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audience reviews

JC Superstar, Davis Musical Theatre Company

Review: Wow. This show was disappointing to say the least. The hand held microphones were distracting and amplification did not always work. It seemed like DMTC regurgitates the same production that they did five years prior. The direction lacked vision and continuity. Honestly, I don't want to offend anyone, but these actors (in the three main roles) had no business performing such demanding roles. Since Mr. Isaacson clearly did not have the talent he needed, he should have changed the production to something with less intense need for actor/singers. DMTC survives on talent (certainly not on sets or artistic vision) and usually lucks out with one or two strong leads. This production lacks talent. I certainly would not recommend this production to anyone I care about. After several years, it is finally time to cancel my season tickets.

Review: I saw this show this weekend and thought it was great. Although the voices of the leads sounded a little tired, there were several moments I found myself saying "wow, that was awesome". The supporting cast (Herod, Simon, Pilate) were also outstanding. This show is definitely a must see!!!

Review: This was my first time seeing this production on an amateur stage and I was at the opening night show. Though there were a few technical difficulties with the vocal volume being a little too low to be well heard over the orchestra and one of the actors mic was cutting in and out; I still thought the show was good. The actors were engaged and passionate which I was not expecting for an amateur production. This play being a rock opera is not an easy one to do as some of the vocals are very difficult and although some of the actors had difficulties hitting all of the notes, I still enjoyed the play. The characters of Mary Magdalene and of Jesus were the 2 of the better voices in the production. The emotion and drama of the interaction between them was very palpable. Judas was a very VERY passionate actor, however the vocals were out of his league. Perhaps he will improve as he matures in the role. This interpretation portrayed Herod as less flamboyant than others, but he is still in stark contrast to the other characters with his loud costume and the brightly hued entourage. All in all I enjoyed the play and was impressed by the heartfelt portrayal. The choreography was splendid and well executed. Even with a few minor malfunctions of an errant staircase that refused to cooperate and stay put, the actors did a splendid job of ad lib without missing a beat. Well done.

Review: So many times I have seen an actor cast in a "dream role" only to be let down. This is not the case with David Holmes in Jesus Christ Superstar. He took the challenge of playing a "dream role" that is both vocally demanding and iconic. (not to commit blasphemy) Jeepers Creepers He's playing JESUS CHRIST. Although the performance I saw he lacked control of his notes during the more dramatic points in the show, his voice was well suited for the rock tenor role. The rest of the show had its highs and its lows. Herod and Herod's Song was a delight visually fun and Paul Fearn's Herod was a laugh riot. The orchestra was excellent but too spread out on the stage. I felt that the set was too simple and the lights were underwhelming for what should be a rock opera experience.

Review: I'm the oboist in the orchestra, so beware: this may accidentally be biased. However, I'm also fairly picky, so let's hope it balances out; besides, it means I've seen every performance and know the general outcome, despite little quirks that may happen each night. Nick Thompson, who plays Judas, has the raw emotion necessary to play the role. His acting is superb--the best acting in the show, I believe--and his death has actually brought me to tears several nights. The singing is not what most theatre-goers are used to, but we must remember: this is a rock show, and Judas's songs are specifically written for a rock singer. As such, he does an excellent job. From Jesus's first note, you can tell that David Holmes is an excellent singer. On the high, loud notes, he does waver off the pitch--sorry, David!--but these are notes with which most females have difficulty, and his quieter sections are beautiful in every note. Overall, splendid job. Emily Cannon-Brown (Mary Magdelene) has an absolutely lovely voice, and she has nailed her high note every night thus far. Her duet with Peter, played by Brennan Ballard, is so beautiful that I get tears in my eyes every performance. (By this point, my sheet music begins to shred from the floods.) Kudos to Brennan in that song, too, because the harmonies they sing blend so well. Other stand-outs in my opinion: Paul Fearn as King Herod. He is hilarious, he is incredibly talented, and the number he sings is an absolute delight (not to mention his flamboyantly fantastic fashions!) The dancers are also excellent in this number. Thank you, Rand Martin, for devising divine choreography. Tony Oslandil is a great serious actor, and his voice also is excellent. What makes me love this guy so much, though, unfortunately is completely missed by the audience: during the temple scene, he sings offstage to supplement the actors' voices onstage, and he also adds to the hubbub of the scene so amusingly that I nearly spit out my reed in laughter. I suppose this shouldn't really be reviewed, but let me tell you that this man is incredibly talented. Eimi Stokes (Simon) has great energy. She belts out her song in ways that make the audience (and the orchestra) want to dance and clap along. To be perfectly honest, I do not think that any of the acting, singing, dancing, choreography, direction, etc. can be considered a weak point of the show (though the oboe playing might be). Most of the problems with the show lie in the technology we are not used to having: the microphones have been going in and out at times. Overall, this has been a great show and I hope it will continue to be. However, if you have never seen Jesus Christ Superstar but you love musical theatre, please remember before you come in that this is a rock show. Expect rock. This musical was written for a different audience than the usual Rodgers and Hammerstein aficionados.

- Karina Summers

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