



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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THE LITTLE MERMAID JR

Pelican Productions

The Arts Theatre

Until 24 March 2019

Review by Talia Gaertner-Jones

Pelican Productions Junior shows have become some of my favourite youth productions. The casts are a joy to watch and you will always leave with a smile on your face. And this production of Disney's "A Little Mermaid Jr" is no different.

The show was double-cast with a large ensemble in each, and I was witness to the 'Flounders' cast opening night performance. The costumes for this production are definitely worth noting. Ariel and the other daughters of Triton all had glistening costumes with cleverly made mermaid tails that were very effectively utilised in Bec Schembri's choreography. Another stunning moment was created during Ariel Higgs' performance as Sebastian, the crab, in "Under the Sea". The ensemble filled the stage in a colourful and fun filled underwater scene. This was then repeated during "Kiss the Girl" when nature came to life around the stage. The ensemble was in sync, each member having their part to play.

Director Jen Frith has obviously worked closely with the entire cast on each one's character along with Kylie Green as Music Director. There wasn't a single cast member that wasn't in character for their time on stage. Zara Blight as Ariel was the perfect mix of curious and independent. Her delivery of "Part of Your World" was filled with wonder in both her expression and movement. Alex Hasler was a charming Prince Eric and his dance with Blight in "One Step Closer" was a lovely moment between the two characters. Emma Pool commanded the stage as Ursula in "Poor Unfortunate Souls" and her costume was stunning, towering over the stage with her octopus tentacles. As mentioned before Higgs as Sebastian, Eliza Brill Reed as Flounder and Neve Sargeant as Scuttle were outstanding as Ariel's sidekicks, each shining in their own way. Reed's solo in "She's in Love", along with all of Triton's Daughters was a delight! Liam Holland as King Triton was commanding yet caring as Ariel's father.

Compliments also needs to go to the ensemble members and crew members who were moving the set on and off the stage. Along with the lighting cues, scene changes were seamless and often set was brought on and off the stage without the audience even realising. This is also due in part to the cast members acting in the scene and keeping the audience engaged one hundred percent of the time. For a young group of performers this was really well done.