

EAST BAY TIMES

Curtain Calls: 'Matilda the Musical' opening Friday at Berkeley Playhouse

Play based on Roald Dahl's 1988 novel to feature young singers from Lamorinda Idol



photo courtesy of Lily Black

Veteran Lamorinda Idol performers Sofia Rose, from left, Keenan Moran, Miranda Klein and Henry Vanhouten will appear in the Berkeley Playhouse production of "Matilda the Musical," running Nov. 4 through Dec. 23 at Berkeley's Julia Morgan Theater. Lamorinda Idol alum Camden Greathouse, not pictured, is also in the show.

By **SALLY HOGARTY** | Columnist

October 29, 2022 at 5:00 a.m.

I've always admired the positive spirit and considerable talents of the young singers involved in Lamorinda Idol, a singing program sponsored by the Lamorinda Arts Council. As a judge or MC over the years, I've watched these young people evolve as performers, and now I have the pleasure of seeing five of them in the Berkeley Playhouse production of "Matilda the Musical."

Based on Roald Dahl's 1988 novel, the musical by Tim Minchin and Dennis Kelly will run from this coming Friday through Dec. 23 in the beautiful Julia Morgan Theater at 2640 College Ave. in Berkeley.

Given the long performance schedule, Berkeley Playhouse divides the younger performers into two casts — Miracle and Acrobat. Idol veterans Miranda Klein (Matilda), Sofia Rose (Nigel) and Camden Greathouse (Michael) are in the Miracle cast with Keenan Moran (Eric) and Henry Vanhouten (Michael) in the Acrobat cast.

"The Miracle Cast is named after the first song in the show called 'Miracle.' It's such a fun number about how the parents think all of us kids are miracles, but we know we're really mischievous," said Rose, a sophomore at Moraga's Campolindo High School.

Rose noted that both casts rehearse together with one cast writing down blocking and choreography while the other cast is doing it and then switching.

"I love playing Nigel. He's kind of crazy and fun to play," Rose said.

If you're not familiar with "Matilda," don't expect a sweet, syrupy kid's show. This one has lots of substance as it tells the story of a young English girl mistreated by her parents (Mark P. Robinson, Mary Kalita) and bullied by her school's headmistress, Miss Trunchbull (Gregory Lynch). Matilda, however, finds support from her teacher, Miss Honey (Chanel Tilghman). She also has a keen intelligence and psychokinetic powers that come in handy.

“I definitely don’t have parents like Matilda — just the opposite,” said Klein, a fifth-grader at Head Royce School in the Oakland hills. “And unfortunately, I don’t have her psychokinetic powers, but I do love playing this character. It’s hard work, and the songs hit some pretty high notes, but I’m surrounded by such amazing actors and I just love it so much.”

Dane Paul Andres is the director/choreographer with Camden Daly the vocal director. For tickets, call 510-845-8542 or go online to berkeleyplayhouse.org.