

## The Page and the Epistle

UNCATEGORIZED

# ARTS: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST REVIEW

JANUARY 27, 2020 | ANDREA WEYHING | 18 COMMENTS

By Andrea Weyhing '22

Who doesn't love Disney classics? Who doesn't have a favorite Disney character or Disney movie that they've watched, and may still watch, on repeat? Most fans of the classics would love to get closer to the story of their favorite film, which is why the Upper School Theater Department was so excited to perform last fall's musical, *Beauty and the Beast*.



This musical adaptation came out two years after the original animated movie was released in 1991. The production was written by Linda Woolverton, with music by Alan Menken and lyrics by Howard Ashman

and Tim Rice. It became the tenth-longest running Broadway show of all time, with 5,461 performances.

The musical is set in a narrow-minded French village that is home to Belle (Tania Ghandour '20), the story's beautiful, intelligent, and brave protagonist who has always felt out of place in the village. Her father is imprisoned in a mysterious enchanted castle, and when Belle's plan to rescue him goes awry, she is also imprisoned by the castle's master, the Beast (Sam Hedeman '20). As she learns more about the Beast, the story of his curse unfolds. Their love story eventually culminates in a suspenseful but happy ending.

When asked during rehearsals how the cast handled taking on their roles, Mrs. Kemmerer, the director, said, "They are, of course, basing their characters on the original production and Disney movie but are also bringing their own spin to them as well. Doing a show like *Beauty and the Beast* is a lot of fun but also requires a great deal of energy. When you're performing for an audience that truly is comprised of all ages, you have to consider ways you can reach and appeal to both young children as well as adults. This show demands a continuous level of 100% energy, and we are working to bring that in each rehearsal. While the characters are larger than life, we've also found it really important to focus on the story and message and bring out what is at the heart of this show. Belle is a strong young woman who wants more than what her current surroundings offer. The Beast and the Enchanted Objects desperately want to return to the lives they lived before. Each character has his/her own conflicts and struggles, which underly even the most comedic of scenes."

Mrs. Kemmerer also explained how the set and other technical aspects affected the show: "One of the biggest challenges of this show is the production side: the massive set (multiple settings: a castle, the woods, the town, Belle's house, Gaston's tavern). Navigating how to create this magical world AND allowing for smooth transitions in scene changes has been a major focus. Speaking of magic, it also has a few moments that require particular effects, such as the sorceresses' spell on the Prince at the beginning of the show and the transformation of the Beast at the end. We are striving to come up with creative solutions to make magic on stage through lighting, smoke, and some other tricks that we hope will surprise the audience. We also want to bring the excitement into the audience. For instance, we've built platforms that will run through the orchestra and connect to the middle aisles to allow characters to access the stage and enter from the audience as well. It's great fun to see it all come together."

Finally, Mrs. Kemmerer spoke about what the story of the musical means to her: "As a kid, *Beauty and the Beast* was always one of my favorite movies, so it's been great fun to return to this story and see how it works on stage. I love that it's a story that goes beyond the normal 'Disney princess.' Belle is a character that young and old can look to as a woman of strength, character and integrity. I'm eager to share this tale and hope that our audience will enjoy this show as much as we have enjoyed working on it."

Tania Ghandour spoke during a rehearsal break about playing Belle: “Being that the set is complicated with the leveling of the castle, practicing off stage was definitely a challenge since we had to use our imagination a lot. Now that we are on stage, all the pieces are beginning to fall into the right places as the set and blocking comes together. The actors playing Cogsworth, Lumiere, and the Wardrobe have cardboard boxes that they practice in so that they can become used to their limited abilities to move. That’s just an example of how significant our imagination is as we prepare.”

Sam Hedeman discussed how he has enjoyed exploring his role as the Beast and how it has helped him discover the world of this story outside of the iconic Disney movie: “I think that seeing a story that I grew up with and a story I love so much in a different way, and seeing the Beast (who we think of as the villain at the beginning but then know and love by the end) and really just putting myself in his shoes and trying to understand his pain and his struggle has been something super interesting and super difficult for me. Because it’s a hard role and I’ve really enjoyed that challenge of [figuring out] how this person, this beast, behaves after he has been trapped in the body he doesn’t want for so long. And I think it’s such a powerful story and [the musical] has so many really cool, really small moments, that weren’t included in the movie. And I think that’s been my favorite part: bringing the Beast to life.”

This focus on developing characters who were similar to their classic personas but also stood out through the actors’ personal choices and interpretations was part of what made this production a great one. Audiences enjoyed both the show and the way the theater department adapted this classic to create a unique experience on our own stage. The actors performed with an unparalleled devoutness that captivated the audience, and the crew made the show into a visual spectacle.

The winter play, Sophocles’ Greek tragedy, *Antigone*, opens January 30 in the Ward Center—starring Savannah Schiebel (Antigone), Aidan Eck (Creon), Jayson Williams (Haemon), Taryn King (Ismene), Tania Ghandour (Teireseas) and a spectacular chorus—so get your tickets now!

## 18 THOUGHTS ON “ARTS: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST REVIEW”



**Quincy**

MAY 25, 2022 AT 8:53 AM

Why is it I always really feel like you do?



**Maryanne**

JUNE 1, 2022 AT 5:21 AM

Yes! Finally someone writes about af.

**Juana**

JUNE 1, 2022 AT 1:09 PM

I don't even know how I ended up here, but I thought this post was good.

I don't know who you are but definitely you're going to a famous blogger if you aren't already ;  
) Cheers!

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**Latia**

JUNE 4, 2022 AT 9:15 AM

Thanks for sharing your thoughts. I really appreciate your efforts and I will be waiting for your further write ups thank you once again.

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**Latisha**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 12:47 PM

Good article. I absolutely love this site.

Continue the good work!

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**Liliana**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 12:53 PM

Having read this I thought it was extremely informative.  
I appreciate you spending some time and energy to  
put this content together. I once again find myself personally spending  
way too much time both reading and commenting. But so what, it was still worthwhile!

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**Kristine**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 1:33 PM

I do not know whether it's just me or if everyone else experiencing problems with your site.

It appears as if some of the written text  
on your posts are running off the screen. Can someone else please comment  
and let me know if this is happening to them as well?  
This may be a problem with my web browser because I've had this happen previously.  
Cheers

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**Christie**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 1:41 PM

Wow! This blog looks exactly like my old one! It's on a totally different topic but it has pretty much the same layout and design. Great choice of colors!

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**Rachelle**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 3:51 PM

excellent submit, very informative. I ponder why the opposite specialists of this sector do not realize this. You should continue your writing. I am sure, you've a huge readers' base already!

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**Nickolas**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 3:54 PM

Everyone loves what you guys tend to be up too. Such clever work and reporting! Keep up the amazing works guys I've incorporated you guys to my blogroll.

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**Mabel**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 4:08 PM

I'm not that much of a online reader to be honest but your blogs really nice, keep it up!

I'll go ahead and bookmark your site to come back in the future. All the best

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**Lavern**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 4:26 PM

Hi, I think your website might be having browser compatibility issues. When I look at your blog site in Ie, it looks fine but when opening in Internet Explorer, it has some overlapping. I just wanted to give you a quick heads up! Other than that, wonderful blog!

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**Eloise**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 4:39 PM

What i don't understand is in truth how you're now not really much more well-appreciated than you may be now.

You are so intelligent. You recognize therefore considerably relating to this matter, made me for my part imagine it from a lot of various angles. Its like women and men are not involved except it is one thing to accomplish with Girl gaga! Your personal stuffs outstanding. All the time care for it up!

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**Hai**

JULY 1, 2022 AT 5:18 PM

Very good blog you have here but I was wondering if you knew of any forums that cover the same topics talked about here?  
I'd really like to be a part of online community where I can get feed-back from other knowledgeable individuals that share the same interest.  
If you have any suggestions, please let me know.  
Thank you!

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**ipod nano**

JULY 27, 2022 AT 4:06 AM

This is one awesome post.Thanks Again. Really Great.

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**Containers For Sale**

AUGUST 14, 2022 AT 11:39 PM

Thank you for sharing indeed great looking !

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**Pinball Machines for sale**

AUGUST 15, 2022 AT 2:32 AM

A great post without any doubt.

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**샌즈카지노**

AUGUST 16, 2022 AT 12:57 AM

Wow, great post.Really looking forward to read more. Fantastic.

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