

Theatre Aurora's Spring Awakening: A Review



By Scott Johnston

Theatre Aurora's latest play, 'Spring Awakening', is not the sort of fare we're used to seeing at the Henderson Drive theatre. Considered a 'children's tragedy,' the play is an updated version of a German script that was banned throughout most of Europe in 1908.

Although modernized to a folk/rock musical by Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik in 2006, it still maintains its original serious and controversial themes.

The story is set in 1891 Germany, and follows the lives of several young men and women as they navigate the challenging road of adolescence, authority and the expectations of society.

Because of the scope of the issues the play tackles, there are a lot of sub-plots packed into it, meaning some characters and storylines may not get the attention they deserve.

Although some of the themes may make some viewers shift uncomfortably at times, the performances will more than make up for it. All of the thirteen cast members, most of them younger actors and actresses, do an excellent job with both the acting and singing. The musical numbers are varied, and wonderfully supported by the seven musicians.

The musicians are set up on a raised dais at the back of the stage, with the story taking place in front of them. This provides the audience the full effect of seeing the musicians and players performing together.

It's not often that a Theatre Aurora play comes with the disclaimer that it contains course language, mature content, adult situations and nudity. It was a bold choice of material, but director Sergio Calderon and his team have done a good job with it.

It will leave you with something to think about.

Evening performances of 'Spring Awakening' continue at Theatre Aurora, 150 Henderson Drive, December 1, 2 and 3.

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