

Beauty and The Beast is a hit

Published on Nov 28, 2008

Amazing. Delightful. Great family entertainment.

Those are some of the comments from patrons on the opening weekend of Theatre Ancaster's production of *Beauty and The Beast*. Standing ovations greeted the performers.

"I've seen theatre in Drayton and Grand Bend, and some of it is good, very good, but this is just wonderful," said Sterling Ince, a first time visitor from St Thomas. "I can't believe the professional level reached here in Ancaster."

Mark Eisenberg, another first-time Theatre Ancaster audience member, and the man who refurbished the seating in the Theatre Auditorium for the Hamilton Wentworth Board of Education, was also surprised at the high quality of the show.

"I had no idea. It's absolutely delightful. Great family entertainment. And the leading lady has the voice of an angel."

The leading lady is young Alyssa Curto, who last year sang the part of Liesl in *The Sound of Music* for Theatre Ancaster. This year as Belle, she has won the hearts of youngsters with her beauty, smile, courage and voice.

"The children were lined up for her autograph after the matinee," explained Melanie Barlow, Theatre Ancaster's front-of-house manager, who arranged the autograph session for the children with Alyssa. "The children were thrilled. Alyssa's just like a real princess."

Sensitivity and courage

Accolades were also heaped on Kai Arnel, who plays the Beast with sensitivity and courage. He's matched by Dr. Jan Chithalen as Gaston, the self-centred primeval villain who schemes to get Belle's love. Gaston's sidekick, LeFou, played by newcomer Noah Hicks, is a comic find with a great voice and a stage presence to match the central characters.

Performances continue this weekend both tonight and tomorrow at 8 p. m. A matinee on Sunday at 2 p. m. completes the performances for this weekend. Walk in tickets are available.

Beauty and The Beast concludes with three performances next weekend at 8 on Friday and Saturday at 2 and 8 p. m.

Tickets can be reserved by calling 905-304-SHOW (7469), and personal selection of tickets can be made at the box office outside the Theatre Auditorium in the west wing foyer at Ancaster High School, 374 Jerseyville Rd. W. at Meadowbrook Monday to Friday from 6-8 p. m and two hours before each show begins on the weekends. Adults \$25. Seniors \$20. Students and children \$10. Visa and Master Card accepted.



Dr. Jan Chithalen sings about his favourite character, himself, while Noah Hicks as LeFou is weighed down by Gaston's heavy musket during a scene from *Beauty and The Beast*.