



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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PIPPIN – THE MUSICAL

South Coast Choral and Arts Society (SCCAS)

Victor Harbor Town Hall

Until October 22

Review by Janice Bailey

When a show is able to remove the audience from its humble surroundings and transport us to a magical place, it is no mean feat. The South Coast Choral and Arts Society perform their shows in the Victor Harbor Town Hall with a traditionally high stage and without the benefits and facilities of a theatre. This does not deter them from aiming for the high standard for which they have developed a well-earned reputation. Their current production of "Pippin" is yet another success. There is clearly a passion and love for creating theatre from all involved and it is this which allows the audience to inhabit the magical place they have created.

"Pippin" can be a difficult show to stage but this has not daunted first-time director, Robert Bell, so far best known for his acting ability. Bell has surrounded himself with a group who have little experience in directing but share his passion and love for theatre and all have a clear vision of what is needed to bring this intriguing show to life.

Jacqui Maynard has gathered a group of musicians who bring the quite difficult musical score of Stephen Schwartz to life and provide the support for the predominantly young cast. Rebecca Kemp's choreography is edgy and well executed by the whole cast. Lynne McGrail and Millie Doherty's costume design is excellent as is Millie's makeup design. The makeup in the ensemble numbers was as good as you would find on any stage.

Jack Doherty takes on the challenging role of Pippin. It is a difficult role as he has to be relatable to the audience and we have to like him even if we don't agree with his pursuit of the idea that there must be something more to life. Jack is at times vocally challenged by some of the more difficult numbers but his warmth and understanding of his role make up for this and we care what happens to him.

Kim Bell's performance as Berthe is a stand-out, especially in her number, "No Time at All". Emily-Jo Davidson has taken on the challenging role of the Leading Player, traditionally played by a male and originally played by Ben Vereen, a Bob Fosse protégée. Emily-Jo's physicality, dancing and vocal ability are more than equal to the role and her performance provides the link which keeps the story flowing.

The South Coast Choral and Arts Society should be justifiably proud of yet another successful production.