



0

More

Next Blog»

Create Blog Sign In

Boston Arts Review

Tuesday, April 1, 2014

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By Beverly Creasey RIPPED

I'm surprised Andrew Lloyd Webber hasn't written a musical about the legend of Jack the Ripper. With its Victorian sensibilities—and sensationalism, it would seem the natural successor to PHANTOM. Tell Webber not to bother. Steven Bergman and Christopher Michael DiGrazia's sardonic JACK THE RIPPER: THE WHITECHAPEL MUSICAL (playing through April 12th) brilliantly captures all the grisly details (and then some) of the 1888 London murders. The sweeping musical takes the insatiable press to task for hyping the mayhem just to sell papers. Their ever present cry of "Crime of the Century" is precisely what anchors the musical.

Bergman's gorgeous music soars over the lurid story with lush melodies and catchy tunes which lodge themselves in your brain. There's even a vaudeville turn to mock the stymied police inspector ("Smarter than you"). The Bergman/DiGrazia musical touches on the many theories of the Ripper's identity (that he was a surgeon, even that he was Queen Victoria's son!) and comes up with one more!

Director Joey DeMita's dark, brooding production doesn't stint on the raw aspects of life in the street. We see the prostitutes at work and the crimson gore when the Ripper disembowels his victims. (For my taste, it was a bit too explicit, yet another depiction of women being brutalized. Now that I think about it, the omnipresent, voyeuristic images of women being tortured and killed, which dominate our present day culture, probably got their start in the 19th century London press.)

DeMita and music director Ben Oehikers have a gifted group of singer/actors to tell the tale, with Matt Phillips leading the cast as Jack. You can see it on Phillips' face, as Jack slowly deteriorates into total madness. The savvy book gives Michael Levesque, as the inspector, demons of his own and Levesque deftly navigates his journey. Kyle W. Carlson, as the earnest doctor, impresses, as do Anne Marie Alvarez, Molly Gervis, Lori L'Italien and Katie Preisig as four of the Ripper's prey. The musical makes them rich, full characters, not just victims... and can they deliver a ballad!

Hollyann Marshall plays the fifth prostitute with such anguish that we wonder, as the inspector does, what she's hiding. Kathleen Comber, too, as the disdainful barmaid, gives her character oodles of spirit. Eric Rehm, Jermaine Golden and Cristhian Mancinas-Garcia are front and center and frightening as the headline hungry press.

DeMita also designed the ingenious, deceptively simple, vertical set

Blog Archive

▼ 2014 (35)

▼ April (8)

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey
POTENT PREC...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey THE
BIRDS A...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey The
Missing...

QUICK TAKE REVIEWS
By Beverly Creasey
Next Rep's...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey The
BEASTS ...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey BREAD
OF LI...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey POOR
LITTLE...

QUICK TAKE REVIEW By
Beverly Creasey
RIPPED

▶ March (11)

▶ February (7)

▶ January (9)

▶ 2013 (90)

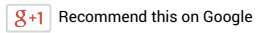
▶ 2012 (72)

▶ 2011 (71)

▶ 2010 (27)

of softly glowing, over-hanging windows and dim streetlights (eerily designed by P J Strachman) which counterpoint Bergman's sumptuous music and underscore the haunting, horrific story.

Posted by bac at 1:39 PM



[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Simple template. Template images by [luoman](#). Powered by [Blogger](#).