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audience reviews

Evita, Runaway Stage Productions (Broadway Stage)

Review: The actors and musicians sold it! I was completely captivated from beginning to end. Combine that with amazing costumes, wonderful voices, exciting choreography and special video effects and you have a winner. One more bonus--It's a steal at \$20.

Review: Wow! The combined talents of the Rodger McDonald, director; Joshua James, choreographer; Jesse Valerio, Music Director bring this opera to life! The vocals of the cast are beautiful. And a live orchestra! This community theatre is consistent in their quality of each and every show. So entertaining!! Thank you Runaway Stage!

Review: Another hit show at Runaway. Evita combines great music, exceptional dancing, and some history as well. This is very fast paced entertaining theatre. The show is so good and moves so swiftly, it is tempting to see it over and over again. Whats better then getting the big Broadway feel in a quaint sized theatre. Don't miss this version of Evita !!

Review: The production of Evita is a totally professional show with amazing voices and musicians. Runaway Stage Productions is the best bargain in the Sacramento area and you always get more than your money's worth. Jessie Valario, Music Director, Rodger McDonald, Director and Joshua James, choreographer bring the whole thing to life and make you want to see it again and again.

Review: Great production!! The cast is small, but very strong! Worth every penny

Review: Runaway Stage Production's staging of Evita continues its reputation as a leader in community theatre. The show is a particularly demanding one to present musically as it is devoid of dialogue and is entirely sung. Strong soloists, chorus and instrumentalists are needed and this show has them. Under the knowing and precise musical direction of Jesse Valerio the cast and musical ensemble (a particularly noteworthy feature of Runaway is its use of a full orchestra) negotiates the complex and rhythmically challenging score of Andrew Lloyd Webber with great energy, accuracy and dramatic involvement. It helps too that the leading characters are all well cast and finely balanced. Bevin Bell-Hall as Eva, Scott Woodard as Che and Roger McDonald (also doubling as stage director) give suburb performances and establish

themselves as true professionals. I was particularly taken with the beautiful voice of Brian Watson as Magaldi, the tango singer, but such is the excellence of this production that all involved are artists of high quality. My congratulations to Runaway for again assembling a talented group of people and providing Sacramento with a theatrical treasure.

Review: Evita is one of my favorite shows, and Runaway's production was decent, but lacked a fair amount of oomph for me. The orchestra was disappointing, and let me say that Runaway's orchestra has been consistently an excellent example of what community theatres can do with dedicated and talented musicians. So to see them perform in such a lackluster fashion, specifically tempo problems differing from what the onstage performers were expecting from their choreography, was very disappointing. I expect this is a blip in their record of high quality music, and hope the next show will be back up to their usual standards. The onstage performers are talented, no doubt. Both Eva and Che could sing their difficult parts very well, Juan Peron commanded the stage with a solid, booming voice, and the Mistress's "So What Happens Now" was a tender and heartfelt lament. I feel like Magaldi deserved more opportunity to shine than his role provided him, and would have liked to see him take more liberty with his signature song, but it had excellent delivery as it was. I feel like the relationship between Eva and Che was underdeveloped, specifically the source of Che's animosity towards Eva. Perhaps that is a flaw of the show itself, but it left me somewhat confused. The musical chairs act for "Art of the Possible" is classic, but it seemed a little childlike in the execution, and not really portraying the sinister nature of the situation. I did like the little twist at the end of it. The set is simple, almost nonexistent except for the staired platform in the back, the lighting is rather poor, but I saw they didn't have any designers on their staff. The show suffers, fortunately not fatally, from that. The video is a good idea, with pictures from the life of Juan and Eva, as well as some live video mixed in. It would have been better had the video camera in "Don't Cry For Me" not kept jerking around, distracting from the moment. Also, the pictures were not always coordinated together, sometimes just a half-second off from the others. That can be very distracting as well..... how difficult would it have been to pair the two back projectors together? In all, a good show, but missed the mark in several areas. Go see it if you get the chance.

Review: Runaway truly missed the mark with this production. Most of the stuff they do is decent, but Evita was horrible. This is probably the worst production of anything I have seen in Sacramento. The band was not good, the performers were awful (espically the actress playing Evita), and the lighting made it hard to see what was going on. If I could I would ask for my money back. Truly a horrible production. Do not go see this, save your \$20!

Review: The show was okay. Eva's lower register wasn't great, but her high belt was really nice. Che was great overall. My biggest issue was that the relationship between Che and Eva was not made very clear. The show was overall a bit hard to understand. Hilary Wells was the show's true standout performer. Her solo as the mistress was the best part of the show. Overall, okay, not great.

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