

# ‘Shrek’ a rousing, amusing show kids will love



Perry Sook as Shrek and Whitney Winfield as Princess Fiona display a great rapport on stage with powerful voices.

**By Betsy Price**  
The News Journal

Awww, a wee Shrek and a wee Fiona launch “Shrek: The Musical” right into a rousing and often affecting show that families will love.

The energetic top-notch cast – stars and chorus alike – give it their all in the fast-paced show based on the first Dreamworks movie starring Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz and Eddie Murphy, which was based on the book by William Steig.

For kids, the strength of the show is that it seems to follow the movie so closely, fans could recite the lines and duplicate the gaseous body emissions, plus they get some amusing backstories, usually told in song. One includes

Lord Farquaad being the son of a dwarf.

Adults will get kick a get out of the many theater references, including scenes that give a nod to “Wicked,” “The Lion King” and “West Side Story,” as well as pop-culture-laced quips that include taking “a right at Brew Ha Ha” on the way to town, the song “Call Me Maybe” and Lord Farquaad’s horse being named “General Petraeus.”

But ultimately, despite the cast’s commitment on stage, the show itself is kind of thin and doesn’t really take the audience anywhere new. By the end, the discerning theatergoer might decide the 21 musical numbers are a chain of glittering costume beads to be care-

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# Shrek: Actors light up the stage

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lessly tossed on the dresser top.

Even so, Perry Sook as Shrek, Whitney Winfield as Fiona and Jeremy Gaston are a striking trio, playing beautifully off each other. They seem to enjoy each other and the show; their time together comes off as natural and fun and most of the powerful musical moments come when they're singing together.

Sook commands the stage as Shrek, moving easily in the heavy make-up and 50-pound costume he needs to turn into the ogre. Winfield brings a huge, bright presence to the show, and her big voice easily matches both Sook and Gaston, who manages an easy presence that's a bit of a nod to Eddie Murphy, but

## IF YOU GO

**WHAT:** "Shrek: The Musical"

**WHERE:** DuPont Theatre, 1007 N. Market St., Wilmington

**WHEN:** 7:30 p.m. Thu.; 8 p.m. Fri. and Sat.; 2 p.m. matinees Wed., Sat. and Sun.

**TICKETS:** \$35-\$85

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** 656-4401; [www.duponttheatre.com](http://www.duponttheatre.com)

mostly his own.

For anyone who might not know the story – Shrek agrees to save Fiona from a tower where she's imprisoned by a dragon and bring her to Lord Farquaad, in exchange for a deed to his property, which has

been invaded by all kinds of fairytale characters banned from Duloc by Farquaad.

As Farquaad, Christian Marriner essentially steals every scene he's in, partly because he's got just the right mix of farce and hubris, and partly because the show makes no pretense of showing the audience exactly how Marriner is playing the pint-sized despot – on his knees, and it's fascinating.

One of the most fun things about "Shrek" is that the show often showcases the talent of its chorus, who play multiple roles as those fairytale characters, villagers, soldiers and the people of Duloc. Their strong singing and dancing is a joy.

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