

“Sister Act” the Musical coming to the Zeiterion



“Sister Act” is at the “Z” for one performance only, Sunday, January 18, 2015 at 2pm.

By Armand Marchand, Zeiterion Theatre Correspondent

When the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center ushers in the New Year with “Sister Act” the musical, audiences will be interested to learn that the show comes with an amazing pedigree. It began as a comedy movie starring Whoopi Goldberg as Delores Van Cartier, a Reno lounge singer who inadvertently witnesses a mob slaying and seeks asylum in a convent to avoid detection by the mobsters who are out to “get” her. Delores’ night club and showbiz background come into complete comic conflict with the Catholic traditions and teachings of the Mother Superior, played to the hilt by Maggie Smith, veteran stage and screen actress. The motion picture went on to be one of the most popular screen comedies of all time, and secured Goldberg’s position as a major star.

In 2006 “Sister Act” was adapted for the stage as a musical

with a score composed By Alan Menken (Beauty and the Beast) and had a successful run at the Pasadena Playhouse. Soon after, Whoopi Goldberg decided to produce the musical for a London run, where the cast was headed by New York actress, Patina Miller. The show was a success and then opened at the Broadway Theatre a year later with Jerry Zaks (Little Shop of Horrors) assuming the position of director and Miller Repeating the role of Delores

The road company of "Sister Act" stars Kerissa Arrington, in her touring debut, as Delores, and Maggie Clennon Reberg as Mother Superior. Arrington who was born and raised in Galveston, Texas, refers to her starring role in "Sister Act" as a "blessing and a dream." The singer-actress is enjoying her first national tour and says that while Memphis was her favorite city to visit, the audience in Knoxville, Tennessee was the most responsive, bringing members of the cast to tears at the rapturous curtain call. Arrington, a career performer, has recently played Mimi in "Rent" and gives her "Sister Act" director Zaks high marks. When asked what she brings to the role of Delores, Arrington quickly responds, "I am myself, I'm a real person, I'm honest, and I give my all." If her candor and enthusiasm are an indication, we should all prepare ourselves for a great performance.

While Arrington is the leading lady, she acknowledges that her co-star, veteran actress Maggie Clennon Reberg as the Mother Superior, provides some of the more dramatic moments in this zany musical comedy. Reberg says her role as the "Alpha Nun" requires a challenging use of her acting chops. She has an impressive resume with many opera roles as well as musical theatre credits. While she was born in Michigan, a good portion of her career has taken her to Chicago, where she has performed for the Chicago Lyric Opera. In addition to Mother Superior in "Sister Act" she's played other nuns in "The Dialogues of the Carmelites" and "The Sound of Music" and jokingly refers to her multiple roles as her "habit habit."

Reberg returning to a more serious mood, refers to the second act which reveals “the human side of the woman under the habit when Delores (brings) a miracle to the convent.” She concludes by saying that “Sister Act” is about “love” – as good as it gets for a New Year message.

“Sister Act” is at the Zeiterion Performing Arts Center, New Bedford for one performance only, Sunday, January 18, 2015 at 2pm. For tickets call 508-994-2900, visit the box office or go on line to Zeiterion.org.
