

On Stage

Community Theater Reviews

By Mary Hembree

***Seussical* - Musicals at Richter Danbury**

Based on the works of Dr. Seuss

Music by Stephen Flaherty, Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens,

Book by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty,

Director/Choreographer Lauren Nicole Sherwood

I can't think of a better way to round out the summer than in the company of characters created by Dr. Seuss. *Seussical* is a bright, whimsical play that brought fun and laughter to the opening night audience of all ages.

Seussical is an amalgamation of stories from the books by Dr. Seuss including "Horton Hears A Who", "Horton Hatches The Egg", and "Gertrude McFuzz". *Seussical* debuted on Broadway in 2000 and after a brief run went into national tours for many years.

This is an enormous cast with over fifty actors and at times most of them are on stage singing and dancing. It would be a blur if not for the tight direction and choreography of Lauren Nicole Sherwood. Ms. Sherwood manages this complexity skillfully resulting in a seamless flow across the stage in every number.

Seussical is chock full of music and dance so the orchestra is key. Musical Director Zachary Kampler and his ten piece orchestra are superb in supporting the roller coaster ride of thirty upbeat, bouncy tunes.

With a cast this large it would be impossible to call out every performance but I will say from the smallest of parts and the smallest performers they all deserve applause.

The Cat in the Hat is our zany "master of ceremonies" and Robert Bria brings him to life in a comical, campy way. A fun, energetic performance!

Dani Assis is a loveable Horton the Elephant with a passionate voice that draws you into his gentle, caring heart.

With a voice that is larger than, well...he is, Jesse Goodman is impressive as Jo Jo.

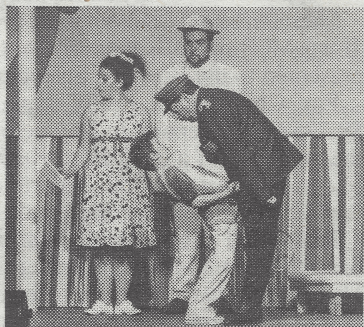
Carly Post (Gertrude McFuzz) and Cat Tron (Mayzie LaBird) are two feathered creatures with voices that belong on stage. Sour Kangaroo artfully played by Aaron-Noel Treppeda has a show stopper voice and her daughter Samantha Treppeda is terrific as Young Kangaroo.

Emma Lubbers (Thing 1) and Viktoria Wulff-Andersen (Thing 2) bring brightness to the shenanigans throughout the show and The Wickersham Brothers were fun to watch thanks to William Armstrong, Andre Grigorio and Stephen Moores.

The set design by Jake McGuire is everything you'd want in the land of Seuss - bright and colorful and the lighting design by Lauren Nicole Sherwood and Mike Campbell is perfect.

If you're looking for an evening of lighthearted fun, *Seussical* is a wonderful summer treat for the whole family.

***Seussical* at Musicals at Richter (100 Aunt Hack Road, Danbury) runs August 4th through August 12th, Friday and Saturday evenings under the stars beginning at 8:30 PM. Grounds open at 7:15 PM for picnicking before the show. Special reduced price on Thursdays August 3rd and August 10th. For prices and more information visit the website at www.musicalsatrichter.org or call 203-748-6873.**



General Genghis Kahn Schmitz (Mike Armstrong) sizes up Jojo (Jesse Goodman) as a new cadet while his parents (Steven Taliaferro and Shannon Grumet) look on. Photo by David Henningsen