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Reviews

Alice in One-Hit-Wonderland 2: Through The Looking Glass

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Reviewed By: [Jonas Schwartz](#) · Jul 26, 2008 · Los Angeles

The Troubadour Theater Company has mined comic gold again with their new musical, [Alice in One-Hit-Wonderland 2: Through The Looking Glass](#) at the Falcon Theater, where audiences are rumbling with uncontrolled laughter at joyful madness on-stage. A sequel to last year's hit, this show tackles Carroll's book, albeit with a different Alice than the author's -- the maid from *The Brady Bunch* (Beth Kennedy). Dismayed by her dead-end career slaving away for a demanding family with six kids and a dog named Tiger, she ends up pulled through a mirror to Wonderland, where the white and red queens promise she'll become royalty.

As with all of the troupe's shows, the story is irrelevant and the jokes are the thing. Even better, the cast's asides when their jokes fail (which is rare) are funnier than the original jokes. Moreover, nothing is sacred in a Troubie production. For example, Dorothy Gale has left Oz with an addiction to prescription drugs; the character Alice played by Ellen Burstyn in the movie *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, is in a vicious rivalry with her television spinoff character played by Linda Lavin; and Carroll himself is a hallucinogenic mushroom eater who wears a bra and goes to Fire Island with his lover Ned.

As for the One-Hit part: The Red Queen sings "Oh Alice, You took my tarts," to the tune of Toni Basil's novelty hit "Mickey," while A-Gnat Funicello, a puppet insect, sings its own version of the 1970's disco sensation "I Will Survive." These songs sound great in part because of Eric Heinly's excellent band, and choreographers Ameenah Kaplan and Christine Lakin work well within several eras. Designer Sharon McGunigle serves up a colorful display of costumes,



Matt Morgan, Beth Kennedy,
and Dan Waskom in
Alice in One-Hit-Wonderland 2
(© Cheryl Games)

particularly a newspaper suit worn by Andy Lopez, and the Queens' dresses that look like felt stacks of tires.

The cast is perfection. Renaissance man Matt Walker (who also directs these productions) is a hoot as Carroll, a sexually curious Mike Brady, and an amorous White Knight, while Kennedy evokes all the best qualities of Carol Burnett. As the constantly bickering Alices/Queens, Erin Matthews and Lisa Valenzuela, who has a powerhouse voice, play off each other wonderfully. Audrey Siegel displays sex appeal and comic timing as Wonder Woman and deadpan humor as the suicidal Alice from the novel *Go Ask Alice*.

Besides singing, dancing, acting, and comedy, The Troubies are masters at acrobatics and puppetry. Walker even plays a mean harmonica. I wouldn't be surprised if they could perform open heart surgery, but I'd be disappointed if they didn't keep entertaining us with shows as hilarious as this one.

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