

SHOWBUZZ

An Encore Theatre Company Production

March 2014

encoretheatre.org.au

PHANTASTIC!!!

REVIEW by Nick Tantaro, THE EXAMINER Monday 17 March

Perhaps the enduring success of the Andrew Lloyd Webber version of Gaston Leroux's classic novel about a love triangle can be attributed to the musical's ability to fill our senses with delight and surprises from awe-inspiring settings to a score that is proving to be timeless. I'm pleased to say that the Encore Theatre Company production of *The Phantom of the Opera* delivers the spectacle this show demands.

The Phantom is a tale of obsession, loneliness and loss ending in love and, perhaps, redemption. Such a gothic love story must be framed in the right atmosphere. The team responsible for lighting, costumes, set and sound design deserves high praise for creating a visual feast and establishing a clear mood for each scene. I was particularly struck by the clever use of simple set pieces and lighting to create a striking scene in a cemetery. Other memorable moments include the boat trip across a subterranean lake and the well-choreographed stage opera scenes. Musical Directors Matt Dudfield and Susie Heggie have given audiences a full, richly textured score performed by an impressive orchestra.

Ultimately, all these elements can only be truly effective when combined with strong characters to captivate and enthrall us. Fortunately, Director Belinda King has assembled a strong lead cast and staged them to maximise the bonds that exist between the various characters. It might have been opening night nerves but I did notice the occasional inconsistency in dramatic performance. Nonetheless, Dean Cocker as the tormented Phantom, Amelia Reynolds as his young protégée Christine and Matthew Garwood as Christine's valiant suitor Raoul carry the story through their amazing voices.

Other standout performances include Di Briffa as prima donna Carlotta and Ella Booth as Meg Giry. Special mention must be made of the opera house owners played by Paul Mannion and Ross Marsden, who add a touch of comic relief to the melodrama. This production works hard for its audience - The Phantom expects nothing less.

FINAL SHOWS!

Good seats still available to
all remaining performances
Must close 29 March



**Presentation
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Opposite Aurora Stadium

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ENGAGING SHOW

With just seconds to go before the curtain fell on the Preview performance of PHANTOM, cast member Jarrad Ennis was determined to re-write the show's script and provide a very different ending to the one which had been carefully rehearsed. Getting down on one knee with a ring in hand and in front of an audience of 600+, he asked fellow cast member, Sophie Fenton, to marry him. And her answer? Through astonished tears it was a very definite "YES!" Congratulations to you both from everyone at Encore!



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Follow the Yellow Brick Road

In 2014, get set to "follow the yellow brick road" and go "somewhere over the rainbow", as Launceston Church Grammar to present the immortal classic *The Wizard of Oz*.

Rehearsals have gathered momentum and it is commonplace to walk in to the school hall to see Munchkins going through their paces or the crows practising their harmonies. Jesse Wilkinson has the honour of playing the much loved character Dorothy (complete with ruby slippers and Toto), ably supported by Hamish Jetson (Lion), Jayden Johnson (Scarecrow), Flynn Miller (Tinman), Elie Roe Daniel (Glinda) and Holly Matson (Wicked Witch of the West).

It is being presented on Tuesday 8 April (student preview night) and then 9, 10 & 11 April, in the school hall on the Mowbray campus. Tickets can be purchased from the school website www.lcgs.tas.edu.au

Jesse Wilkinson (Dorothy), Jayden Johnson (Scarecrow), Hamish Jetson (Lion) and Flynn Miller (Tinman) take a break at rehearsal for LCGS' *The Wizard of Oz*.

*"We're off to see the wizard,
the wonderful wizard of Oz!"*

9, 10 & 11 April
LCGS School Hall
Mowbray Campus



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THE EXAMINER
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LAFM
89.3 Launceston's Best Mix

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WHAT'S ON in TASSIE?

**FRESH! 2014 Theatre North
Subscription Season**

God of Carnage Now playing until March 29
(Earl Arts Centre) TICKETS 6343 1085

The Phantom of the Opera Now playing until
29 March (Princess Theatre)

TICKET BOOKINGS

IN PERSON Princess Theatre Box Office,
57 Brisbane Street Launceston
ONLINE: theatrenorth.com.au
PHONE: 6323 3666

MORE INFO about ENCORE?

[facebook.com/encoretasmania](https://www.facebook.com/encoretasmania)
www.encoretheatre.org.au

PO Box 951 Launceston TAS 7250
encoretheatre@hotmail.com

CO-PRESIDENTS
Belinda King 0411 233 345
Jamie Hillard 0433 999 248

BEHIND THE SCENES

Crew member JESS WALKER has taken some stunning pictures from the wings of PHANTOM, and we'll be sharing some with you on our Facebook page. Here is a preview! Great work, Jess!



Encore
Theatre Company

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michael flaherty
pty ltd



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intelligent, innovative, inspired.