



**David C. Nichols** shared a link.

June 9



Speaking of Bests, last Friday found [Bret et moi](#) venturing into Hollywood, where the tireless forces at [Good People Theater Company](#) are presenting a plus-perfect revival of Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones' deathless parable. Am neither exaggerating nor joking -- if [Amanda Dehnert's](#) dazzling [Trinity Rep](#) rethink showed how the ephemeral material could withstand and even benefit from expansive realization, this bare-bones, "traditional" take reminds anew of just how special "The Fantasticks" can be when cast with actors who can illuminate the archetypes and still stay spontaneous in the moment. [Matt Franta](#) and [Audrey Curd](#) are ideal as the Boy and the Girl -- he lighter of voice than some Matts yet innately correct, all callow, unstudied charm; she less twittery/fluttery than many a [Luisa](#) and blessedly unaffected in the emotional moments. [Christopher Karbo](#) has done [El Gallo](#) previously, but he doesn't coast on that -- started weeping 30 seconds into "Try to Remember" from the unforced simplicity of his delivery -- and the dads of [Matt Stevens](#) and [Michael P Wallot](#), a tad younger than usual, know exactly how far to push their quasi-vaudeville shtick. [Joey D'Auria's](#) Old Actor and [Corky Loupe's](#) Man Who Dies actually locate subtleties in their surefire show-stealing roles, and the Mute of [Alex Rikki Ogawa](#) sustains exactly the proper functionary attack. The ensemble's beautifully blended energies, the buoyant musical direction by the invaluable [Corey Hirsch](#) -- there's a harp, just saying -- and the unwavering respect for what makes the show so unique in content and form exhibited by [Lady Janet Miller's](#) quietly inspired direction cohere entirely, as no old-school production of this eternally remounted classic in my memory has done since [Sullivan Street](#) ever so long ago. A representative, spot-on rendering, charming, memorable, and finally cathartic, which fully justifies the publicity angle of "the original Fringe show." Under no circumstances should it be missed. Bravi a tutti, mille grazie, bis, and follow, follow, follow.... 