

REVIEW – ARCADIA

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WHERE HAVE I BEEN? Review: ARCADIA at Palm Beach Dramaworks. How is it that I've never been to Palm Beach Dramaworks?? I don't know the answer to that but based on my experience tonight with the opening of ARCADIA I know I won't be missing any more shows. ARCADIA may be one of the greatest plays I have ever seen. Tom Stoppard's play, directed by J. Barry Lewis, is about the past and present, what was and what could be, and what might be. Set in Sidley Park, an English country house, and takes place in 1809/1812 and present day, the characters in the past are juxtaposed with those of present. Caitlin Cohn, who plays Thomasina Coverly, is a remarkable talent who brings subtlety to her role made more amazing by how young she is. Vanessa Morosco as present-day character Hannah Jarvis, just keeps getting better, more versatile, and astonishing to watch, having just completed DISGRACED at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre. You just can't keep your eyes off her. Playing along her real-life husband, Peter Simon Hilton, was last seen as David Frost in Frost/Nixon, also at the Maltz, Hilton is funny, scary, and annoying as literature professor Bernard Nightingdale. Rounding off the cast is Ryan Zachary Ward as Thomasina's tutor, Septimus Hodge, as handsome and talented a stage presence as they come. In this play the English accents also actually sound like - English accents. The Don and Ann Brown Theatre, home of Palm Beach Dramaworks, reminds me of the smaller, more intimate theaters where serious drama can be presented. ARCADIA is smart, thought-provoking, passionate, complicated - and you feel like you've been to the best theater has to offer after it's all done. PLAYING AT PALM BEACH DRAMAWORKS, 201 Clematis Street, West Palm Beach, now through April 30. For tickets and information call the box office at (561) 514-4042 or go to palmbeachdramaworks.org.