



arts reviews

The Sound Of Music | 4/5



http://www.todayonline.com/sites/default/files/styles/photo_gallery_image_lightbox/public/19618845_0.JPG?itok=bP7txAUt

The multi-national von Trapp family in The Sound Of Music. Photo: BASE Entertainment

The children of The Sound Of Music are just one of our favourite things

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SINGAPORE — In my youth, I had always imagined that I would one day play either Gretl or the Mother Abbess in an adaptation of The Sound Of Music, my favourite musical of all time.

But since I am at that awkward age where I am just a few years too old to play the five-year-old daughter of an

Austrian navy captain, and several decades too young to shriek “climb ev’ry mountain”, I had to be content with playing the role of a reviewer for the show on Sunday evening.

I hadn’t expected to enjoy the musical as much as I did, because I firmly believe that there will never be a better Maria than the one played by Julie Andrews in the 1965 film adaptation of The Sound Of Music, the one that also starred Christopher Plummer and won five Academy awards. Still, I was blown away by the actors who played the seven von Trapp children – some of whom are actually from Singapore. The session I watched featured Carmen Pretorius (Liesl), Sean Harrison (Friedrich), Abbie Machin (Louisa), Joshua Goh (Kurt), Felicity Bertram (Brigitta), Selma Hansen (Martha) and Jaime Chew (Gretl). Together, the children carried the show with their talent, liveliness and ease. They were wonderful singers and dancers, comfortable on stage and incredibly likeable. And, needless to say, little Jaime Chew, who makes a far better Gretl than I ever would have, stole the show.

In comparison, South African actress Bethany Dickson had the unenviable task of playing the protagonist Maria, a playful postulant who brings love, joy and music to the widowed Captain von Trapp and his seven children. Although Dickson wasn’t quite as dynamic or inspiring as her character required her to be; her clear, almost pristine voice made her a joy to listen to. I was also initially disappointed by Andre Schwartz’s lacklustre performance as Captain von Trapp, though he later redeemed himself with a moving rendition of Edelweiss.

There was nary a dull moment in the two-and-a-half-hour show, which was well-paced and packed with the show’s most memorable songs. I found myself singing silently along to songs like The Sound Of Music, Maria and Do-Re-Mi – tunes I believe many in the audience knew by heart. And after I got home that night, I dug out my old battered copy of The Sound Of Music, just to listen to those songs once again.

It will probably be many years before I will be able to put on a nun’s habit and brainstorm the various ways to solve a problem like Maria. But, hopefully, it will be before people figure out how to hold a moonbeam in their hands.
Hon Jing Yi

WHAT: The Sound Of Music

WHEN: Tuesdays to Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 2pm and 8pm, Sundays at noon and 6pm. From now till August 10.

WHERE: Grand Theatre, MasterCard Theatre at Marina Bay Sands

TICKETS: S\$65 to S\$195 from SISTIC.

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