



Our critics rating: ★★★★★
Date: Monday, 14 May, 2018
Review by: Will Longman
 currently booking at the Her Majesty's Theatre.

[...] *The Phantom of the Opera* has been impressively running non-stop at Her Majesty's Theatre for over 3 decades now, but does Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical still have the same sense of wonder as it did all that time ago.

There's no question that it's a complete classic: the story tells of the titular phantom who haunts an opera house, the tales of his presence in the building are now common gossip amongst the casts. During rehearsals for the company's latest offering, an unknown chorus girl, Christine, is forced to thrust into the lead role, with the producers assured she has been taught well. Taught, it turns out, by the 'Angel of Music', the Phantom whose voice rings around in her head.

During her triumphant performance, an old friend Raoul rekindles his love for Christine, while the Phantom reveals himself to Christine, luring her to his underground lair. As he tells her how she's been chosen to perform his work-in-progress opera, she lifts his mask to reveal his gruesomely disfigured face, and this begins a tale of jealousy and control.

While its reputation as the ultimate romantic musical precedes it, watching the show in the #MeToo era throws up for a few uneasy moments. As the Phantom's manipulation and desire to control Christine become more and more apparent – through some pretty no-nonsense lyrics like "You will curse the day you did not do /All that the Phantom asked of you" - it's difficult not to feel for her as she is trapped and manipulated by a selfish, jealous man.

It did create two of the most desirable roles for any musical theatre performer. Originated by Michael Crawford and Sarah Brightman, the production currently features an excellent leading cast of Ben Lewis and Kelly Mathieson. Lewis commands every corner of the stage with the menace of the Phantom, while treating his more tender moments with the deluded pain the character demands. Mathieson plays Christine with the kind of innocent naivety that makes the part convincing, and nails some of the most challenging songs written for the stage.

There is still something special about Lloyd Webber's score. Its songs were revelations that shook musical theatre, standards that entered the public consciousness. The '80s synth-opera fusion might seem a little dated, but there's no disputing *that* descending motif still conjures goose bumps. At the heart of "The Point of No Return" - the Phantom's composition – are the satisfying resolved phrases that are a trademark of the score. [...]

While we could dissect the reaction the show would get if *Phantom* was presented as a new work today, there's no question that it's still wild, it's still joyous, and it's still deserved of its place as the pride of the West End.

★★★★★
 2019-02-22T0
 by TamaraDachi

Great performance
 First of all the theatre is great all by itself but the phantom of the opera is an outstanding show that blew our minds and made us long for the curtains not to close. The actors were great in both performing and singing and had us astonished by their talent and devotion to their roles.

★★★★★
 2019-02-27T0
 by amoscookis

Phantom of the Opera
 I can't say enough good things about this experience. The venue at Her Majesty's Theater is iconic and absolutely beautiful. Seats were comfortable, clean and ample leg room for this tall couple. The cast and production were supreme!! I didn't want it to end. Highly recommend!!!

★★★★★
 2019-02-25T0
 by Nikki T

Birthday Show.
 Fantastic show, a must see. Theatre was lovely and clean and tidy sat in Royal circle and view was excellent.

★★★★★
 2019-02-22T0
 by 877Smarie

So the show.... I have to say I was a bit disappointed, I enjoyed it & I cried at the end, so it was moving... but I just felt perhaps the show was a bit dated now, it didn't wow me like I had expected it to, my husband wasn't a fan & he actually fell asleep, so did the man who was sat next to him! I tried getting him a red bull during the interval but the bar staff said there was none, in fact no energy drinks at all, so I got him a vodka & coke instead! The lead singer Christine, was absolutely phenomenal, her voice.. wow, just simply incredible! It's nice to tick it off my bucket list, but I wouldn't watch it again, I have a friend who's seen it 3 times & I'm baffled by that!