

Globe's on the right path with The 39 Steps

BY JOE COUTURE, LEADER-POST JANUARY 27, 2012

THE 39 STEPS

Globe Theatre Until Feb. 12

The 39 Steps is a fun production that exemplifies the magic of theatre.

The current main stage show at Regina's Globe Theatre, which runs until Feb. 12, is full of creative storytelling, with no shortage of self-aware humour.

Perhaps most notable are the jobs done by Gareth Potter and Randy Hughson - those two are charged with portraying the vast majority of the characters in the play, and have some entertaining scenes that involve a lot of switching back and forth between roles, to great comedic effect.

The 39 Steps, which is adapted by Patrick Barlow from the novel by John Buchan and the movie of Alfred Hitchcock, is a spoofy spy thriller, and the many gags and action-intense scenes had the audience - during the well-attended preview night on Wednesday - laughing and clapping often.

The set and costume design (John Pennoyer), lighting (Louise Guinand) and sound (Daniel Maslany) were particularly impressive, and integral to most of the amusing moments of the show.

A phone that doesn't stop ringing when it should, windows that become doors, "extras" that miss their cues, a seemingly endless series of hats - in those ways and many more, the whole theatrical team conspires to tell the story and make it funny.

The cast of four is completed by David Leyshon, who plays the protagonist Richard Hannay, and Andrea Runge, who has three roles, including the female lead for the majority of the play, which runs for about two hours plus a 15minute intermission. Both Leyshon and Runge have Regina roots, having graduated from the University of Regina's fine arts program, and seem to be perfect choices for the roles they play in The 39 Steps.

All of the actors except Potter have been on the Globe's stage previously, but it has been a while since any of them have performed at the theatre. It's nice to see a strong cast who's not compromised primarily of faces recently familiar to the Globe, as that had seemed to be becoming a trend at the theatre with some of its latest shows.

Director Marti Maraden is new to Regina and the Globe with The 39 Steps, though her resume is long and has entries from much of the rest of Canada, including 18 seasons at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival.

If The 39 Steps is any indication, she will be an excellent addition as a teacher at the Globe's Conservatory program this summer.

The artistic team for the well-orchestrated and highly complex show also includes Kristen Holfeuer as assistant director, Kim Bujaczek as stage manager, Natasha Bean-Smith as assistant stage manager and Melanie Rogowski as apprentice stage manager.

The show is very accessible and people of most ages should be able to appreciate it.

With its talented cast, many memorable moments and very professional production, you can't go wrong checking out The 39 Steps and you certainly get your money's worth with two hours of solid theatrical shenanigans.

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