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audience reviews

The Sound of Music, Davis Musical Theatre Company

Review: I was pleasantly surprised when I attended DMTC's production of "The Sound of Music" this weekend, and found myself laughing, crying, worrying - but mostly, smiling. I have attended many productions put on by Davis Musical Theatre, and this is one of the best I have seen in several years. With a clearly hardworking cast, magnificent sets, and a full (wow!) orchestra - this production brought to life everything wonderful about this classic tale. Kay Hight is the PERFECT Maria! Throughout the show, she proves her range and ability as a performer - and as a young woman that has obviously taken to heart who Maria truly was. Hight is brilliant onstage, from the first notes of the title song, to her closing tears as she leaves her beloved Austria behind. Her voice soars in "I Have Confidence" (a great addition from the cinematic hit), and brings an unstoppable smile to your face with "My Favorite Things". Her interaction with the von Trapp children is honest, and you can feel her love for them in each and every scene. My personal favorite was her duet with Liesl (played by the charming Moriah Haworth), a reprise of "16 Going On 17". It is an ideal song for her beautiful voice, and she makes a simple song memorable with the sincerity she puts behind it. No wonder this star-on-the-rise already has a Best Actress Emmy under her belt!! Moriah is sweet as the lovestruck Liesl, and is truly (and LITERALLY - her brother plays Kurt!) an older sibling to her fellow von Trappians. In her scenes with Rolf (marvelously portrayed by Matthew Kohrt), she is just the right mix of innocent and playful. Kohrt has a strong voice, and is an excellent dancer! Their version of "16 Going on 17" was a little ballet, a little folk dance, and a lot of good choices. I wish I had seen more of Matthew! As Rolf-turned-Nazi he is believably fierce, and the final ultimatum in the Abbey makes you hold your breath. The unmissable mistake, is Giorgio Selvaggio as the Captain. As an audience member, you REALLY have to put your "theatre goggles" on to even remotely believe him as the father of seven kids. He is just too young. And it doesn't help that he is clearly uncomfortable with his own presence on stage. His voice is quite commanding, but almost too harshly with Maria at times. Perhaps a few dozen more shows under his belt (not to mention several aging years!) and he would've been ready for this role. But he gives it an honest try. Thankfully, he's got constant support from the best of both Hight and Emily Cannon-Brown as the widow Elsa while he's onstage. Emily is stunning in her costumes, and has a voice that shines beyond her sparkling smile. She brings notable undertones to all her acting, and creates a very real picture of a powerful woman figure. Also remarkable is Marguerite Morris as the Mother Abbess - what a voice! "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" is inspiring enough to send anyone back to face their fears. She is both understanding and duly questioning of Maria, and fits into the character with ease. And of course, the Von Trapp children! ALL of these well-cast kids do a splendid job in their roles. The standout voice comes from the small-but-mighty

William Chan as Kurt, who brings tears to Maria's (and my!) eyes, as he and the others prepare to leave their home. Rose Moylan is a very sweet Gretl, and Ani Carrera is an equally cute Marta. Kendyl Ito is a standout Brigitta, blissfully honest and amazingly competent on stage. She, too, has an excellent voice. Though they may not LOOK like the truest of blood-related families, their blend and balance makes you forget all else. This is definitely a highlight for DMTC - and one that should not be missed!

Review: Saw this on Sat., 3/14. Overall, it was good, but not great. Good points: the children and the nun were all excellent ensemble-wise, had great rapport and chemistry with one another. Beautiful costumes. Great orchestra. Bad points: DMTC really needs to mic their actors and also have overhead mics on the stage. It isn't possible for any theater anywhere to have perfect acoustics that would allow the singing to be perfectly heard, nor it is possible for any show to have all the singers with loud enough voices to carry. Some of the singers we could barely hear, specifically the actress who played Elsa. The acting was hit or miss, with Kay Hight giving an excellent acting performance. Again, the kids were all good actors, too. Herb Schultz was absolutely hilarious as Max and had so much great energy and character. Mother Superior was really good too. The actor who played George frowned too much and came across as angry, like he was trying to portray maturity (the actor was far too young for the character).

Review: Herb K. Schultz. Every time I see this guy's name in the program, I am very disappointed. My girlfriend has brought me to lots of productions at DMTC over the last few years, and I don't understand how he keeps getting leads. At his BEST, he makes me really uncomfortable. The children were wonderful, they clearly stole the show. They were a focused, talented group of kids. The woman playing Maria SOUNDED great. I won't pick on the guy playing Von Trapp, as far as I know, miscasting is the director's fault, not the actor's.

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