

Matilda The Musical

From Book to Movie to Theatre: Why is this Roald Dahl classic still being remade?

Is there anything more incredibly magical and exciting than going to the theatre? What's better than seeing your classic, well-loved children's book come alive with song and dance on stage before your very own eyes? The Royal Shakespeare company's production of *Matilda* has unsurprisingly been running for over a decade, with every show a roaring success.

the live performance of *Matilda* leaves you only wanting more.



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Experienced director Matthew Warchus had a vision for his Live show. Alongside writer Dennis Kelly and gifted lyricist Tim Minchin, the trio aimed to create a show for all ages. Whether it be a first-time watch for the younger audience, or for the veteran *Matilda* viewer that can recite every line, the musical brings joy to all.

‘Unique and unforgettable’

- Rolling Stone

Thus, securing its lengthy stay and comfortable position as one of the most popular West End shows in recent years,



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Watching the beloved story that we all know, and ultimately love, unfold in a different form gives it a breath of fresh air. Drastically different from the book and the film adaptation, the musical numbers and live performance brings *Matilda* back to life.

What I believe is important about this production, and the reason for its success, is its ability to teleport anyone back into their nostalgic period of childhood - where

Madeline De'Cort, Nottingham Trent University

you can become a kid again, just for the night, and fully immerse yourself into the characters, songs, and story, much like we did when we read the book for the first time.

Matilda not only withholds this nostalgic, personal connection with us, but the production has also allowed for wider social representation on stage. Whilst Matthew Warchus intended to keep the production as close to the classic original characterisation as possible, he still desired to allow more opportunities for diversity. He sought representation, to branch out to wider audiences and represent individuals who had been neglected within the previous adaptations of the story.

Heidi Williams is one of four girls rotating the lead of Matilda that is being shown in The Cambridge Theatre in London. As a

young black girl, playing the lead role in this adaptation is crucial in the celebration of diversity and difference. Especially as she holds the role of strong-willed Matilda, sustaining amazing inner strength and power. This confidence and sense of self-worth can be seen through her want for a better life for herself, despite her unfortunate upbringing.

‘Gleefully Nasty and Ingenious’

- The Guardian

The range of cultural representation is amazing for younger audiences to see, with a young girl like Matilda as our



unlikely hero. She carries the message that despite your appearance or age, you must be resilient in having your voice heard and to be accepted in society. Arguably, the casting choices for *Matilda* is yet another reason for its ongoing success amongst critics and the general public.

The show allows for the audience, young or old, to transport themselves to a world of fun, mischief, and imagination, keeping the inner child alive within all of us. The message strikes us every time - to find your inner strength, to stand up for yourself, and always do what's right. This important message is displayed throughout, just like Roald Dahl's original book, which continues to resonate with people. It is what brings audiences back year after year, this idea of the audience immersing into a world of childlike nostalgia. This, along with the adaptation of cultural change, is the reason for its consistent success in theatre, and is also why I believe it is well worth a watch!

Matilda The Musical is currently showing from 16th of September 2021 to the 26th of May 2024 at The Cambridge Theatre in London. Tickets start from £24, and the production is 2 hours 40 minutes long with one intermission in the middle. It is recommended from 6 years and above, making it a perfect day out for the whole family.



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