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The Sound of Music, Magic Circle Theatre

Review: Wow, what a wonderful show! The sets were amazing and the costumes delightful! The cast...simply outstading. Katie Veale as Maria Rainer was stunning and a fantastic actress and singer. She brought so much life to the stage and you really could tell that she loved the children. The kids were cute and there were great performances all around, especially from little Brigitta. She has some great one-liners with excellent delivery. The nuns sang in perfect harmony. The only complaints would be that some of the numbers seemed a bit too choreographed, but it doesn't distract too much...and at times Mother Abbess seemed bored or unmoved-perhaps it was that she was sick? Anyway, bravo to Brent Null and Magic Circle for another fabulous production! This is a must see, for any family!
- Judy L.

Review: Overall an enjoyable show, yet one that still suffers from MC's usual problems. First, the good. Maria and the children were delightful to watch. Several of the supporting cast members had moments where their talents shined. The vocal quality of the entire cast was very nice and the costumes were beautiful as well. The choreography, by Mr. Hatcher, was enjoyable, albeit simple and at times overly repetitive. That may be due to the dancers ability however. Now the bad. MC has long been guilty of some of the worst looking sets in the local theatre community. Whomever paints and decorates them should find work in other areas of theatre (although I was impressed with the backdrop for a change!). The music was rushed as is the norm for shows musically directed by Mrs. Vaughn. She elicits beautiful singing from her actors, it's too bad the songs are rushed through and in some cases ruined because of it. The direction, by Mr. Null, is inconsistent at best. Rarely does the blocking support the words. And I have yet to see anyone have their actors speak at the audience, as opposed to the other people onstage, so much unless I was attending a lecture. Due to the good, and despite the bad, this show bears your attendance. Go with lowered expectations and you will be pleasantly surprised.

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- Brenda R.

Review: This play is without a doubt the best ever! The voices are magnificent. They truly sound like professional singers. The children are so talented, the nuns are so good they could form their own opera, Maria sounds just like Julie Andrews and Captain VonTrapp has the most beautiful voice I've ever heard. It's a must see!!!

Review: Magic Circle must be doing something right if they were able to secure a \$200,000 grant from the Irvine Foundation. That group doesn't give money away to just anyone. Simply put: this is one of the most elegant productions Magic Circle has mounted in some time. These sets are the best ever produced on that stage. The backdrops were not painted, but actually looked like someone blew up a huge picture of the Swiss Alps and placed it on the stage. Bravo. The costuming is quite nice as well. The dresses that were worn by the Baroness were divine.

The voices were magnificent. Katie Veele, who plays Maria, has one of the most beautiful and natural voices I have ever heard. As far as the children go, all are excellent but Brigitta, Gretl and Kurt are all standouts. The Nuns chorus was flawless. Mother Superior seemed a bit young for the role to me, but sang the part perfectly. I did have some trouble hearing at one point, but it was brief. I was extremely happy to see they kept the two songs from the movie "Confidence" and "Something Good". Although there was one song by the Baroness, Max and the Captain that I have never heard before.

One of the greatest achievements of this production was how seamless it was. The show itself (with a 20 minute intermission, mind you) runs 2 hours and 30 minutes. Isn't the movie close to 3 hours? It certainly didn't look to me as if anything had been cut, so another bravo for keeping the pace going at a good clip.

A nice surprise for me occurred before the show actually started as I distinctly heard the actual Trapp Family Singers a couple of times playing in the theater. What a nice touch. Standing ovation to the directors for a job well done. Please go see this production. You'll thank me for it.
- Marjorie Foster

Review: Nice play. Nice sets and costumes. Good talent. Thank you for this production.
- Erin G. Komatsubara

Review: This play is thoroughly enjoyable. The cast is absolutely outstanding. They all have beautiful voices that sound extremely professional. Katie Veale as Maria brings so much energy to the stage and her voice is outstanding. Brian Lewis as Captain Von Trapp is perfect for this role and his acting as well as his singing is wonderful. The nuns sing in beautiful harmony and are delightful to watch. The kids cast in this play are incredible. The acting from all of them is very impressive. Also, the sets are beautifully done. I've seen this play twice now and plan to go again. It's a must see for the entire family!
- Judy G.

Review: The show was just great. All the voices were beautiful. I think Mr. Null did an excellent job of casting. Maria did an outstanding job. The children were so much fun to watch. You could tell they loved what they were doing. Very believable. I particularly liked the way the sets were changed so quickly and efficiently. A must see show if you like lots of good music and a show that moves along briskly.
- Jo

Review: Wow...just wow. I can't believe how great the cast is. The tempo of the music is so much more fun and lively than in the movie and Broadway Revival. Kudos to Brent Null, Jennifer Vaughn, Stephen Hatcher, the whole cast, and everybody at Magic Circle!! My favorite cast member was Friedrich!! :)

Review: Great production! Great performances! It was my first time at the Theatre and I thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon.
- Stacy M.

Review: This was my first experience seeing a Magic Circle Production and I will admit to being underwhelmed. Aside from the actors obvious singing abilities, which were wonderful, some very nice costumes, and one amazing backdrop, in addition to the wonderful source material (one of my favorite shows of all time!) this show lacked. Not being a 'theater person' I can't comment quite as eloquently as some before me have as to the issues, but several of the people that I attended with attributed the shortcomings to this shows direction, which makes sense. I can make two observations: 1. Scene changes can be quick when there is little set to change, 2. Beautiful singing can be ruined when songs are sung too fast. I can't say not to go see this show, but if you love The Sound Of Music as I do, I would recommend the movie or waiting for Music Circus to put this show on.
-Jeffrey C.

Review: The production was superb. We couldn't believe how fantastic it was. What great singing, acting, and sets. I am planning to email all my friends in Sacramento to tell them not to miss this. My friend who saw the show with me will be doing the same. It was a joyous evening, and I thank you.

Review: I saw this show over the weekend and was really disappointed. After reading all the reviews before mine I see that my reasons for not liking this show are shared by several others so I will not repeat them. Magic Circle usually does some good shows so I hope they don't get judged too harshly for this one.

- Francis W.

Review: I enjoyed this production despite some of its weak points. Everyone worked very hard to provide an enjoyable show. Thank your very much. Maria was wonderful, although it took her a short while at the start to totally get into character (it appeared at first that she was simply giving a recital.) The children were simply amazing. How could anyone not love them. The Nuns were outstanding and even the ensemble radiated their individual characters. Mother superior has a powerful and beautiful voice, however she needed to play a more mature, wise and motherly character (I went to a convent, and had a mother superior). Gayorg was gentle - but a little too much so. He needed to show a far more commanding presence and no-nonsense personality. His love scene with Maria was completely lost - there was nothing there, not convincing...his best moment was while singing "Eidelweiss". Max needs to play his character a little more real and not so much a caricature. Unfortunately, I have to agree that many of the songs are a bit rushed. The music is so well known, that any divergence is immediately noticeable and does not fit well with the scenes. But I still loved it and hope everyone gets to see it. Take your family, it is a family show. Congratulations everyone.

- Laura B.

Review: After seeing this production before at the same theater about nine years ago, I was expecting it to be much better this time around (bigger budget, experience, etc). The sets were indeed MUCH better, and the costumes were very fun as they have been lately in all their productions! However, sadly, the acting still suffers much in mis casting and who seems to be available to do some of the roles. I will say that I LOVED the children and they were by far the best and strongest. Katie was fine as Maria, beautiful voice, but a little on the young side for Gaylord (played by Brian Lewis). There is absolutley NO chemistry

between them and you don't buy for a second that they could ever be in love. And poor Gaylord, who is supposed to love music and sang songs and lead the Von Trapp family before losing his wife (as stated in the show) didn't even show any musical talent in playing at least SOME sort of instrument! I do remember the actor that played him last time (I think it was Allen Ponce) at least played the guitar and made it very warm and believable. I also didn't care much for Max this time around as this actor chose to use mannerism's and a voice that was more suited for comedy and characture. Over all, sadly, the production was an uneven performance across the scale.

-Phil

Review: I think the show was wonderful!! I enjoyed all the children!! I really liked the two little girls! That line that marta said was so cute! I think she should get the pink parasol! The nuns were beautiful, as always!! The whole cast was beautiful!!

- Alexis P.

Review: I had heard from several of my friends who had gone to see The Sound of Music that it was a wonderful production. My husband and I

attended and we were not disappointed! It was wonderful! The musical talent displayed by all of the actors was quite amazing (the nuns harmonizing). We thought Maria was convincing and the children were delightful to watch.

- Susan R.

Review: Great job to everyone in the cast! I have seen the show twice, and I wish it went on for longer than 7 weeks, so I could bring more of my friends. Great job to Magic Circle for this great production. Everything about this show was awesoke. The sets were great, especially.

Review: A very disappointing show. Not the worst I've seen at Magic Circle, but far from the best. I agree with some of the previous posters that the music was rushed. What a shame! I found the overall direction to be rather choppy, uneven, and overly planned. It just didn't ring true, natural, or realistic to me. While no one performer stood out as bad, other than the lovely girl playing Maria nobody stood out as very good either. I hope to see more of her in the future! Kudos to Maria. The children were pleasant to look at (very cute) and acted as well as one could expect at community theater productions. I would agree that overall the sets were better than most MC productions... though I still feel that they lack when compared to other theaters. I could not

recommend this show to others. Wait for the next MC production.

- Christy L.

Review: This performance was very entertaining and very well done. We thoroughly enjoyed it.

- B. Williams

Review: Ok, the Sound of Music isn't my favorite musical. That being said, this version was okay, just okay. I'm a big supporter of community theatre, so I always recommend seeing a play instead of watching TV. Don't have high expectations, remember, it is community theatre, not professional.

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