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What's this?

A story of two halves

Published Date: 12 August 2008

By THOM DIBDIN

Jekyll & Hyde The Musical, ***

Inverleith Church Hall, Ferry Road

EXCEPTIONAL vocal talent from the principals and well-drilled choreography from the chorus combine with a set which allows every member of the audience a good view of the stage, to ensure a memorable production of Jekyll & Hyde from Forth Children's Theatre.

Matthew Smith alternates in the title role with Cameron Dyer. Smith makes a capable Dr Jekyll, using the warmth and power in his lower register most effectively in his transformations to Mr Hyde. He is not as adequately equipped to deal with the demands of his upper register, but he ensures that the score is clearly projected.

This musical version of the RL Stevenson story focuses most strongly on the relationship between Jekyll/Hyde and prostitute Lucy Harris, after Jekyll fails in his attempts to persuade the Board of Governors at the hospital to let him carry out experiments on the nature of good and evil on patients.

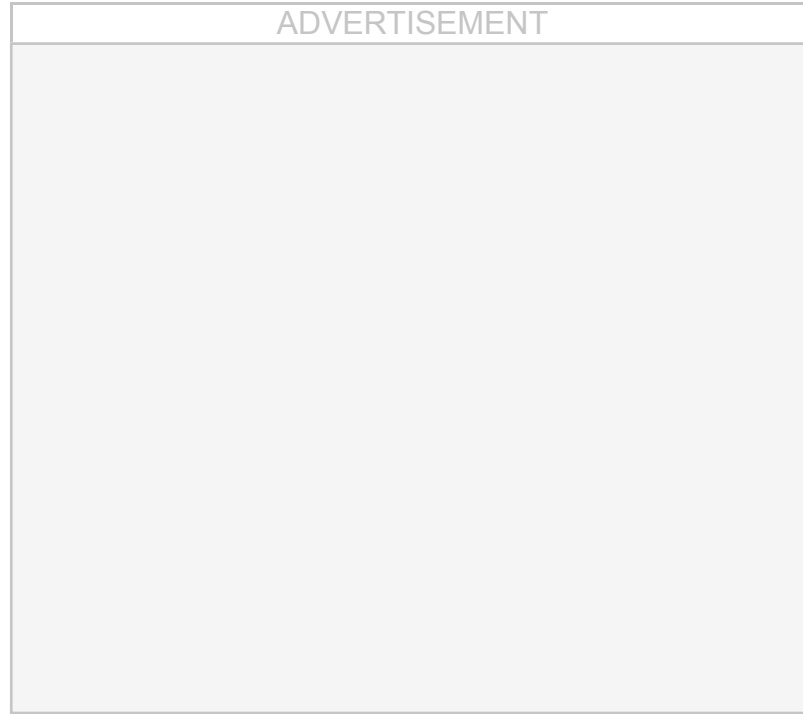
Hannah Scott, who sings Lucy, gets all the best tunes. She makes full use of a very good voice to ensure that they are given all the justice they deserve. Whether it is in the brothel scene, where she leads the chorus in Bring On The Men, or soloing in A New Life, she has the power, intonation and presence to leave you gasping for more.

In the chorus scenes the large ensemble make excellent use of the stage, bringing a sense of menace to the production and helping to keep the story going.

Although well executed, the production lacks depth. The problem stems from the subject material. In a depiction of the relationship between good and evil which is as frank as this, you simply cannot be coy about the adult material of the plot, which is simply not appropriate for a youth company.

So, while the chorus and principals are appealing and put in heartfelt performances, they are not in a position to do justice to the material they have been asked to perform.

Run ends Saturday



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