

Review: High School Musical, York Light Youth by York Mix

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Review: **High School Musical, York Light Youth** Venue: **Joseph Rowntree Theatre, May 27, 2014**

York Light Youth put on an extremely energetic and enthusiastic performance of *High School Musical* at Joseph Rowntree Theatre.

The story is set in East High, a typical American high school, with geeks and jocks. Never the twain shall meet, that is until new student Gabriella arrives to upset the status quo.

There's a lot of humour in the story and the cast handled it really well. As with most Disney stories it has a prince (Troy, played by Christian Mortimer), a princess (Gabriella, played by Megan Forgan) and the wicked witch (Sharpay).

I know that's not quite how Disney wrote it, but just watch it and see.

Sharpay is jealous of Gabriella's influence amongst her classmates. She's actually bringing together the geeks and jocks, and threatening Sharpay's last remaining sphere of influence – the drama club.

The auditions for the autumn musical (pronounced Muse-*l*-cal throughout the show) are hilarious – more so when you know these kids can really sing. They do a fantastic impression of X Factor rejects, so you're actually cringing in your seat.

I really didn't like the character of Sharpay (Kelly Stocker). Kelly did an excellent job of portraying the bratty, spoiled heiress.

From twiddling her hair to the nasally whine, she had this character down pat. Her slightly younger and very long suffering twin Ryan (Jake Husband) changes sides on her.

He's a very effeminate character and Jake played the part to perfection. For me it was just like watching Ryan's character from the film.

Part of the story line is about not having to be who your clique says you should be, but to be the person you want to be.

Zeke (Conor Mellor) not only wants to be a chef but he has an unrequited crush on Sharpay. Neither of which fit with being a jock. He continues to try and woo her regardless, with hilarious results.

Whether it's the comical expressions or his great voice which is really suited to the rock style songs in the show I'm not sure, but he was one of the highlights of the evening for me.

Ms Darbus (Rosy Rowley) was another of my favourites. She came across as the ditzy and over dramatic drama teacher, constantly at loggerheads with the football coach.

Her exaggerated Shakespeare and her detention class of pretending to be an animal were brilliant.

Trust me, you've not seen anything until you've seen that interpretation of an earthworm, it was hilarious.

I'd recommend taking in the show – I have a feeling some of these youngsters are going to be stars of the future

It's a teen romance and there are some funny exchanges between wanna be couples, including Chad (Finn East) totally misunderstanding Taylor's (Georgia Chapman) French quote for German. Georgia has a beautiful voice when it can be heard in amongst the choruses.

The potential for disaster is apparent: a complicated dance routine with basketballs, and some very crowded choreography from the large cast on a small stage.

These youngsters handled it superbly. They're incredibly professional, have spent weeks rehearsing, and it shows.

As well as being a talented group of young performers, my lasting impression is of their energy and enthusiasm.

They literally bounce around the stage for most of the evening, huge grins on their faces, whooping and hollering when they're not singing their hearts out.

You could tell they were enjoying what they were doing and that was infectious, the audience loved it too.

The show runs until Saturday. It's a great family night out.

My daughter was humming the songs all the way home and thoroughly enjoyed it. I'd recommend taking in the show – I have a feeling some of these youngsters are going to be stars of the future.

Review: Disney's High School Musical, York Light Youth, Joseph Rowntree Theatre, York, by York Press

Thursday 29th May 2014 in [Theatre](#)

Review: Disney's High School Musical, York Light Youth, Joseph

YORK Light Youth, the fledgling youth wing of the York Light Opera Company, has gone all-American for its second show.

Adapted from the first of the Zac Efron and Vanessa Anne Hudgens Disney television films from 2006, High School Musical is as loud and bright as East High School's colours of red and yellow.

It has a cast to match, colourful, energetic and very clearly delighted to be working together under the direction of John Hall, who is assisted by regular choreographer Chloe Shipley, in charge of a company that never stands still.

So speedy is the show – and Michael Thompson's breezy musical direction – that Ethan-Ray Winteringham's scene-stealing cheeky radio announcer Jack Scott rushes his props off stage each time as the words still fly out of his mouth.

The story revolves around clashing cliques in the tradition of college musicals: the sports jocksof the Wildcats basketball team, under the thumb of Darren Shaw's Coach Bolton and the drama

pupils of Ms Darbus (a typically flamboyant Rosy Rowley).

Caught in the middle are Christian Mortimer's Troy Bolton, the basketball captain at odds with his coach father and awkwardly drawn to singing in the school musical, and Megan Forgan's Gabriella Montez, a bright transfer student with a talent for singing she is too shy to exploit..until this show was written for her.

Forgan is the stand-out performer, Mortimer has a voice for musicals and looks that had the girls in the front row screaming. Kelly Stocker relishes the spoilt school diva role of Sharpey and Finn East, Georgia Chapman and Jemima Rowley all catch the eye too.

Disney's High School Musical, York Light Youth, Joseph Rowntree Theatre, York