

STARRING ALAINA MILLS,
CHELSEA PATTISON, PETER
HOLLOWAY AND MELANIE
NIEMANN. DIRECTED BY
MIRLA CRISTE. BY MUSIC
THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE.

Peter Pan

Childhood dreams of soaring through the clouds, running free without parents and battling pirates all come streaming back in Music Theatre Louisville's production of "Peter Pan."

The careless breezes that flow through the newly renovated Iroquois Amphitheater, along with the sleepy blink of lightning bugs, add to the whimsical mood of the 100-year-old story about a boy who wishes to stay young forever.

Though remaking a fairy tale that many already know can be a challenge, director Mirla Criste manages to creatively tweak aspects of the story, while staying true to the original play by James M. Barrie.

In this vein, Wendy (Alaina Mills) is adorned in the pink, ruffled nightgown that has become synonymous with her character,

while Tiger Lily (Melanie Niemann) is portrayed differently than usual. She is no longer an American Indian, but is part of a more ambiguous tribe that shares an Edward Scissorhands-bouffant hairdo, as well as hooded, darkly made-up eyes.

The song and dance numbers, which are accompanied by an orchestra, are a vibrant addition to the story, and the large, colorful sets help bring it to life, along with a beautiful backdrop that changes from a star-sprinkled night sky to a bright orange-hued sky.

Children will be delighted by the flights of Peter Pan (Chelsea Pattison) and the other kids (thanks to happy thoughts and harnesses) and will eat up the silly hijinks of a somewhat softer-than-usual Captain Hook (Peter Holloway) and his crew. The fact that the vil-

lains are lovable helped placate the swarms of children in the audience, and the two 15-minute intermissions kept them from becoming overly squirmy.

However, "Peter Pan" should not be mistaken for a story that only children will enjoy, as many of the underlying themes relating to gender, family, love, childhood and the nature of life itself will strike a chord with adults. Whichever way you look at the story, the nostalgia of the old fairy tale makes for a fun night out, especially in the casual atmosphere of the open-air theater.

"Peter Pan" continues through June 27. For tickets or more info, call 561-1003.

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