

Through the Lookingglass: Wonderland in Denver

Eric Peterson | Wednesday, October 07, 2015

Lindsey Noel Whiting is Alice in Lookingglass Alice.



Liz Lauren

As *Lookingglass Alice* reminds, *Alice in Wonderland* conjures the creative, kooky kid in all of us. The city can always use a little more of that.

The missus and I hit the town and saw [Lookingglass Alice](#) last week.

Amazing. The play, a super-physical theatrical spectacle from the Chicago's [Lookingglass Theatre Company](#) and [The Actors Gymnasium](#) that's at the Stage Theatre at the Denver Performing Arts Complex through Oct. 11, reminded me of my childhood, reading *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* at the tender age of four and its sequel, also by Lewis Carroll, soon after.

The absurdity of Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, the insanity of the Mad Hatter, the oddball commentary on math theory and politics, the alternate dimension, that other place, the artful gibberish of the Jabberwocky, it all made such perfect sense of nonsense, and still does.

Lindsey Noel Whiting is Alice in Lookingglass Alice. And it always did, as a toddler staring at an old bound hardback in the back of a station wagon, as a kid buying a Cheshire Cat figurine at Disneyland, as a psilocybin-addled college student, as an adult who appreciates imagination in all of its forms. I've always seen the books as a portal to creativity.

Carroll's madcap deconstruction of logical extremes is aptly captured by the show, which is an intensely athletic exercise for its cast of five, who show off an impressive breadth of pop culture references and skill sets to boot -- singing, unicycling, chair tossing, acrobatics, improv comedy, you name it.

There are some good rabbit holes to go down in the metro area.

In Greenwood Village, bronze statues of *Alice* characters populate [Marjorie Park](#), near Fiddlers Green, from the Caterpillar to the Walrus and the Carpenter. In Englewood, there's a great mural on [Headed West](#), a South Broadway head shop, that was contested by city officials but was ultimately allowed to remain.

Denver? In the city limits, not so much. An anonymous street artist stenciled a Cheshire Cat on the [Westword building](#) in 2008 and [Kevin Eslinger](#) sells some wicked prints of his renditions of the Red Queen and company at his gallery in Baker .

But there's always time, which the White Rabbit chases as it stands still for the Mad Hatter.

We could use some absurd and insane Wonderland-themed public art in Denver. The city should commission Eslinger to splatter his mad vision of the Jabberwocky under the 6th Avenue underpass, lest the 'burbs outrage us in the wabe.

