

Entertainment Review

Cinderella Musical Opens At The Crighton Theatre With Impressive Reviews

By Bob Nielsen

"Another op'nin, another show" may have been one of Cole Porter's finest contribution to his 1948 Broadway hit "Kiss Me Kate" (written in response to Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Oklahoma"), but in 2012 it would still be fresh and convey the excitement experienced by the cast and crew of the Stage Right of Texas production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Cinderella" in last Friday's Opening Night at Conroe's Creighton Theatre. The talented ensemble featuring Kathleen Baker as Cinderella, Louis Crespo, Jr. as Prince Christopher, and Leona Hoegsberg as the wicked stepmother suffered none of the dreaded opening night missteps that sometimes plagues limited engagement community theater productions. Ms. Baker follows in the footsteps of Julie Andrews, who appeared as Cinderella in the CBS television

premier in 1957 and Leslie Ann Warren in the later 1965 TV version (among others). The 1957 production was viewed by 100 million people and remains one of the most-watched events in television history.

With a superb supporting cast and crew the Stage Right opening night performance was outstanding. The orchestral accompaniment for a production written by the masters of musical theater, Rodgers & Hammerstein, who also gave us Oklahoma, Carousel, Sound of Music, State Fair, The King & I, South Pacific, as well as numerous television and film events, is exceptionally challenging for community theater. Every song (and sound effect for that matter) must be delivered with precise timing and in a venue like the Creighton, which has no live orchestra pit, the pre-production preparation by music director and pianist Caleb

Ackerman and conductor and synthesizer player Dave Englert becomes the heart of the production for the nineteen-member orchestra.

Debra Schultz directs the finely-tuned production with a deft hand and a fine example of committed community theater stagecraft completes the experience. Lighting and sound are both exceptional, as is the program, which is well-written, colorful and very readable. As locals know, the Creighton Theatre features very

comfortable -- even spacious -- seating. Cinderella is a production for the whole family. Part of its charm is familiarity -- we all know the story. But it's very entertaining for all to see how Rodgers & Hammerstein, Director Debra Schultz, and the various cast members interpret the familiar roles. Cinderella performances are on every Friday and Saturday until July 28th at 8 pm, with Sunday 2:00 p.m. matinees on July 22nd & 29th. Tickets are at reasonable family and group prices and

now available by calling Ticket Manager Kim Kelly daily in the theatre Box-office between 3:00 & 6:00 p.m. at: (936) 441-7469 - OR on line at: www.crightontheatre.org.