during the play. Mast exhibits expertly coordinated physicalizing when stumbling around onstage and jumping on and off furniture. He executes his performance of a challenging character with ease, and with Chamberlin creates a fantastic experience for the audience.

The technical work of CHATEAU LA ROACH can be strenuous and detailed, Oak Park High School stepped up to that challenge. The set does not change during the play but creates a solid color scheme and establishes the environment for the action. Though it is simplistic, adorable features such as Parisian art hanging from the walls and doors labeled "Bonjour" and "Bon Voyage" contribute heavily to the show's atmosphere. In tandem with the set, the props are all well thought out and executed with very few issues with using them. The costumes all follow a similar color scheme with light pinks appearing in many outfits, and though some seem less suited for the time, they all work together to create a beautifully costumed cast. As a whole, CHATEAU LA ROACH'S technical designs are wonderfully done and create a lovely experience for the audience to see.

CHATEAU LA ROACH is a chaotic farcical comedy that involved a lot of work from actors and technicians alike, and Oak Park High School delivers a marvelous performance. The show's witty humor is sure to leave audience members cackling in their seats and checking their walls for singing roaches.

by Lauren Knight of Lee's Summit West High School

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(CHATEAU LA) ROACH INFESTATION AT OAK PARK HS!!

Picture the perfect weekend retreat, represented onstage: a traditional French country house, located lakeside in America. But what's this? Cockroaches?! Sacre bleu! This is the situation the guests of the Chateau LaRoche find themselves in, much to the chagrin of the eccentric French hotel managers Francois and Mimi LaRoche. What follows is hilarious hijinks through physical comedy as the LaRoches try to hide the pesky pest problem from their guests. This entertaining show is brought to the KC metro area by Oak Park High School in their theatrical production of CHATEAU LA ROACH by Lauren Wilson.

We are first introduced to Francois and Mimi, played by Olin Spencer and Ava Broermann respectively, as they discover the roach problem. Both actors embrace the over-the-top nature

of their characters, with dramatic mannerisms and exaggerated, yet consistent, French accents. But, before the hotel owners and staff can resolve the insect issue, the weekend guests arrive. One dynamic duo is Lily Tice and Tristan Young who play, a child star and his haughty agent from Hollywood. Tice and Young both have hilarious moments and never fail to land laughs with the audience. The characters Madame Zillinda and Enira De Can, played by Allison Stockton and Rayna Key also have great command of the stage. Stockton, in particular, plays the mysterious and funny psychic well. Throughout the play, the eccentric exterminator, Roskel T. Gooney, played by Rhys Wilson, inadvertently uses a pesticide which causes the cockroaches to grow in size. This leads to Act I culminating with the Roach, played by Drew Chamberlin, emerging wearing a roach costume and a top hat, passionately singing "Santa Fe" from Newsies. The entire cast shows an excellent knack for comedic timing and commitment to physical comedy, especially in the scenes in which many of the characters are accidentally or purposely sprayed with pesticide from a squirt gun and when Gooney confronts the Roach.

The set consists of the lobby of the chateau, with the centerpiece being double elevator doors. Along with the automation of the doors thanks to the set designer Katie Slattery, stage manager Elleanna Miera cues perfectly timed lighting and sound effects to complete the working elevator illusion. Along with lighting the elevator, the stage lighting, designed by Chelsea Brown and Jay Davis, also uses different colors to show shock, hypnosis, and death throughout the show.

One of the most impressive aspects of the show is that it was directed by Jenna Holland, a senior at Oak Park. Holland displays impressive organization and creativity in her vision of this show. Overall, OPHS Theater delivers a hilarious and raucous show with CHATEAU LA ROACH which highlights their talented comedic performers and creative technicians. Consider this a five-star review, roaches and all!

by Jordan Blackburn of Blue Springs High School

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## THERE'S ROACHES AT OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL!

A review of "Chateau La Roach" at Oak Park High School

The recent production of "Chateau La Roach" at Oak Park High School showcased a play with a fascinating story written by Lauren Wilson and an incredibly talented cast from Oak Park. This play, which has delighted audiences for decades, continues to captivate with its unique blend of wit, humor, and memorable characters.

First and foremost, the standout feature of this production was obviously it's amazingly funny cast. The actors brought the characters to life with their impeccable comedic timing and infectious energy. Andy Mast who played Nigel Havic commanded the stage even while being poisoned and un-poisoned he kept the two sides of his character alive. Each member of the cast

demonstrated a keen understanding of their role, delivering their lines with precision and flair. The chemistry among the actors was palpable, creating a dynamic and engaging performance that kept the audience laughing throughout the play. From the lead roles to the supporting characters, the cast's comedic prowess was truly exceptional.

In addition to the stellar performances, the technical aspects and set design of "Chateau La Roach" were also commendable. The attention to detail in the set, managed by Katie Slattery transported the audience to the titular chateau, with its intricate architecture and well-crafted props managed by Alex Shaumeyer and Mason Sloan. The lighting managed by Chelsea Brown and Jay Davis and sound design from Chantal Kariuki and Amy Nguyen enhanced the overall atmosphere of the play, effectively setting the mood for each scene. The seamless coordination between the tech crew and the cast ensured a smooth and visually appealing production.

"Chateau La Roach" at Oak Park High School was a delightful theatrical experience that showcased the rich history of the play and the incredible talent of the cast. The witty humor, coupled with the outstanding performances, made for an evening filled with laughter and enjoyment. The technical aspects and set design further elevated the production, creating a visually stunning set for the comedic brilliance on stage. Overall, this production of "Chateau La Roach" was a resounding success and a testament to the dedication and creativity of the students involved. So, applauses to the student director Jenna Holland for putting on a wonderful show.

by Yesena Watts of Blue Springs High School

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## THE GRAND CHATEAU LA ROACH

Traveling on a long road trip you cannot wait to see your hotel for a great night's rest. A comfortable room with a great view of the lake is just the cure to a long haul. Luckily you've picked a hotel run by the LaRoches and roaches? This chaos and fun filled adventure is found at OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL in their production of CHATEAU LA ROACH.

CHATEAU LA ROACH written by Lauren Wilson follows the chaotic weekend of hotel owners Mimi and Francois LaRoche as they try to get rid of cockroaches with the looming threat of a health inspector's visit and many crazy guests. Unfortunately, after a spray from the exterminator turns a cockroach to a mutant six foot tall "Newsie" more shenanigans and wild comedy ensue.

The first floor of the CHATEAU LA ROACH brings us to Francois LaRoche (Olin Spencer) and Mimi LaRoche (Ava Broermann). These two talented actors make the audience feel what its like to run a hotel when its all falling apart. Olin Spencer has outstanding physical comedy and facial expressions keeping all eyes on him. Ava Broermann is perfectly able to represent the woman who is trying to hold her business together in the face of great strife.

The wonderful and frankly strange guests are who we'll find on the second floor. Nigel Havic played by Andy Mast is a comedic force. A British cyclist? Or undercover health inspector? are the questions still being asked. What is known is that Andy Mast has outstanding physical comedy when he himself doesn't know who he is. Lola St. Britannia, played Tristan Young, delivers comedic dialogue and commands attention when on stage.

The third floor takes us to the crew making the elevator work. The Student Director, Jenna Holland, leads the crew and actors with such grace, creating a comedic and memorable show. With the help of the stage crew, Sam Ham and Kennedie Holland, made the cockroaches and created the world of the LaRoche hotel.

Every hotel has its basements and lower parts of the show. Many moments of the show's energy wasn't consistent from all actors on stage; many times some actors would have all the energy and others wouldn't be able to match their power. This led to some jokes falling flat and comedic moments becoming uncomfortable. However, the show was fun and entertaining the whole night long.

After a great stay at OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL in CHATEAU LA ROACH it's time to check-out. Audiences left the hotel with feelings of happiness, knowing that they were entertained and felt at home even in the face of challenges.

by Aralyn Mayes of Grain Valley High School

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## OAK PARK IS CRAWLING WITH HUMOR IN CHATEAU LA ROACH

Finally, some time away from home! You are ready to stay at a beautiful French-inspired resort and forget all your problems for the weekend. But wait...what is that?! Is that a roach?! It's hard for guests to stay relaxed in Oak Park High School's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH.

Written by Lauren Wilson, CHATEAU LA ROACH is a Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwriting Contest winner, loaded with slapstick comedy and ridiculous body humor. The story follows hotel owners, Mimi and Francois LaRoche as they prepare to host several guests for the weekend including...cockroaches?! How will the hotel staff navigate their pesky pest problem while maintaining the memorable magic of the Chateau LaRoche for visitors? CHATEAU LA ROACH takes its audience through a whirlwind of hallucinating bicyclists, life-size cockroaches, and crazy exterminators!

Olin Spencer plays the eccentric Francois LaRoche. Spencer is full of lively energy as he jumps around the stage and comedically falls through windows. As he wrangles the hotel staff through the cockroach madness, Spencer expertly paces his humorous lines and movements. Francois's

wife and fellow owner, Mimi LaRoche, is portrayed by Ava Broermann with immense poise and confidence.

The remainder of the cast truly ties the outrageous farce together. Andy Mast plays the British bicyclist Nigel Havic. Mast perfectly encapsulates his character as he stumbles through hallucinations and keeps the audience cackling with each quip. Tristan Young captures the Hollywood agent Lola St. Britannia. Young has extraordinarily sassy stage presence and lays out dialogue with ease. She interacts confidently with other cast members and keeps the audience smiling with every cheeky line. Drew Chamberlin plays the personable, mutant Roach. Chamberlin hilariously springs onto stage with incredible vocals and emotion as he begs for mercy on his insect family.

Just as the hotel crew keeps the hotel afloat, Oak Park's production crew keeps the magic of the play consistent and engaging, most notably by Director Jenna Holland. Holland was the mastermind behind the madness. Her skillful directing, casting, crew assignments, and blocking created a cohesive and wonderful show. Costumes (Sophy Mark and Chelsea Trieu) are beautifully coordinated. The staff sport matching pinks, each guest wears clothing that adds to characterization, and every cast member has several costumes that stay clean and detailed. Props (Alex Shaumeyer and Mason Sloan) are extremely interactive and elevate the performance with realistic crawling roaches and bundles of dynamite.

The most captivating aspect of Oak Park High School's production was the cast and crew's incredible pacing. Jokes were timed well with pauses for laughter, lines were never lost. Some sound and mic issues were present, and a few technical aspects were inconsistent with the time period or missing detail, but the energy was always high among Oak Park's talented thespians.

As the guests prepare to end their wild and pandemoniac stay, Oak Park High School's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH left its viewers with a night of laughter and smiles.

by Autumn Ferrante of Grain Valley High School

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## WELCOME TO HOTEL ROACH

Have you ever had a time where it felt like everything around you was going wrong and you had to fight to try to keep things together? Well, that is the feeling that Oak Park High School gives you in CHATEAU LA ROACH.

CHATEAU LA ROACH is a comedic play written by Lauren Wilson. The show is about an event-filled weekend at the hotel Chateau LaRoche. Between the extravagant guests, a secret health inspector, overwhelmed employees, and a roach problem, the weekend is anything but dull.

Francois LaRoche, the hotel owner, is played by Olin Spencer. Spencer does a realistic French accent that stays consistent. He gives a witty and chaotic performance that entertains the audience. Spencer also does a decent job of showing the layers of his character. He and Ava Broermann, (Mimi LaRoche) have lovely stage chemistry. They play a couple who you believe have been married for years. Broermann plays Mimi with a sweet subtlety that helps to ground the show when everything else breaks down into chaos. Katherine Robbins plays the waitress Gina Retch with sass and flavor. Robbins shines bright when on stage she stays in the scenes even when she is not the main focus. Robbins does a particularly compelling job when she is serving the guests. Throughout the dinner scene, you can see her get more stressed and overwhelmed and it makes her character feel authentic.

A big part of the show's success is thanks to the hilarious supporting cast members. Adam Campbell (Chef Paolo) has a strong Italian accent and a comedic rhythm to all his lines. Andy Mast (Nigel) excels at physical humor and is always in character. From the moment Tristan Young (Lola) walks on stage she has so much presence and poise that eyes are drawn to her. Drew Chamberlin enters the stage as a giant Roach with a song and dance that awe. Not only does Chamberlin deliver laugh after laugh, but he and Lily Tice (Ronnie) also create a heart-warming and emotional death scene in act two. Finally, Allison Stockton (Madame Zillinda) gives a power performance. She is so believable in her character while also being mysterious and charming.

The technical aspects of the show are impressive. The sets by Katie Slattery are simple but effective. Small details like the tree view outside and the French signs on the doors add a lot of subtle depth to the show. The opening elevator is also a fun touch. Caleb Shields, Tori Phelan, and Isa Hernandez put a lot of creativity into marketing and publicity. From the moment you enter the school, the floors and walls are covered in roaches which immediately pulls you into the atmosphere of the show. The programs are also cute and well-designed. The show was Directed by Jenna Holland. Holland cast and blocked the show. She was in charge of putting everything together and does a terrific job.

The costumes in the show are adorable and creative. The pink accents in all the LaRoche workers were a lovely touch. There are times when the consistency of time period in the clothing got confusing but regardless the outfits are amazing.

Come on down to Oak Park High School for a fantastic fun roach-filled getaway that will keep you laughing.

by Elizabeth Molina of Grain Valley High School

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ROACHES! ROACHES EVERYWHERE!

From a peaceful hotel to utter chaos with roaches, Oak Park High School's adaption of Lauren Wilson's CHATEAU LA ROACH provided completely hilarious comedy, incredibly stressful situations, and truly depressing moments.

Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH is a comedy written by Lauren Wilson. The show takes place in modern times. It is about a French couple running a hotel. However, disaster strikes when an intrusion of roaches occupies the residence. The struggle that both the staff and the residents face is not one to miss!

As the show delves into the story of the hotel, many problems arise. However, the cast of Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH managed to display these issues with such a level of energy that it left one craving for more when the end of the show arrived. The way both the hotel staff and customers interacted with each other really set the stage for how they would respond to the issues in the not-so-distant future.

One of the most entertaining aspects of the show were Oak Park High School's very own Olin Spencer who took on the role of Francois Laroche and Ava Broermann who played Mimi Laroche. These two worked very well together, especially considering that they were a married couple. Their chemistry was unmatched. The way both Spencer and Broermann had each other's backs was a delight to witness.

The supporting cast were incredibly hilarious in their interpretation of their characters as well. Lola St. Britannia, played by Tristan Young, was refreshing, with the comedic lines dropped very often. Young's performance of this character truly proved how unserious Lola could be, despite Lola's character taking many things too seriously. Another good example of excellent characterization was Drew Chamberlin in the role of Roach. There was never a dull moment when Chamberlin strutted on the stage. From the very first entrance of Chamberlin with the incredible solo he presented to the very depressing death scene that was both comedic and sad. He displayed his many talents every time he appeared on stage.

While the actors gave an incredible performance, the sets, lighting, props, costumes, and sound provided incredible assistance to the stage. A favorite amongst many were the elevator doors created by Katie Slattery set center stage. The mechanics of it were incredible to watch. Along with the set, the costumes designed by Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu were able to give away the character's personality without the assistance of the actors. Even if the characters happened to be in their work uniform, it was still very clear what kind of character they needed to be.

All of these elements, proved to create a very delightfully entertaining show. The perfect comedic timing, incredible costume designs, and an immersive set completed this extraordinary show.

by Emma Greene of Grain Valley High School

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## SISTER SASSY PANTS IS WHO??

There could be so many cockroaches in your wall right now, you wouldn't even know until it's too late! The terror and pain that you witness after seeing a huge cockroach! Oak Park High School presents a terrifying, but intriguing tale of CHATEAU LA ROACH, written by Lauren Wilson.

This lighthearted play brings unserious and goofy comedy, to do something a little more original. The characters of this play all from different backgrounds, come together to defeat a common enemy, a 6-foot cockroach!

Francois LaRoche, played by Olin Spencer, the infamous Frenchman who put up this hotel with his lovely business partner/wife, Mimi LaRoche played by Ava Broermann are a lovely duo who brought such grace and clear talent both. Broermann played Mimi LaRoche calmly and with a warming presence, Spencer with his authoritarian, but silly and dramatic attitude, both took time to get to know their characters and their relationship with each other which made this duo entertaining to watch.

Tristan Young who played Lola St. Britannia obviously took her role very seriously, but in a quirky, sassy way. Not one moment, was a dull moment with Lola on the stage. Young made sure that her character took up the stage, in every scene, making sure her presence was known and heard. Her jokes and comedic timing were on point. The waitress, Gina Retch (Katherine Robbins), played such a kind and lighthearted girl who just wanted to make guests feel welcomed and comfortable. Robbins played her character to a tee. Never once did she break character and continue her awkward and apologetic demeanor. Robbins made sure that the character she played was memorable and relatable.

Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu, perfected the costumes from beginning to end. All the staff were identified with the same signature pink, black and white accents on their costumes, and it was a nice touch that made the play that more enjoyable. They also took time making sure each and every one of the guests had a different look unique to them. From Josie's flannel outfit to Madame Zillinda's colorful dresses and scarves, the costumes added so much to the already expressive personalities. From entering this building, the publicity crew really impressed, from the creative cockroach walkway to their impressive and unique dishes; Caleb Shields, Tori Phelan, and Isa Hernandez really had their work cut out for them. The different food items in between acts was a nice touch and felt extremely welcoming. The program from the play was also nicely organized. The bios of both cast and crew as well as baby photos were such a sweet and cute touch.

From tech to the cast, everyone worked extremely hard to make sure that they gave it their all for this performance. One thing to take from this experience for sure, is to not mess with Miss Sister Sassy Pants.

by Jai Harris of Grain Valley High School

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## OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL IS INFESTED WITH LAUGHTER

CHATEAU LA ROACH, a play with slapstick comedy, big stage actions, and cockroaches! You don't want to miss CHATEAU LA ROACH at Oak Park High School.

When the hotel, Chateau LaRoche becomes infested with cockroaches the owners, Francois and Mimi LaRoche, try hard to get rid of them before the anticipated health inspector sees them. They learn that the health inspector could be anyone! Will we find out who in Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH? Or be overtaken by 6-foot cockroaches!

First we meet the owners of the hotel, Francois LaRoche played by Olin Spencer and Mimi LaRoche played by Ava Broermann. They play a husband and wife from France. Both actors are able to handle extremely difficult French accents throughout the play while also still being able to maintain comedic body language and hilarious delivery. Olin Spencer makes big character choices and consistently commits to his choices throughout the production. Ava Broermann brings a very energetic presence to the stage, and she commands the attention of the audience with her comedic delivery. However, you can't have a booked hotel without guests and the staff.

Gina Retch played by Katherine Robbins perfectly portrays the stressed waitress of the hotel staff. She has amusing stage presence and body language which carries throughout the production. We can't continue without trying to fix the growing roach problem. Roskel T. Goomey played by Rhys Wilson delivers a comedic exterminator that runs around trying to get rid of the hotel's roaches. He is high energy the entire time and takes on a challenging accent that enhances his already extremely strong character. The hotel staff as a whole are very uniform, their character choices come together and complement each other incredibly.

Still, we can't just focus on what's happening on the stage but we must also look at what happens behind the scenes. CHATEAU LA ROACH was student directed, from casting, to blocking, to even giving stage crew assignments. Director Jenna Holland took on a heavy load of responsibilities. She was able to execute these duties incredibly to put together a finished show. Something that really helped this play to have a finished clean look was the set. There are hints of pink throughout the set and a working elevator door in the center that helps to pull the audience into a hotel lobby. This set was executed wonderfully by Katie Slattery and her crew. However, there were some slight technical issues with the show. There were some slight sound problems. Certain sound elements had no issues, such as the music that plays in between the scenes that helps to keep the audience's attention. However, there were some sound elements that were slightly loud and overpowering such as the elevator noise and the thunderstorm. Along some mic issues, however when there were mic issues they were solved swiftly and the

actors on stage were able to adapt and still be heard and understood.

Oak Park High school was not only infested with cockroaches this weekend but infested with laughter as well. Both the cast and the crew worked hard for this production to be what it is. CHATEAU LA ROACH was a play that won't be forgotten.

by Meadow Harvey of Grain Valley High School

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YOU'LL ENJOY YOUR STAY AT OAK PARK'S "CHATEAU LA ROACH!"

That is if you don't mind the occasional cockroach! What should be a routine health inspection spirals into every business' nightmare, roaches. Oak Park High School opens its doors to a truly show-stopping performance CHATEAU LA ROACH!

CHATEAU LA ROACH, by Lauren Wilson, follows Francois and Mimi LaRoche as they run their hotel with their hodgepodge of staff. What starts as a normal day quickly spirals with the appearance of not one, but three roaches! Soon the LaRoches learn the infestation has spread... on the same day they were to host Hanula Bing, the famous travel blogger! Even worse, they receive notice a health inspector is coming to the hotel, who will surely shut them down! As the staff scurries along trying hide their new pesky visitors, they must also attend to the various guests, including Hanula, two newly-weds, a widow and her clairvoyant, a British bicyclist, a nun, and a surprise visitor, child-star Ronnie and his Hollywood agent Lola!? All the while they desperately try to find out who the "secret" health inspector among them is before the roaches do.

The hotel is theirs, and we're just living in it! Francois and Mimi LaRoche, played by Olin Spencer and Ava Broermann captivate the audience with a commanding presence. The leads' abilities to volley with any given character on stage at any moment create captivating and believable progression as they wrangle their staff to keep track of the issue, whilst distracting the guests of course. Paired with comedic timing and dramatics these two captivate the audience constantly.

But no hotel is complete without its guests, who shine day in and day out! Hanula Bing, played by Gabby Barnes is a hilarious addition to the cast with her extremely optimistic, yet rather gullible depiction of the illustrious famed travel writer. Her interactions with others shine as she talks with the perfect voice creating hilarious encounters with all. The brooding Lola St. Britannia played by Tristan Young, is having none of it. This diva, the agent of Ronnie Zircon, seems to care more about herself than her client as she constantly takes charge and demands everyone to do as she needs. Tristan has the attitude that truly brings this character to life, her constant one-liners and disgusted faces tell you everything you need to know.

Like a hotel, the crew is what truly puts things together for an enjoyable stay. The costume crew

worked overtime, creating not one, but two to four outfits unique to almost every guest, helping convey the passage of time in a subtle, yet realistic manner. Each outfit perfectly encapsulates what the characters are about. Additionally, all of the hotel staff's accents of pink come together nicely, clearly communicating all of them as members of the staff. Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu should be proud of the work they put into these costumes.

But for every happy customer, there's a chance of a roach. Or a lack thereof, as the scenes involving the roaches often lacked the critters, they were unfortunately only used for a couple of scenes. Despite this, the actors involved always had the same point of concentration for the location of the roaches creating great roach continuity. There was also mic muffling issues with select costume pieces, but luckily it worked in most scenes favor as the actors would often play into it.

As the mystery behind the roaches comes to a close, the cast milk out a final few laughs, a skill they prove to possess time and time again, making Oak Park's CHATEAU LA ROACH a truly incredible stay.

by Trenton Sinn of Grain Valley High School

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#### SINGING ROACHES AND ELEVATOR EXPLOSIVES

From singing roaches to elevator explosives, CHATEAU LA ROACH by OAK PARK High School is zany, unique, and hilarious from start to finish.

CHATEAU LA ROACH tells the story of extravagant French hotel manager, Francois LaRoche, and his obsessive efforts to keep his lakeside chateau running no matter what comes his way. This play by Lauren Wilson is a farce that incorporates slapstick physical comedy, unexpected twists, and an eclectic cast of characters. Francois and his wife Mimi discover with horror that cockroaches have taken over their hotel on the same weekend a famous travel writer and an undercover health inspector are expected to visit. The LaRoches and their staff frantically try to manage the problem before guests arrive, enlisting the help of unconventional exterminator, Roskel T. Goomey. Despite their best efforts to keep the guests oblivious, some problems become too massive to ignore.

Energy is high from opening curtain, as Olin Spencer playing Francois LaRoche and Ava Broermann playing Mimi LaRoche trade animated banter. Olin Spencer takes on the role of Francois with vigor, enthusiasm, and sass as he lights up the stage with his natural charisma. Ava Broermann brings a bright pep to Mimi LaRoche with her energetic stage presence.

Rhys Wilson as Roskel T. Goomey saunters on stage with expert comedic timing and physical comedy. Andy Mast as Nigel Havic is effortlessly hilarious and pumps up the show to another

level. Drew Chamberlin in the role of Roach has a natural glowing stage presence that captivates audiences. From his jazzy theatrical entrance to his melodramatic death, every moment on stage was memorable. Each member of this talented cast succeeds in bringing their quirky characters to life.

Special tech elements worth noting are the operational elevator doors and massive cockroach prop designed to crawl across the walls. Student Director Jenna Holland brings the show to life with clever directing choices and acting guidance. Makeup, led by Mia Zambrano and Tristan Young, adds special touches to Roskel T. Goomey such as grease in his hair and dirt makeup smeared on his face. Set Manager Katie Slattery brings the lobby of Chateau LaRoche to life with thoughtful touches like outdoor scenery and "Bon Appetit" adorning the kitchen door. Stage Manager Elleanna Miera coordinates quick and smooth transitions between scenes.

The high energy level of the show was entertaining, however at times the enthusiasm led to certain lines being lost. Most actors enunciate well, while some even use French accents to develop their characters.

This hilarious production of CHATEAU LA ROACH by OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL combines a vibrant cast with eye-catching technical choices and enough slapstick to knock audiences out of their seats.

by Elena Baker of Lee's Summit West High School

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#### SPAGHETTI WITH A CHANCE OF COCKROACHES

With a larger than life set, and even larger cockroaches, OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL brings the story of CHATEAU LA ROACH to life splendidly. The actors have great comfortability and great sense of humor throughout the show. OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL'S CHATEAU LA ROACH does a phenomenal job.

CHATEAU LA ROACH is an extremely funny slapstick farce that gives the audience something to constantly notice and laugh at. CHATEAU LA ROACH won the Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwriting Award. The show follows the LaRoches and their struggling hotel. Throughout the play the many kooky guests arrive, while the LaRoches are dealing with their worst nightmare. An infestation of cockroaches. This infestation is made even worse as the health department is planning to send over an inspector on that very day.

The show is led by the acting chops of both, Olin Spencer portraying Francois LaRoche and Ava Broermann portraying Mimi LaRoche. The pair does a great job working together throughout the show. Olin has phenomenal physical comedy skills. These skills are showcased throughout by antics such as climbing through windows or throwing himself onto the floor. Olin's commitment to this extreme character with heavy French accent is extremely admirable. Ava

likewise does amazing with this challenging accent as well. Throughout the show Ava does a great job at being composed and brings a strong sense of comfortability to the whole show.

The show is full of many characters with large personalities that the actors do a phenomenal job with. Playing the role of Roskel T. Goomey, Rhys Wilson truly brings his character to life. Rhys had many difficult and challenging moments throughout the production most involving a lot of physical comedy, Rhys's acting chops shine through greatly. Another character with extremely compelling and strong acting was Lola St. Britannia played by Tristan Young. Tristan brought an incredible attitude to this character and truly steals the show, keeping the audience in her palm. Speaking of stealing the show it's impossible to not bring up Roach played by Drew Chamberlin. Drew's first appearance in the show made it clear instantly that he would be memorable. Drew entered the scene with an absolutely phenomenal rendition of "Santa Fe" from Newsies, and the audience from there on was fascinated to see what else he could do. For the rest of the show Drew did a great job of connecting with his other cast mates, and made the character of a 6 foot tall cockroach very likable.

The props of the show were done incredibly. It was a truly magical moment to see a real looking cockroach plod down onto the wall. The show was truly brought together by its great and though out costumes. The hotel staff of the hotel is beautifully costumed with a black and white costume, with a hint of pink uniquely put into their costume.

At times many actors' strong accents while well done could be very hard to understand. This fact was not well complimented by the sound. Many microphones were not set at the correct levels, and similarly the sound effects could be too loud as well.

With amazing actors and great technical elements CHATEAU LA ROACH is truly a pleasure to watch. Overall OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL does a beautiful job at bringing CHATEAU LA ROACH to life.

by Gretchen Isbell of Lee's Summit West High School

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#### A SINGING COCKROACH?

This funny farce is extremely well rehearsed in CHATEAU LA ROACH by OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL. The Play CHATEAU LA ROACH is engaging to watch and is full of high energy from start to finish. Viewers were engaged by the well-designed elevator, committed actors, and even a singing cockroach.

CHATEAU LA ROACH is a comedic farce written by Lauren Wilson. This play is about a French couple named Francois LaRoche and Mimi LaRoche who found out their hotel is infested with roaches while having many guests stay for the weekend. One of the guests is a supposed

"health inspector" coming to inspect the hotel for the weekend.

As the play begins, we are introduced to Francois LaRoche played by Olin Spencer, and Mimi LaRoche played by Ava Broermann. Ava and Olin have amazing chemistry with one another. They play a couple so well that the audience can tell they have spent time working together to build their stage chemistry. Another fantastic performer is Gina Retch played by Katherine Robbins. Katherine does an excellent job portraying a stressed-out waitress. Katherine had the audience feeling for her as the only, overworked hotel waitress.

The scene stealer in this play is the Singing Cockroach played by Drew Chamberlin. From the moment Drew walks on stage and sings "Santa Fe" from the Broadway musical "Newsies", the audience goes wild. Drew steals the show with his comedic timing and acting. Another noteworthy character is Ronnie Zircon played by Lily Tice. Lily portrays the only child at the hotel so well. Lily is fully committed to her character with her choices and actions. She is a joy to watch on stage.

The play CHATEAU LA ROACH was directed by student director Jenna Holland. Jenna does an excellent job directing her cast to use the entire stage. Every line has a purpose in this production and is well executed. Jenna's choice to have the cast move throughout the show keeps the energy high and the audience more engaged in the action. The set made by Katie Slattery was very well designed. The set is built with shapes and hallways that appear to go beyond the stage. Katie does an amazing job creating an elevator with operating doors. The elevator felt real and left the audience impressed.

CHATEAU LA ROACH by OAK PARK was impressive because of the sets, actors, and directing. Unfortunately, some of the choices made by the costume crew and set crew do not seem to fit the period of the show. The look of the hotel and costumes used throughout the show were a little more old-fashioned than our current fashion and decor. However, the cast moves the play along with high levels of humor and energy.

The play CHATEAU LA ROACH at OAK PARK was truly entertaining and filled with comedy. You do not want to miss this entertaining show. This play leaves the audience wanting more stage time with this amazing cast and its singing cockroach.

by Jenna Dillabough of Lee's Summit West High School

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#### CHATEAU LA ROACH: A PEST-TACULAR PLAY

Ever wonder what happens when a hotel gets infested with cockroaches? Probably not, but none-the-less, this play is worth the watch! Oak Park High School's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH is not only the perfect combination of funny and weird, but it will have the audience

squirming in their seats the whole time.

Lauren Wilson's play, CHATEAU LA ROACH is about the terrors the hotel staff and guests face after discovering that the hotel is infested with cockroaches. The group of employees scramble to kill all the bugs, and they find an exterminator to help get the job done before the guests can notice, but they realize the task is a lot more difficult said than done. One roach even grows to be human-sized and sings! Although it has never been on Broadway, this show has wonderful twists and turns that keeps the audience engaged and laughing.

Everybody in the cast has raw talent and an ability to make confident acting choices, each one of them kept their character energetic and unique in a fresh way. Olin Spencer's performance of Francois LaRoche is quite unforgettable. The second he steps onto stage all attention is instantly drawn to him. It is clear how much dedication he put into his character, and he embraced it entirely. The passion Olin puts into his character, Francois LaRoche, makes the play all-the-more enjoyable and sets the bar for the other performers around him to shine in their own ways.

It is hard to pick specific people to write about, because each actor was unique and talented. One actor in particular does a fantastic job. Tristan Young, who plays Lola St. Britannia executes the sassy agent who has to handle the drama king that is Ronnie Zircon (Lily Tice) phenomenally. She bosses the hotel guests and service team around like it's nobody's business. And she looks good doing it! Her interactions with the other characters in CHATEAU LA ROACH allowed them the opportunity to make big decisions as performers. Drew Chamberlin's performance of Roach is also quite unforgettable. He completely steals the stage by singing "Santa Fe", from the hit Broadway musical, "Newsies". That roach has one heck of a voice! Each time he graces the stage, everyone squeams and squirms in pure bliss. He definitely knows how to get a crowd laughing.

The first thing people notice when entering a theater is the set, so it is extremely important that it looks presentable and eye-catching. Katie Slattery and her crew do a spectacular job turning the stage into a realistic and pleasant atmosphere with their creation of the hotel. Along with the amazing set, everyone on tech crew plays their parts backstage wonderfully. Especially Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu, who put an impressive amount of effort into the costumes. Every employee in the hotel has something pink included in their outfits at all times. And all of the guests have costumes that match their characters perfectly.

With a talented cast and clever dialog, CHATEAU LA ROACH promises an evening of laughter and surprises that will leave the audience thoroughly entertained and perhaps even looking at roaches in a whole new light. It is truly, a Pest-tacular Play!

by Kennadi Merriam of Lee's Summit West High School

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## ROACH INFESTATION AT OAK PARK??

OAK PARK High School flies across the world to bring us the dazzling show CHATEAU LA ROACH. Not only are their human sized bugs but also a secret health inspector??

CHATEAU LA ROACH is set: present day Paris, France in a goofy newly opened hotel. One day the LaRoches who run the marvelous hotel find a pink envelope on their front desk. The envelope says that a secret health inspector will be arriving that weekend to inspect the hotel. As Mr. and Mrs. LaRoche communicate to their staff that this will be happening, the staff start recognizing bugs popping up. They quickly call an exterminator who is not very qualified💎 but gets to work. Follow along as the quirky staff tries to ease the tension as guests start to arrive not knowing the hotel has a roach infestation!

Francois LaRoche took to the stage with dazzling facial expression and excellent comedic timing. Played by Olin Spencer, Spencer goes the extra mile making his character the star of the show. His loving wife, Mimi LaRoche, played by Ava Broermann interacts with Spencer with extraordinary chemistry, keeping the audience enthralled. Broermann welcomes other guests into the hotel with ease and showcases her characters kindness on stage.

Katherine Robbins, playing Gina Retch, awes the audience with her facial expressions and smart gestures which helped encourage other actors to do the same. Katherine doesn't fall short when it comes to comedic timing and her lines never fell flat. Roskel T. Goomey, played by Rhys Wilson, took the stage with his horse voice and Jim Carrey attitude. He made fantastic character choices, leaving the audience asking for more.

The supposed "Health Inspector" did a fantastic job. Andy Mast sadly got sprayed with roach poisonous one too many times. Mast played Nigel Havic, the sweet bike rider that was staying at the hotel for a night. Mast did a fanatic job at staying in character even when passed out and passing out! Mast made the audience cry with laughter and so did Tristan Young who played the sassy Hollywood agent. Lola St. Britannia is a poor agent trying to relax with her super famous child actor client. Tristan does an amazing job reacting to other actors and portraying a mean snotty character.

Not only did the actors make the show come to life but the Tech did as well! The set, created by Katie Slattery, took us across the globe to Paris, France with cute paintings and even working elevator doors! The costumes, made by Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu, fit each character precisely and matched each actor's persona accurately. The roach costume and cheese made the whole audience cry of laughter and was the most memorable and perfect outfit for those characters.

Overall you can say that OAK PARK did not disappoint. Though the health inspector will be coming next weekend, this weekend catch the hilarious show CHATEAU LA ROACH at OAK PARK HIGH SCHOOL!!

by Makenna Laird of Lee's Summit West High School

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## VISITER LA CHATEAU DU OAK PARK

Poisonous parmesan, singing cockroaches, celebrity preteens and an undercover health inspector? OAK PARK high school's cast of CHATEAU LA ROACH is filled with zany personalities that are sure to turn heads.

Lights come brought and eyes are guided through the wonderful set of CHATEAU LA ROACH. A simple stationary set that easily juxtaposes the bizarre hotel staff. The energy of the cast is unmatched. A constant flow of guests moves through the stage as the hustle and bustle of check-in ensues. Each member of this eclectic group adding their own touch of quirkiness to the atmosphere creating an exciting visual. Scurrying around the set, the staff faced with a few more unwanted guests. Roaches.

The Chateau LaRoche is never complete without its wacky hoteliers Francois and Mimi LaRoche played by Olin Spencer and Ava Broermann respectively. A wave of energy exudes from the stage any time the light hits this pair. With a highly animated personality and a carefully crafted character Spencer easily draws the attention of any audience. Always by his side, Broermann plays the level headed wife with extreme precision. Broermann gracefully balances the comedy of this complex script with her jabby one liners and witty, over the top persona. Sharing a spectacular chemistry and equally strong French accent, this power duo builds a bond on stage that is simply remarkable!

A notable member of the eccentric hotel staff is Gina Retch played by Katherine Robbins. Amidst a cast full of crazy characters, the level headed waitress truly stands apart. Commanding the stage with impeccable timing and great finesse. A wave of laughter swept through the auditorium as Robbins scrambles across the stage during her nightly dinner rush. Rhys Wilson portrays the greasy exterminator, Roskel T. Goomey, perfectly. The unspoken hero of the story, Wilson rids the chateau of their unwanted pests with a confident stride. Ready to attack with the use of chemical warfare. Wilson navigates across every inch of the stage with great purpose and intent. Andy Mast as Nigel Havic and Tristan Young as Lola St. Britannia are always sure to get a laugh from the audience. Whether it be the witty, dry humor or elaborate physical comedy, these two are true comedic powerhouses. Easily fitting in with the rest of the hilariously animated cast.

Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu from the costuming department craft a unique design style for each character with such care and precision. While beautifully designed, the set and costumes combined were an intriguing mix. Not quite matching any specific time period, which added a unique interest to the viewing experience. It is clear the student director, Jenna Holland fine-tuned each and every aspect of this show. Creative blocking was created for stand out

characters, lighting that enhanced the acting on stage, and props that are larger than life. The technical elements of this show are truly beautiful.

This show is full of liveliness and energy throughout. From the hotel staff and their out of the ordinary characters to the guests who just want a place to stay. This show is fast paced and thrilling for any audience. Sacre Bleu! This is a show you definitely don't want to miss!

by Max Hunt of Lee's Summit West High School

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## CHATEAU LA ROACH IS TRES BON

With crazy hotel guests and even crazier creepy-crawlers, CHATEAU LA ROACH performed at Oak Park High School is a hilarious show that will have you laughing and squirming in your seats all at the same time.

Written by Lauren Wilson, CHATEAU LA ROACH is a comedic play focused on the Chateau LaRoche hotel and the chaotic events that unfold over the course of a weekend. Owners Francois and Mimi LaRoche have to navigate difficult staff and a roach infestation all while a health inspector is undercover as a guest in their hotel.

The principal cast of CHATEAU LA ROACH are true stars under the stage lights. Olin Spencer (Francois LaRoche) and Ava Broermann (Mimi LaRoche) star as the hotel owners. Spencer and Broermann have excellent chemistry together and the pair both excel in all comedic aspects. Katherine Robbins (Gina Retch) exudes the nervous energy of a waitress. Robbins' energy is so strong that it's almost palpable. The principal cast are fun to watch and add immensely to the show.

The support cast of CHATEAU LA ROACH are all talented, with a few notable standouts. Tristan Young (Lola St. Britannia) kills her line delivery every time, and Ben Place (Jip Nackerly) and Bella Hernandez (Josie Nackerly) portray an adorable newly-wed couple. Drew Chamberlin (Roach) shines while singing a portion of "Santa Fe" from NEWSIES and makes the death of a roach a truly emotional experience. Hannah Oenings (Sister Liza Bethingil), a German native, does a convincing American accent. The entire supporting cast really comes together to create an exciting show.

CHATEAU LA ROACH has some impressive technical aspects. Subtle but powerful lighting effects from the lighting team of Chelsea Brown and Jay Davis work well. Props by Alex Shaumeyer and Mason Sloan look nice and complete. Student Director Jenna Holland showcased her talent as a director. All of the casting, stage directions, and character choices are reminiscent of a director with many years of experience, and the fact that it is all done by a student is impressive.

There were some elements of CHATEAU LA ROACH that were lacking. Some actors, especially those utilizing accents, could have benefitted from working on improving their diction, as many lines were lost to slurred and muffled words. While microphone cues were generally good, some of the sound effect cues were very loud and almost startling. The large lobby of the Chateau was structurally impressive. However, it would have been nice to see some additional set dressing. Overall, the show was still very fun and none of these critiques ever majorly affected a scene.

An extremely amusing show, CHATEAU LA ROACH by Oak Park High School is a marvelous time filled with belly laughs and not-so-little bugs.

by Scarlett Lawlor of Lee's Summit West High School

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#### WHY CAN'T ALL COCKROACHES BE THIS AWESOME?

Wouldn't you look at this beautiful hotel! Helpful staff, amazing food, cockroaches, and- wait- COCKROACHES?! The audience's laughter can be heard bellowing throughout the theater as Oak Park High presents CHATEAU LA ROACH, a slapstick comedy that is positively overflowing with incredible humor and singing-dancing roaches!

CHATEAU LA ROACH follows hotel managers Francois and Mimi LaRoche who prepare for a fully booked weekend. From British bicyclists and lovely honeymooners, all types of guests are ready for their stay. The only issue? The LaRoches have just found out their hotel is infested with cockroaches! Not only that, the health inspector is also making a surprise visit! How will they ever keep their hotel open with singing cockroaches lining the walls?

Leading the show as quirky hotel manager Francois LaRoche is Olin Spencer. Spencer gave an absolutely delightful performance. As LaRoche he created a well-rounded and hilarious character. His cartoonish and animated physicality added not only to his crazy character but the overall atmosphere and mood of the show. Buying into the over-the-top craziness of his character which was just what this show needed. His cartoonish French accent was also perfect for the character. Even with the accent, the audience is still able to hear his lines thanks to his clear diction. Spencer's onstage chemistry with each of his scene partners was a truly pertinent element of this show. It's best exemplified between himself and the hotel staff. It made it feel as though he was trying to father five dysfunctional children, each more stupid than the next. Spencer was fantastic as the leading man!

Unwavering Lola St. Britannia was unforgettable thanks to Tristan Young's stellar characterization. From the moment she walked on stage Young was an absolute delight. She was mind-blowingly hilarious and delivered one-liners that would make the audience laugh for minutes on end. She also has incredible chemistry with her scene partners, especially Lily Tice, child star Ronnie Zircon. Tice also delivered a perfect characterization of her role. She gave total

commitment to the bits and was always engaged while onstage. Even when the spotlight wasn't on them, both remained in character without pulling focus, something comedic actors occasionally have trouble with, but for Tice and Young, this was no issue. All in all, the child star and manager duo crushed these roles and left the audience wanting more!

No show is complete without the unseen backstage technical elements. Head of House Tori Phelan and Isa Hernandez stood out amongst these incredible crew members. Their creative ideas for the house set the mood of the play before the curtains even rose. From cockroaches lining the walls and floors to the hilarious cockroach cutout, it was simply perfect. You could see the passion and hard work poured into the design which allowed the audience a place to take an intermission without taking a break from the continued entertainment the show had to offer! Kudos to them and the rest of the house crew!

While this production was indeed stellar, no show is without its minor issues. While watching the show the mics were occasionally turned off or turned to the wrong volume. This would occasionally cause disruption while watching the show, but the actors and sound crew quickly recovered. Even when their mics were off the actors were able to project their lines until they were turned back on.

Oak Park High School's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH was an unforgettable night and even though it was infested with cockroaches, it could still make the audience come back for a second night!

by Charlotte Sweet of Platte County High School

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### CHATEAU LA ♦ GIANT ♦ SINGING ♦ ROACH

We've all had what we believe is unique and individual experiences spending the night in a hotel. These consist of snoring dads, siblings hogging blankets, and even, on occasion, bug infestations. However, very rarely do we see invasions the size of the massive roach swarm occurring in Oak Park High School's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH.

With human-sized roaches, incompetent work staff, and poisonous Italian cuisine, CHATEAU LA ROACH is a hilarious slap-stick comedy circled around a French couple who owns a luxurious hotel which happens to be their pride and joy. With this joyous getaway also comes the five staff members of the establishment who are highly unqualified and together make a gang of employees who desire nothing more than to perform alongside each other on a stage. The conflict of the show appears when during the busiest weekend the hotel has ever seen, roaches are found crawling in the walls of the hotel. The workers are set to meet a 10-year-old movie star, a hypnotist, a nun, and a health inspector coming to examine the building. Throughout the play the roach size and abilities increase, and so do the tensions among the guests, and just as

soon as the chaos hits its peak, it is learned that the health inspector was caught in a bad storm and is no longer able to perform the inspection that weekend, giving the hotel staff a much needed, roach-free break.

Leading this chaotic show is Francois LaRoche, played by Olin Spencer. Spencer does a phenomenal job of delivering every French-spoken line with clear and enunciated diction to be sure he is understood when yelling at his staff. Spencer also has fantastic chemistry with his costars, namely, Andy Mast playing the role of Nigel Havic. Mast delivers the perfect amount of comedic relief to an already funny production, Mast brings to the table stellar physical movements as well as incredible vocal inflections to truly sell his character.

Another notable performance comes from Tristan Young portraying the role of Lola St. Britannia. Young is exceptional in the role of the sassy agent of a 10-year-old superstar and does so with a staggering stage presence that goes unmatched. From the minute Young enters the stage, she takes over the stage making sure whatever needs to be done to meet the needs of her boss is done. Young does a marvelous portrayal of Lola comfortably gracing the stage with sternness and fluidity.

What truly sets this show apart is its stunning creativity led and directed by Jenna Holland. Holland takes this beast of a production head-on and delivers a flawless, comedic, and heartfelt show. With unique blocking decisions, actors can be seen at all times by the audience leaving nearly zero room for confusion as to what is happening with all actors at a given time. Throughout the show, Holland does a fantastic job utilizing every bit of the set for her actors making the show more believable as a panicked bellhop jumps out of a window.

Although, there were some inconsistencies with the time period. It was often difficult to tell what period we were in with some costume pieces matching different eras of time better than others. There were also instances where set pieces wouldn't match the proved 2024 time period and some pieces didn't seem to belong as much as others. However, this was quickly fixed by impeccable chemistry by the actors and excellent comfort and use of the stage.

Not many people can say they have run around a French hotel being chased by a six-foot-tall roach singing show tunes, but you know who can? The hotel occupants and staff at CHATEAU LA ROACH at Oak Park High School!

by Finley Pennington of Platte County High School

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THAT WAS SUITE!

Bugs. No one likes them. But at Oak Park's performance of CHATEAU LA ROACH, boredom was exterminated and bad moods were terminated as the staff of Chateau La Roche deals with their bug problems before the health inspector arrives in disguise, all while being interrupted by

guests who just might be the mentioned inspector.

CHATEAU LA ROACH, a side-splitting play originally written by Pat Cook in 1993, is about a hotel staff that, under the direction of their employer Francois LaRoche, works to eliminate the sudden infestation of roaches under the ominous threat of a disguised health inspector. Little do they know, the one who caused all this trouble is among their ranks.

The whole hotel couldn't have been run without the eccentric personality of Francois LaRoche, expertly characterized by Olin Spencer. Hesitation doesn't know this man, as he dives headfirst into the underpaying, micromanaging position of hotel owner. Spencer commands the stage with a skillfully strong French accent with Francois' intense persona.

No hotel is complete without its guests, and no guest list at CHATEAU LA ROACH is complete without Nigel Havoc and Lola St. Britannia, played by Andy Mast and Tristan Young respectively. These two personalities, while contrasting, managed to wield their characters with similarly strong energy. Mast's stumbling stupor during the second act as he "inspected" the chateau was engaging and realistic, and Young's thick sarcasm was a perfect addition to the cast, balancing out seriousness and humor beautifully.

This show couldn't have gone well without their crew. Their costumes were detailed and fit each character, from the multiple travel outfits of Enira De Can (Rayna Key) to the nun's robes of Liza Bethinghil, to the pink outfits of the Chateau staff. Although they did suffer some difficulties with sound, they more than made up for it in set details, such as the sliding elevator doors and the multiple exits and entrances that gave depth to their environment.

No matter how much bugs may scare you, Oak Park infested their show with great humor and talent.

by Hansen Karlberg of Platte County High School

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## INFESTATION ALLEGATIONS

CHATEAU LA ROACH, while not commonly known, is a slapstick comedy about a French married couple, the LaRoches, and their hotel beside an American lake. On a busy weekend full of unique characters, they discover a cockroach infestation and call in an exterminator to get rid of them without alarming the guests or the undercover health inspector. Things take a turn when one cockroach grows to human size and a manhunt - or cockroach hunt - begins.

Starting the showoff was the criminally comedic Olin Spencer as Francois LaRoche. Spencer's character is well developed and consistent including his accent, physicality, and quick witted reactions. He makes big and bold choices that pay off and drive the show forward. He acts

alongside Ava Broermann, playing his wife Mimi LaRoche. Broermann has a sense of sweetness that contrasts nicely with most of the frantic or rude guests.

Attending this infested infrastructure is a wide array of guests with varying personalities, none of which is bigger than Lola St. Britannia played by Tristan Young. Young makes her first entrance big and with purpose, with more than just blocking motivating her movements. We see her motivations, moments before, and thinking as she goes through the play. Not only is her character refreshing but also engaging and wonderfully caddy - even down to the walk. Lola takes care of Ronnie Zircon, played by Lily Trice, throughout the show. Trice commands attention on stage just as her child-star character would with the paparazzi. Even though her actions may not be big and loud, they fit her character well and remain memorable. Ronnie's scenes with the Roach are some of the most hilarious of the show.

The Roach, played by Drew Chamberlin, starts off strong with an impressive and unexpected performance of "Santa Fe", including the high belt. Every time he enters the stage it is bound to be enjoyable. His line delivery is natural and effective, resulting in many laughs and even sadness during his temporary death. Even while he isn't speaking, he remains in character and draws attention by twitching on the ground or making fun of another character in the background.

Also adding flare to the show is Madame Zillinda (Allison Stockton), Nigel Havic (Andy Mast), and Roskel T. Goomey (Rhys Wilson). These characters all stand out from the rest with more defined personalities and stage awareness. Stockton has excellent physicality and quick-witted replies, Mast's craziness is played believably and with great comedic timing, and Wilson's line delivery makes his character seem more real and in-tune with the show. These three play a very important part in keeping the pacing of the show quick and eye-catching.

The costumes, done by Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu, clearly communicate character personalities and connect them with each other. For example, all of the staff of the hotel have touches of pink that work nicely and tie into the building's pink trim. However, many characters have clothing from different time periods, which can be visually confusing. The set also has fun touches such as "Bon Appetite" on the kitchen's door and working elevator doors. However, the tan walls with a few photos hung on feel somewhat lackluster. The sound system also falls a bit short, making actor's voices sound like they are coming from behind the set and making some characters hard to understand.

Overall, Oak Park High School's CHATEAU LA ROACH is a fun-filled comedy with a little something for everyone.

by Kaitlyn Seim of Platte County High School

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## INFESTATION!

Foggy weather calls for a cozy night at a romantic French hotel until the unthinkable happens. A roach infestation! These creepy crawlers aren't the only visitors of the chateau this weekend. A recently married couple, a widow and her fortune teller, a nun, a traveler, a British bicyclist, and a famous child star and his agent come to visit, along with a disguised health inspector among the guests keep the staff members very busy as they attempt to tackle the growing cockroach infestation. This chaotic and fast paced show, CHATEAU LA ROACH, put on by Oak Park High School, is extremely entertaining to watch.

Francois LaRoche, played by Olin Spencer, takes his character to the max. Every punchline he delivers is received well by the audience, and his physicality does not disappoint. Spencer hooks the audience with his fantastic French accent and the inflection in his voice is top-tier. Mimi LaRoche, played by Ava Broermann, also takes the cake for an amazing accent throughout the show. She has consistent character work throughout the show, from her worrisome screams heard at the beginning, to her frustration with the whole situation.

Some additional characters that stand out include Nigel Havoc, played by Andy Mast. Mast has some amazing physicality that slowly builds in the first act. Once he consumes the roach poison, his insanity goes out the window, a sight that is truly entertaining to watch. Enira De Can, played by Rayna Key, has an amazing attitude the second she steps onto the stage. Her demanding and sassy demeanor makes her very enjoyable to watch.

A character that completely steals the show is the giant cockroach himself. The Roach, played by Drew Chamberlin, first appears at the end of the first act and truly shocks the audience with his rendition of "Santa Fe," as he impressively nails the high note. Throughout the second act, Chamberlin does an outstanding job of connecting with the audience as his character's life tragically comes to an end at the hands of the Roach Exterminator, then again as he miraculously survives the whole incident. His consistent accent and hilarious facials are truly an outstanding part of the show.

What immediately stood out to me in the first act was the cohesiveness of the pops of pink color in the costumes, amongst the hotel staff members, designed by Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu. The entire ensemble's costumes fit their characters, and from the cheese wedge, to Francois's pink bedazzled shoes adds to the whole production. Another enjoyable aspect of the play was the makeup, specifically for the maid in the first act. Hair and makeup, done by Mia Zambrano and Tristan Young, does a great job at capturing the despair the maid faces in the first act, with the running mascara that is visible all the way in the audience.

This impressive show, although extremely well put together, had some areas for improvement. This production had many stage slaps and door hits that, although they were hilarious at times, some weren't very realistic looking and you could tell they were fake. Additionally, while some improved lines were funny, at times they became too much and would fall flat.

From singing cockroaches, to poisonous cheese, CHATEAU LA ROACH performed by Oak Park High School is not a show you want to miss!

by Kendall Heckman of Platte County High School

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#### A DIFFERENT "APP-ROACH"

Whether you're a business owner longing to pass a health inspection or an elevator operator wishing to blow an entire hotel to smithereens, there's no doubt that big dreams can come from anywhere, especially if you're a 6-foot tall roach who aspires to join the ranks of Broadway. Under the student direction of Jenna Holland, Oak Park's production of CHATEAU LA ROACH is a bumbling comedy that is spearheaded by a diverse cast of characters who come from all sorts of different backgrounds from Hollywood to a hole-in-the-wall...literally.

If a reviewer were to see shows regularly around the Kansas City Metro area, one would find they've seen just about every single show there is to see from high school theater. That is, until CHATEAU LA ROACH. A relatively obscure play, the only information one may be able to find about it is listed on its publishers' Pioneer Drama Service website, where it won the site's own Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwriting Contest. It's after sitting through the show's two hours of gut-busting comedy that one may realize how bizarre the obscurity is because the actors at Oak Park have proven CHATEAU LA ROACH deserves to be more common within the theatrical scene.

One such proof can be found in the eccentric yet irritable Francois LaRoche, played by Olin Spencer. Even as soon as the actor makes his entrance through the lobby window, Spencer makes sure to display his impressive physicality throughout any scene. This style of Vaudeville comedy perfectly complements the show, especially when he's hilariously swallowing down a cockroach in front of his corresponding quirky cast mates. One of these co-stars is Ava Broermann, who played a mindful Mimi LaRoche. In a show full of bizarre and off-beat characters, Broermann brought a much-needed grounding to the story, doing it with a flawless French accent! Whenever Francois' humble chateau starts to come crumbling down, Broermann can smoothly bring comedy to relatability.

Justly, the house is also brought down by the ludicrously lavish Lola St. Britannia, played by Tristan Young. With her head held high, and her heels even higher, Young gives a masterclass in comedic-timing. This can be seen in countless scenes where delivery can either make or break a line. Young makes sure to keep the bratty nature of her characterization on full-throttle throughout the show, making every single one of her quotes hilarious and memorable.

Moreover, when speaking about memorability, one can't go without mentioning Andy Mast's playful performance of Nigel Havic, who contrastingly shows his comedy expertise through

slapstick action. Mast notably displayed an impressive range of personality when switching his motives between cyclist and health inspector, with each new impersonation captivating the audience in fresh and exciting ways.

What is any show without an engaging set for actors to play on? Luckily, the wide range of characters make full use of the obviously French chateau and its appropriately pink aesthetic. Although not all characters matched the bubbly colors of the world around them, the costumes that did match the chateau were simply candy for the eyes.

Getting the opportunity to see a new show is a rare treat that one mustn't take for granted. Especially if that show contains the zany cast of actors found at Oak Park High School. Filled with bumbling bellhops, eccentric guests, and a single giant cockroach, one simply must see the once-in-a-lifetime show that is, Oak Park's CHATEAU LA ROACH.

by Sam Ragone of Platte County High School

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### ◆OH LA-LA, IT◆S A ROACH◆

Oh my, it's a roach, it's a mouse, it's spaghetti! Nobody wants to stay at a hotel filled with roaches and odd employees. Well guess what! Oak Park High School is here to check you in and creep you out with CHATEAU LA ROACH.

CHATEAU LA ROACH, is a comedic play written by Lauren Wilson. Produced by special arrangement with the Pioneer Drama Service, inc, in Denver, Colorado. It is also the winner of the Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwright Contest.

The whole cast lit up the stage with laughter, suspense, and a little sadness. One who really caught everyone's attention is our very first actor Olin Spencer who plays Francois LaRoche, an intimidating hotel owner, throws an impressive French accent that makes the whole audience burst into laughter. His energy is well kept the entire time he is on stage. What enhances his character so much more is his smooth and rapid moves. Our second honorable lead is Ava Broermann who plays Mimi LaRoche, has a thick emotion that keeps her going with everyone she interacts with on stage and within herself. Her comedic moments are the most memorable in this entire show.

The most uplifting part of the show in Act I is the one and only Drew Chamberlin who plays the Roach! His vocals are upheld and shows bravery within himself and charm that makes him a memorable character in the show. Our beautiful actor Tristan Young who plays Lola St. Britannia, keeps her sass, attitude, and incredible organization with her tones with whoever she talks to on stage, especially with Lily Tice who plays Ronnie Zircon.

Of course, this show couldn't be done without our intelligent lighting crew, Chelsea Brown and Jay Davis, who do amazing lighting that catches every abstract from the set to the actors on stage with our yellow/mango tones. Costume crew, Sophy Marks and Chelsea Trieu,, have done an absolutely amazing job picking out the worker's costumes that have pink tones that match the set, made by Katie Slattery, it's a simple hotel lobby but has so much to catch everyone's eye.

Now in some parts, their accents make it hard to understand what they're saying but they always have their way to project with their dialogues. In some scenes with the elevator opening, the sound cue would be pretty loud but is later fixed during the second act.

With all the screaming, laughter, and roaches, it's always best to check if your weekend stay has cockroaches and mice. Oak Park High School has put out a fantastic show with a lot of engagement with CHATEAU LA ROACH.

by Katherine Velasquez of Ruskin High School