

Les Misérables Remastered

SO GLAD Megan could get tickets! Back in June, I learned that the 25 Anniversary of *Les Misérables* was making its way to the Stranahan. I did not forget but with all the eventful events surrounding my family the past few months, it kind of took a back seat. However, Megan was able to score us a trio of seats for tonight's show. I was willing to drive which at times met with some rather humorous moments from young Miss Clark (**"OMG WE ARE GOING TO DIE!"**). Even walking to the theatre parking lot after the show. MWHAHHAHAHA!

We made excellent time even with my capable driving. We got a bit of dinner with an hour to spare before curtain. The show was even more spectacular than I remember. I last saw a high school production about 3-4 years ago and saw a professional production (it had to be) about 10 years ago at the Stranahan. There were several changes made in the staging, scenery, and lyrics which all combined to enhance what was already one of my favorite shows.

Immediately noticeable was the changing of the backdrop pre-show. It had previously been a drawing of the young Cosette with her broom. It has been replaced by a Victor Hugo painting. I did not know that the author of the original novel as well as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* was also an artist. Gone also were the captions indicating the time and location of the story. These were not needed as the action just moved at a steady clip.

The revolving platform that had previously been used in productions was also noticeably absent. Instead, different levels of perspective were used to heighten the drama. Marius sang the beginning of "A Heart Full of Love" to the mature Cosette from the ground while his love stood on her balcony (think Tony and Maria or Romeo and Juliet). Later, the audience could "see" Valjean carry the wounded Marius through

the different sections of the sewers. Finally, Javert falls back and is enveloped by the water as he falls to his death. A brilliant re-imagining of a classic theatrical event!

After the show, the three of us had our picture taken with M. and Mme. Thénardier (who as usual stole the show). We lined up and (also as Usual) I was relegated to the back but got right between the charming couple. As you may recall, I performed "Master of the House" with Carol at a recital last spring. How I would relish the opportunity to play the role in a full scale production. I will post the picture as soon as Carol makes a copy.

The drive home was fun as well. After stopping at a gas station before getting on the turnpike for a drink (again after Megan made her patented quip about dying), we popped in the new LIVE anniversary recording. As we approached our drop off point I heard **"TURN LEFT! TURN LEFT! NO, KEEP GOING! KEEP GOING!"** HAHHAH! Sorry...at least I did not mention how many times the lovely ladies had to visit the powder room ☹ (oops)

I also learned for future reference that a high school classmate of mine lives a short distance away from the theatre. A handy tidbit for those times when we have to go dashing through the snow like a few years ago on Good Friday.

Thanks Megan and Carol! ☹

Now that I know how to put accents above letters in words like *Misérables* and Thénardier, I cannot stop myself. Such a fantastic show! A silver screen version of the musical *Les Misérables* is soon to start filming with Hugh Jackman as Valjean, Russell Crowe as Javert, Anne Hathaway as Fantine, Geoffrey Rush as Thénardier, and Helena Bonham Carter as Mme. Thénardier. Set for a 2012 release. If they ruin the show with the translation to the screen, I will not be happy!