

Theatre Aurora presents Totally Scrooged: A Review



By Scott Johnston

People were openly booing at Theatre Aurora's latest play, but that was a good thing as it was the delightful Christmas pantomime ?Totally Scrooged.?

A pantomime is an interactive performance, where at times the players converse directly with the audience members, who in turn are encouraged to cheer for the heroes and boo at the villains.

As this is a take on the holiday classic ?A Christmas Carol?, the boos are directed at main character Ebenezer Scrooge.

Caroline Smith's slightly twisted and very amusing version of the classic tale is full of both modern and local references, and provides humour that can be enjoyed by both children and adults.

The show has many musical numbers consisting of familiar and catchy songs, some of which have revised lyrics to suit the story.

There is also a lot of enthusiastic choreography, including during the very impressive ?If I Should Ever Lose My Job?.

The story itself broadly follows Dickens' book and characters, with a Fairy guiding us along the way.

Set in Victorian England (or at times, maybe not) miserly Scrooge encounters the wonderfully portrayed ghosts of Jacob Marley, as well as those of the Past, Present and Future. Does he learn his lesson in the end, or being a pantomime, is there a twist? You'll have to go to find out.

Although the entire cast of 19 is wonderful, several stand out.

Carolynn Kent makes her version of Scrooge suitably boo-worthy.

Kent Hunter plays the long-suffering employee Bob Crachit, with David Haddad terrifically over-the-top as his hat-obsessed wife Euphoria.

David Pang has the most audience interaction as enthusiastic nephew Fred, Katie Tanton has fun as the Present Spirit and Abi Oliphant guides us along the story as the Fairy.

The rest of the cast are excellent actors and singers, especially as many play multiple roles.

Also impressive is musician Adine Mintz, who was onstage and performs not only on the keyboard, but sings and dances as well, through much of the production.

The impressive lighting, costumes and sets also helped to provide the right atmosphere.

With zany characters, detailed choreograph, zippy songs and a terrific cast bringing a fun script full of one-liners to life, 'Totally Scrooged' makes for a delightful way to start off the holiday season.

Evening performances of 'Totally Scrooged' continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, November 28 & 29, and December 4 & 5, with matinees on November 29 & 30, and December 6 & 7.

Tickets are available through the box office at 905-727-3669.