

The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe - Review

By Grace Reid-Vensel
Prime Stage Teen Advisory Board

“Good people always need a good leader, and a good leader needs good people.” The stage adaptation of *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* takes audiences of all ages on an imaginative journey away from the theater and into C.S. Lewis’ epic land of Narnia. A story led and told by children, it is a deeply empowering tale for the young explorers in your life, showing them that their minds alone can create positive change and mend damaged societies.

The story begins with four siblings, Peter (Jackson Conforti), Susan (Annabel Tew), Edmund (Eammon McElfresh), and Lucy (Molly Frontz), and their exploration of a wardrobe in a spare room. Each child with a distinct and vibrant personality, everyone in the audience could identify with one of these characters. The four actors had a dynamic that led the audience to--not only root for them--but to cheer for them and laugh with them. Molly Frontz, who played the adventurous younger sibling, Lucy, carried such a wonderfully curious energy that proved Lucy to be a compassionate and fierce leader of the group. Lucy’s strength could not have existed without the guidance and love from her sister, Susan, played by Annabel Tew, who gave a mature performance, and a beautiful representation of sisterhood. The dynamic between Peter (Jackson Conforti) and Edmund (Eammon McElfresh) was hilarious and watching them bond and find strength within each other was a highlight of the show.

Their adventures in Narnia could not be complete without the many fantastic creatures they met along the way. Rachel Pfenningworth, who plays the White Witch, commanded the stage in a wonderfully evil performance. She and her sidekick, Dwarf, played by Matt Henderson added comedy to the show that left the audience wiping tears of laughter. Aslan, played by Michael Barnett, gave a gallant and kind performance. The quaint and quirky Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, played by Anthony Luisi and Caitlyn Young, were a wonderful addition to the show and shared an “old couple” dynamic that was both adorable and hilarious. I could not forget to mention the genuine and pure Tumnus, played by Andrew Lesnett, who was a highlight to many with his magnetic stage presence and energy.

The enchanting and engaging ensemble of actors, including Trevor Buda, Isaac Miller, Jill Buda, and Brooke Echnat were the backbone of the show and supported an atmosphere where the audience is empowered in their use of imagination. This atmosphere could not be complete without the physical design of the show. The fantastical set and lighting design by M.K. Hughes and Madeline Barber, respectively, heavily involved the actors and further represented the ensemble and collaboration of all cast members in the show in a wonderful way thanks to the director, Wayne Brinda.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe at Prime Stage Theatre will have the final weekend of performances on Friday, March 10th at 8 pm, Saturday, March 11th at 2:30 (sensory-inclusive) and at 8 pm, and Sunday, March 12th at 2:30 pm, which includes signed interpreted and audio described.

The Prime Stage Teen Advisory Board is supporting Prime Stage Theatre with a handmade photo card of Aslan, some Turkish delight, and the opportunity to write a note to a favorite cast or staff member for a donation of \$10 or more, while supplies last.

You won’t want to miss it!