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review - Toxic Avenger Musical

**CRITIC'S PICK****TOXIC AVENGER THE MUSICAL**

Clever, hip, humorous, naughty, and delightfully entertaining!!! ***Toxic Avenger the Musical*** is all these and more. With book and lyrics by Joe DiPietro, music & lyrics by David Bryan, and musical direction by Corey Hirsch, this show is part of the 2016 Fringe Festival in Hollywood.

Credit must be given for the amount of work and labor of love with all these shows. Artists must move into any theatre, costumes and props in hand, and even change set pieces within 15 minutes, as one show finishes and the next begins.

This show is performed at the Sacred Fools Theatre in Hollywood. Fast paced direction by Janet Miller, who also choreographed the numbers, makes ***Toxic Avenger*** even more hilarious than expected. The cast of only five brilliant performers create a life that keeps moving quickly and never gets dull or tedious. The basic story is that of a nerd who is bullied and dumped into the toxic waste disposal only to emerge as a Toxic Avenger hero. He is played masterfully by Jared Reed. His love interest, a blind girl, wonderfully hilarious, is played by the talented Kim Dalton, who reminds us of Kristin Chenoweth... does she have singing chops!?! The rest of the cast is so great playing various parts throughout the piece. They are Shirley Anne Halton (pictured above), who plays the nerd's mother as well as the evil mayor very involved in the creation of the toxic dump. Her turn as a duet with her two characters is an absolute hoot. The two remaining actors listed in the program as White Dude and Black Dude are Danny Fetter and Wesley Tunison, who each show such versatility with all the characters they play. It seems that most of their time must be backstage changing costumes only to appear onstage as hysterical, over.the.top characters, and I don't want to spoil this for the reader, but the audience begins anxiously awaiting their next appearance once they leave the stage.

The songs are absolute fun with the likes of "Jersey Girl", "My Big French Boyfriend", "Thank God She's Blind", "Evil is Hot", and "A Brand New Day in New Jersey", to name but a few. The show is supported by a tremendous live 5 piece band. What a joy to see this truly alive, in every way, show that everyone seemed to enjoy so much!

'Tis a pity that Fringe shows this good only last for a limited run. Janet Miller and Good People Theatre have done it again!



5/5 stars

Reviewed by Stan Mazin

*I just want to add a note about Janet Miller and Good People Theatre. I was sick and unable to see this particular show, but know that everything Janet chooses has very special meaning to her. If she picked it, it's howlingly funny and fits perfectly into the time slot allowed for Fringe. She knows what works and how to give it all she can. Her company are all brave theatrical souls who exist to to make the theatre world go round. Bless them one and all! - Don Grigware*

