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SCHOOL OF MUSIC AND DANCE

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Spring Concert 2013

Sunday, May 19
3 p.m.

Silva Concert Hall, Hult Center

\$10 general

\$7 senior

\$5 student/youth

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THEATER BY ANNA GRACE

THE DOCTOR IS IN

The Actors Cabaret of Eugene reprises the family-friendly Seussical

The house is packed, and squirming, at the Actors Cabaret of Eugene. Kids are spilling in and out of their seats as parents and grandparents sip cocktails and coffee. Everyone is joyous and easy as the bright lights and brighter costumes of *Seussical* flood the stage in a musical tribute to the 20th century's greatest children's author.

Seussical runs like an out-of-control roller coaster through the lion's share of Dr. Theodore Geisel's works, with the Cat in the Hat in the driver's seat. Storylines from *Horton Hears a Who!*, *The Butter Battle Book* and "Miss Gertrude McFuzz" intersect with some cohesion while lines from every other Dr. Seuss classic flash past. The music is predictable and fun; the characters are super-sized. Shining through this script are the morals that only Seuss can preach without putting our teeth on edge: Stand up for the small, war is stupid, vanity will keep you from soaring, think freely and think big.

The condensation and conglomeration of the Seuss canon is hard for some to swallow, but the kids are loving it. Written by Tony-winners Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty with a little help from Eric Idle, the play is goofy and touching and child-friendly.

The large cast is so balanced that my own children were unable to pick out a favorite actor. Bryn Garland is natural as Jojo the Thinker. Youthful and energetic, Noah Schoenfeld plays the Cat in the Hat. Mark Van Beever makes a heck of a kindhearted Horton the Elephant. Chelyce Chambers is memorable as the Sour Kangaroo. Co-directed by Joe Zingo and Mark Van Beever, the play recreated many of the moments from the 2007 production, but the intimate space of the cabaret provides a more energetic experience than the Hult Center.

With a 7:30 pm start time, 2-hour run, kids' pricing on meals and matinees on both Saturdays and Sunday, *Seussical* is a play that is not only appropriate, but also manageable for small children. The cabaret seating is excellent for squirming, and the blackberry ice cream sundaes at intermission are particularly well received. (I was hoping they'd serve "Schlopp with a Cherry on Top.") In this production one can see ACE responding to audience requests for a family-oriented show, for a patron is a patron, no matter how small. ■

Seussical runs through June 8 at the Actors Cabaret of Eugene; \$16-\$41.95.



LAURA HOLDEN, CHELCYE CHAMBERS, NOAH SCHOENFELD AND TRACI HASH IN *SEUSSICAL*

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