

See it twice, see it twice:

Jacob Two-Two is fun, fun

Leora Aisenberg

"Child Power" is the message of *Jacob Two-Two*, but it is also the medium. Nine year-old Torquill Campbell's performance (as Jacob) has enough power to light up the stage.

Young Peoples' Theatre's latest production, adapted from Mordechai Richler's *Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang*, is a mixture of quotidian truth and musical fantasy. The end result is a triumphant celebration of kiddiedom.

Jacob is frustrated because no one pays attention to anyone who's only "two plus two plus two" years old. His habit of saying everything twice, developed out of necessity, gets him into trouble with "big people". And big people, at least those who exist in Jacob's imagination, know what to do with the "little creeps" who forget to put down the toilet seat.

Campbell poignantly captures the essence of what it means to be a child in an adult world. Jacob Two-Two's plight as a social outcast is shared by lawyer Louis Loser (hilariously played by Les Carlson), as well as by a throng of youngsters who have been sentenced to imprisonment on Slimer's Isle. In Children's Prison, cold showers, nightmares and ironies abound.

Ironies, such as the fact that the heinous Hooded Fang (George Buza) is really a warmhearted wrestler. Or the discovery that the kids can outwit even the most Machiavellian villain. The grown-ups do not escape unnoticed. That is the point to *Child Power*, kids win out over the unfair adult world.

The songs in this musical adaptation are enjoyable, even though a few of the voices could not soar above the orchestra. A

problem that seems inherent to YPT. The dialogue is crisp and unpretentious, rarely crossing the fine line between sugar and schmaltz.

Eight year-old Eric identified with the protagonist and declared *Child Power* to be "a very good idea". Theatre buff Ryan, 4, liked the scary scenery and special effects, noting that it "was the best movie (play) I ever saw."

Jacob Two-Two reminds adults that many of us are guilty of overlooking the awesome potential of children. Jacob Two-Two, the "little kid", reminds his peers that with a little self-esteem they can rise to the heights of super-heroes.

YPT's *Jacob Two-Two* is scheduled to run until January 24. Admission is \$9.00 for adults, \$5.00 for students and seniors.

In his words: "Don't miss it, don't miss it."



No kid gloves for Jacob Two-Two. The play, starring Torquill Campbell, is currently running at the YPT.

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