

BWW Reviews: LOOKINGGLASS ALICE at The Arsht Center

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"Off with her head", screams the Red Queen. "Off with her head." And Alice dodges another dire threat as she scrambles, dances and flies through Wonderland in her quest to become a Queen.

There are caterpillars, hedgehogs, a white rabbit and a mad hatter, a Chesire cat, white knight, white queen and a heart stopping Humpty Dumpty all joyfully jiving [Lewis Carroll](#)'s classic words as Chicago's Lookingglass Theatre and The Actors Gymnasium join the Arsht Center in an entertainingly casual retelling of Alice's adventures.

Just five excellent actors/gymnasts live behind the looking glass in a world of imagination and wild fun. Improv is a not an infrequent factor. Excellent.

The Ziff Ballet Opera House stage seats 450, entry is through the house and onto the stage through a giant framed mirror, some of the audience going left to the Alice Section and the others right to the Lewis section. Once inside the audience faces a black curtain in front of which is a golden mantelpiece and fireplace. Over it hangs a large mirror. Seated beside the fire is Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, who wrote as [Lewis Carroll](#). He stands and peers into the mirror and sees not his reflection but Alice, mimicking his every move.

Lights flash and booms boom and the black curtain disappears revealing the playing area and the audience in the opposite section. Alice is suspended in mid air above a hoop, the rabbit hole. She descends to Wonderland and the Red Queen is screaming, and we're immersed in the fantasy. Jabberwocky? Oh, yes.

And the stars? Well, there's [Lindsey Noel Whiting](#) as Alice. An entrancing young lady who is a fearless artist on the trapeze and dangling ropes. [Molly Brennan](#) who plays the Red Queen, and one third of the caterpillar; Mad Hatter and White Rabbit [Kevin Douglas](#) who's also one third of the caterpillar; Adeoye who is the Chesire Cat and the final third of the Caterpillar and [Samuel Taylor](#) who is the White Knight and the White Queen. All, except Alice, play multiple other roles.

From the drink me bottle and Alice shrinking, through the Tea Party and the croquet game with the flamingos and Humpty Dumpty's great fall, little is left out. Writer and director [David Catlin](#)'s imagination is boundless. Oh, frabjous day.

Before the show the audience was warned, several times, that once seated, no one could return to the theatre if they left midshow.

On opening night LOOKINGGLASS ALICE started fifteen minutes late with ushers seating late arrivals. Then during the show three separate groups were ushered in and unbelievably one lone man was seated just ten minutes before the end of the performance. Nice ruining of the immersion, Arsht.

LOOKINGGLASS ALICE runs through August 16 at the Arsht Center, 1300 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami.

305-949-6722 <http://www.arshtcenter.org>



Photo by Justin Namon