

Doug Barron

From: Kim Vasquez [grayladyprods@gmail.com]
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To: Doug Barron
Subject: Plagued review and photo

Oscar Moore Review



It is twenty years since Cinderella (Gina Milo) lost her glass slipper and her heart to Prince Charming (Jim Sorensen) and is living the happily ever after life (or is she) when her overbearing mother-in-law the Queen (Brenda Braxton) decrees that the rebellious and inquisitive Dusty (Natalie Bradshaw) - daughter of Cindy and Charm - must in two days marry the old codger Herbert. Forget about love and inner goodness. It's the bank account that really matters in this wonderfully giddy production of "Plagued - a love story" which is part of the New York Musical Festival.

Director Samuel Buggeln and choreographer Danny Mefford keep the high spirits happily afloat throughout the two act musical where Cinderella hasn't yet learned how to be a princess. She is still very much in the cleaning up after everyone else mode and still loves her husband even though he is displaying some kinky traits in the bedroom in regard to her feet and the infamous glass slippers. His song "Put On Those Shoes" certainly brings this fairy tale right up to the here and now. It is hysterical.

As are many of the other songs written by Casey L. Filiaci (Music) and Vynnie Meli (Lyrics) who also wrote the very amusing book which is like a hip "Once Upon a Mattress" - while adding an honest and touching love connection that blossoms between Dusty and Scoop that adds a human touch and unexpected sincerity to the show.

One day, about half way into Act I - Scoop (Pierce Cravens) arrives and collapses at the Castle door - announcing that the Plague is coming. Brought up by the monks, they have sent him to warn the castle of the problem. Will they listen? Will Dusty marry Herbert? Or Scoop? Will Cindy find her wings and take flight? Will the Fairy God-Mother reappear?

Of course she does. Lorraine Serabian, makes a star entrance and gives a wildly comic performance managing to produce a small pumpkin for Dusty, explaining that she must do the work to achieve her goal.

With song titles like “Ever After is An Awful Long Time” “It’s In the Fleas” and “Not While I’m the Queen” you know you are in for a good time. But it is with the lovely “Wormwood and Lavender” and the touching “In My Own Skies” that the score truly amazes and surprises. The writers strike a great balance between zany and sincere. And it works.

All the members of the cast are terrific. And look terrific, outfitted in regal finery provided by Janell Berte. Dale Hensley as the Doctor and Julian Brightman as the Knave add nicely to the broad comedy.

“Plagued - a love story” is a modern day fairy tale for adults with sexual and some very serious undertones that add just the right magical touch.

Produced by the New York Musical Theatre Festival & Kim Vasquez/Gray Lady Entertainment.

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Kim Vasquez

Gray Lady Entertainment, Inc.

grayladyprods@gmail.com

347-528-8892

www.grayladyentertainment.com

