

‘Something Rotten’ is something... special

Rose show features Shakespeare,
Nostradamus and writers on a mission

By Angela Hatcher

Take a big splashy musical, spike it with a generous goblet of hilarity, add an amazing mega-sized cast, throw in a boisterous and rowdy Shakespearian tale, and what do you come up with? “Something Rotten!” But this show is anything but that.

Perhaps it should be retitled, “Something Special, Indeed!” And something rotten doesn’t always have to be about eggs, but... This irresistible feast of uncontrollable giddiness is set in the 1590s, and with A-list Director/Musical Director Tim Nelson at the helm, we are guaranteed that there just isn’t anything antiquated or dated about it. As a matter of fact, theater nerds might test themselves to see how many contemporary musical references, inside jokes and shameless theatre gags are actually intertwined within the show itself.

he has to convince his starry-eyed, sensitive brother that this is their destiny although Nigel is getting pretty fed up with Nick’s crazy idea.

Nigel is head-over-heels in love with Portia (lovely Olivia Aniceto) and Nigel is convinced that he should write from his heart as opposed to the commercial frivolousness that his brother is in to.

Each cast member plays his or her role with animating flair and skill, and demonstrating exceptional vocals most especially are: Jeremy Kie Vance with his beautifully sensuous voice, Jeremy Phelen with his strong vocals, Chris Caputo who definitely knows how to entertain a crowd, Vincent Aniceto who sings with gusto and great fervor, Tawni Bridenball (as Bea), whose lovely soprano voice rings out beautifully, and Brennan Eckberg who takes his role as the king of pop seriously.

While donning some heavily Elizabethan costumes, the main characters and the ensemble perform captivating number after number and leading a full company in show-stopping tap-dancing sequences are some of choreographers Jennifer Simpson-Matthews’ and Diane Makas’ signature strong moves.

A trio of songbird minstrels, Catherine Dosier, Jillian Matthews and Collette Peters, gets the ball rolling, and with high energy, superb wit, flawless comedic timing and a whole lot of enthusiasm, the musical story begins. The two Bottom brothers, Nick (Jacob Phelen) and Nigel (Jeremy Kie Vance), have a job to do. They are writers at a creative impasse who must come up with a new play, and their nemesis is none other than William Shakespeare (Brennan Eckberg) himself.

Will is the leather-clad, bare chested rock star who has the town enraptured with his writings, or possibly it’s his “Elvisesque” magnetism. It’s hard to say, but Will, who is always stealing ideas, seems to “one up” the boys, and, out of desperation, they are determined to beat the Bard, or so it goes.

Nick secretly seeks out the local soothsayer, Nostradamus (Chris Caputo), in an attempt to find out what Shakespeare’s next hit will be and Nick learns that there is a new genre on the horizon. It’s called a MUSICAL. This is completely unheard of, but Nick goes with it, and now

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In addition, some other must mentions for their outstanding performances are: Tom Orr as Shylock, Randall J. Goddard as Lord Clapham, Dr. David Hubbard as Eyepatch Man/Sir Francis Bacon and Jeff Mempin as Master of the Justice.

There is a huge appetite for silliness and some seriously fun stuff in musical theater and the Rose Center Theater’s “Something Rotten!” is just that ticket.

Technical director/scenic and lighting design: Chris Caputo; costumes: Carole Zelinger; production manager and props: Sherre Titus.

The Rose Center Theater is at 14140 All American Way in Westminster. Phone: 714-793-1150, ext 1. E-mail: RoseCTBoxOffice@gmail.com. The show runs through July 20.



Photos by Ryan Salazar

Theater reviewer Angela Hatcher writes that “Something Rotten!” has a huge appetite for silliness, and gives the play, showing at the Rose Center Theater, a big thumbs up. Above and below are moments from a recent show.



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