



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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THE WIZ

Hills Musical Company

Stirling Community Theatre
Until 15 May 2010

Review by Stephen Davenport

"The Wiz" is magic.

Sensible people will ease on down the road to the Stirling Community Theatre to catch this dapper piece of musical theatre. The parking is insufficient and the auditorium is filled with smoke but the production is splendid.

Superbly, Director Amanda Rowe and her fine ensemble bring to life the strange and wondrous creatures of the "Wizard of Oz" as Dorothy (Kate Engelfield) and her motley crew travel along the yellow brick road to the Emerald City.

The bright walls of the set and lighting allow egress and exits for the characters who are swathed in loud 70's patterns. Within in these walls (and other imaginative stage images) 'Oz' is presented like a "Saturday Night Fever" with disco balls, neon lights and even Elvis is in the building.

Rebecca Stanley's choreography is excellent – yet some of the vocals are merely adequate – and the dancers are full of panache.

The familiar story is told thoughtfully – and the songs are all appropriate – and the jokes so funny (the Munchkins are hilarious) that everyone should thoroughly enjoy the spectacle. Engelfield has verve and integrity as Dorothy, Mark Stefanoff has irresistible appeal - and loose limbs - as Scarecrow and Fahad Farooque is emotionally affecting as Tinman. Toto is played by a cute dog named Sally Bowles (you couldn't make it up) but the night belongs to those mad and comical Munchkins.

Overall, "The Wiz" is enchanting.