

# ON STAGE LOS ANGELES

VISITORS

44688

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2016

## LITTLE DRUMMER BOWIE AT THE FALCON



Katie Kitani, Rick Batalla, Lisa Valenzuela, Joseph Leo Bwarie, Niles Rivers, Katie DeShan, Cloie Wyatt Taylor  
Photo by Sasha A. Venola

BLOG ARCHIVE

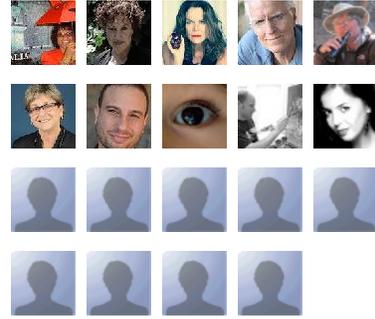
- ▼ 2016 (38)
  - ▼ December (1)
    - LITTLE DRUMMER BOWIE AT THE FALCON
  - ▶ November (2)
  - ▶ October (5)
  - ▶ September (3)
  - ▶ August (2)
  - ▶ July (3)
  - ▶ June (3)
  - ▶ May (2)
  - ▶ April (4)
  - ▶ March (5)
  - ▶ February (7)
  - ▶ January (1)
- ▶ 2015 (56)
- ▶ 2014 (44)
- ▶ 2013 (45)
- ▶ 2012 (30)
- ▶ 2011 (42)
- ▶ 2010 (52)
- ▶ 2009 (8)

INVISIBLE FOLLOWERS

Where have I been all these peoples' lives? Really? If Broadway ever came to Burbank, it's been there for years and I've just blithely driven by not understanding that more fun was being had in ninety minutes on the Falcon stage with this

bunch of actors, musicians and creators of some of the best stuff I've ever seen. To rave about the Troubadour Company is almost silly. Now and then we may read a 'rave' and know that it's just an opinion of another writer trying to sound like he knows what he's doing.. In fact that's what I try to do with ever review I write. Most of the time it's to be at least kind to whatever the production might have been that I've agreed to review. Of course there are many well done shows going up every night here in L.A. and some are worth a trip to the box office. Many times they are more than worthy efforts, but... a rave? A show that is so well done that it's undeniable and one would pay to see it again? That's a rave! Well. Garry Marshall's Falcon Theatre is pretty consistent with fine productions that I've reported here. But.. last night's Opening Night of LITTLE DRUMMER BOWIE conceived and presented by The Troubadour Theater Company, The Troubies, as they are known to their pals, is a hoot from the moment that the house lights dim and the live on stage band begins to play. We are greeted by Christopher Scott Murillo's simple, functional set and the band conducted by Eric Heinly on drums with Kevin McCourt, B.J. Johnson, Mike Abraham, Kirsten Edkins and amazing Ashley Jarmack on sax and clarinet. I mention the band because they are not just the vendors of the score, but share the energy of the production enjoying every moment as much as the hammified cast does.

#### Followers (19)



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SHEEHAN

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The exceptionally relaxed presentation turns on the mashup of NBC's holiday treat, **The Little Drummer Boy** with a sincere tribute to the great David Bowie. Essentially, this is the tale of the kid who could only give his talents to the Christ Child by playing his drum.. a rump pa pa pumm... turning on the story of Ziggy (Joseph Leo Bwarie) who strays from his mom and pop (whose names will be listed elsewhere because I got so into the show that I neglected to note who was whom in the cast of nine players who all played many, many parts. Each member of the cast reflects the talent of each of their company partners and they all stand out and are having as much of a good time as the audience. We meet Ali, the kid who is the catalyst for much of the action, Beth Kennedy, who is too cute for words.. (she's a guy!).. and then Ziggy and the mix of Bowie tunes tempered to fit the story of a drum (a major Tom!) and incorporating Bowie tunes into the wonderful trip of how shy Ziggy is not so sure he wants to become a star and then, how stardom changes him and then changes him again. We roll through sight gags and puns and audience interaction. Imagine a modern take on the arrival of the Three Kings! Arrive late if you'd like to be part of the show!

Timing and restarts and silliness all become an evening that ends in a Standing O leaving the audience, along with the cast, almost out of breath. At the beginning of the show the characters ARE introduced .. in a way... and they include along with Bwarie and Kennedy, the

following talented performers: Riccardo Berdini, Lisa Valenzuela, Rick Batalla, Katie DeShan, Niles Rivers, Katie Kitani and Cloie Wayatt Taylor along with Matt Walker's Voice from Above.

One liners and puns and great production numbers rival anything you'll see on Broadway and the tickets are not going for four figures. The 130 seat house is perfect for full enjoyment of an evening that won't soon be forgotten. Co-directed by Matt Walker and Bwarie, it's clear that everyone had some input. The respect and care that these Troubies have for one another creating this tight production shines from each actor one to another... and the band!

This is a high rave. It's so much fun.. and we all know how important a little fun is right this minute! Really! My directive? Get to the Falcon Theatre and experience this show! It's more than just good theatre. It's an *Experience* that will mean even more to Bowie fans who miss our icon who left us way too soon.

## **LITTLE DRUMMER BOWIE**

Falcon Theatre

4252 Riverside

Burbank, CA 91505

Through January 15, 2017

Tickets and Information:

818 955 8101

[www.falcontheatre.com](http://www.falcontheatre.com)

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