

THEATER REVIEWS: ALICE IN WONDERLAND 2: BEHIND THE LOOKING GLASS

Monday, July 28, 2008 - 6:00 pm

Cheryl Games



THEATER PICK ALICE IN WONDERLAND 2: BEHIND THE LOOKING GLASS Goofy, good-natured and outlandishly entertaining, this latest romp from director Matt Walker and his inspired ensemble plucks characters and themes from the Lewis Carroll classic and scrambles them with elements of contemporary pop culture into a satiric hodgepodge of — well — everything. Unlike last year's *A. in W.* parody, where the central character was an outsized look-alike for Carroll's blonde, white-pinafores child, this Alice (Beth Kennedy) resembles the Brady Bunch's maid, Alice Nelson. Unhappily unmarried, she's feeling down in the dumps when she's unexpectedly pitched through her bedroom mirror and into a series of screwball encounters. These involve her quest to become a queen and culminate in her battle with the Jabberwocky, a ludicrously giant puppet emblematic of her own fear (and, to the extent that the piece is directed at everyone's inner child, ours too). Otherwise, trying to encapsulate the hilarious non sequitur shenanigans is pretty much impossible. For me, side-splitting highlights included Alice's desperate efforts to administer CPR to a shattered Humpty Dumpty (Mike Sulprizio), an "Alice Anonymous" meeting attended by Alice Cooper (Jack Voorhies), Alice Kramden (Jennie Fahn) and TV series Alice (Lisa Valenzuela), and the monkeyshines surrounding Alice, the White Knight (Walker) and an inflatable rubber tube. Sharon McGunigle's costumes, Matt Scott's puppets and the snazzy choreography by Nadine Ellis, Ameenah Kaplan and Christine Lakin form part and parcel of the raucous fun. *Falcon Theatre, 4252 Riverside Drive, Burbank; in rep, call for schedule; thru Oct. 12. (818) 955-8101. A Troubadour Theatre Company production.* (Deborah Klugman)