



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

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## CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

### Adelaide Youth Theatre

Influencers Theatre

Until 23 April

Review by Janice Bailey

I have been privileged to see several productions presented by Adelaide Youth Theatre which have been thoroughly entertaining with some amazing performances. This latest production of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" surpasses any I have seen so far – it is SUPERB! The production team – Director Ray Cullen, Assistant Director Georgia Broomhall, Choreographer Jayden Prelc, Assistant Choreographer Tayla McDougall, Music Directors Ben Francis and Serena Cann – have all done an incredible job of getting this quite complicated show to the stage and making it appear seamless.

As with all of AYT's shows there are two casts, enabling more of these young people to 'strut their stuff'. I saw the 'Candy' troupe with Nathan Stafford as Willy Wonka. This young man is personable and has the stage presence of someone with twice his experience. He looks good, sings well, dances like a dream and manages to capture the 'somewhat off centre' personality of the inimitable Willy Wonka. His performance doesn't falter and his energy lifts the performances of other cast members whenever he is on stage.

Ryan Tillman as Charlie Bucket conveys just the right amount of incredulity, energy and charm. Matt Monti does well as Grandpa and his voice is a delight. He and Ryan work as a team in their scenes together. Charlotte Lawrence makes a caring mother to Charlie and also displays a very pleasant singing voice.

The other 'winners' - Seb Cocks as Augustus and Holly Abbott as his mother, Kiara Linke as Veruca (suitably unlikeable), Deon Martino Williams as Mr Salt, Tina Farndale Mujema as Violet, Lorenza Ravidia as Mr Beauregarde, Harry Ince as Mike Teavee and Melanie Cowmeadow as Mrs Teavee, Maddock Mackenzie as Jerry, Eva Sanchez as Cherry and Kaila Barton as Mrs Green all take on their roles with energy and enthusiasm, fulfilling the theatrical tenet that there is no such thing as a 'small role.' Every person on the stage is important – and each of these performers understands this as they give it their 'all'. This includes the full ensemble without whom a show cannot happen.

Having the orchestra in the centre of the seating adds another element to the show as it is fascinating to watch how hard they work – in this case, under the baton of Ben Francis, whose endless talent and enthusiasm never ceases to amaze me.

The Influencers Theatre is enormous but creates an atmosphere that cannot be achieved in a smaller venue. Well done to this cast and to Adelaide Youth Theatre for yet again another extremely amazing and entertaining show.