

The Minack Theatre review

"The mightily talented BROS Theatre Company from south west London, staged a stunning show and one of the loudest and sparkliest finales ever seen on the Minack stage, to thrill a sell-out bank holiday crowd on the opening night."

To read the full review, [click here](#).

Company review by Heather Stockwell

Most people know the story of *Sister Act* from the 1992 film, but perhaps don't know the musical version. Before I first saw the show at the London Palladium, I thought nothing could top the music from the film- how wrong I was. The score by Alan Menken is fantastic, by various turns hot disco, upbeat funk, smooth soul, and serene choral – with the lyrics by Glenn Slater being witty, funny or heartfelt as appropriate. The book fairly whips along, telling the story about the power of both music and friendship to bring us joy and bring us together- friends into a family. When you put all of those elements together – you have a true powerhouse show.

Hallelujah, did it open with a bang! From the first note, the band nailed it, conveying the excitement and joy of the score, immediately captivating the audience and transporting us into Deloris' world. From the get-go, every member of the cast had energy and pace- particularly impressive on the last night of what must have been an exhausting run.

Principles were very strong across the board:

Aggie Holland as Deloris was Fabulous Baby! She had absolutely all of the sass, smarts and a voice even bigger than her hair – and if you saw her epic wig, you can begin to comprehend the scale of her talent.

Kerry Magee as Mother Superior was superb – a master of the withering one-liner, bringing real humour and heart to the role.

Darren Moss as Eddie was adorable, showing us the soft side of this sweaty Philly cop, totally melting the hearts of the audience with his sweetly wistful song and loveable awkwardness around his crush Deloris.

Tracy Sorgiovanni was totally convincing as Sister Mary Robert, the shy young postulant with the golden voice. A total testament to her skill as an actress who can play a wide range of roles.

Katy Jackson as Sister Mary Patrick had all the bubbly joy and enthusiasm you could wish for in this part, her energy was fantastic.

Deb McDowell was glorious as Sister Mary Lazarus. I thought I had seen the best during her rap, but nearly expired from laughing as she charged with a war cry across the stage, held aloft, and all while holding a sceptre!

John-Paul Sutherland did an incredible job of establishing the nasty and menacing character with a singing voice full of soul, the gangster Curtis – and was rewarded with boos, the highest compliment an audience can pay a villain.

Paul Nicholas Dyke as TJ, James Turnbull as Joey and Sebastian Roughly as Pablo were all loveably hilarious as the hapless cronies in Curtis' gang. Their voices blended wonderfully, and those in my party who fondly remembered the 1970s said they were all absolutely spot on in evoking that period with their characterisation and choreography in their musical numbers.

Andy Yeates brought a real sense of twinkly fun to Monsignor O' Hara, sweeping the audience along in his excitement at the changing fortunes of the convent and his ability to get down and twirl his robes along with the best of them!

Other shout outs for great performances to the hilarious Caroline Hayes and Clair Jardella, the gorgeous Bex Wood and Emily Bright, and gloriously sparkly alter-boys/ deadbeat thugs/ dancing queens Jonny Buckley, Mat Madeley, Chris Morris, Will Prescott and Dave Shortland. BROS have won numerous awards for outstanding chorus work and this show proved yet again why this is the case. The chorus was large, but everyone was an individual character. From Nuns to tramps, to dream dancers and back again – the standard of the singing and movement was excellent (even excellently terrible when required by the Nuns). Multi-layered harmonies came across loud and clear. The Nun's choral Benedictus was truly beautiful. The energy and passion for the music and the story was electrifying in big chorus numbers like Raise Your Voice, Take Me To Heaven, Sunday Morning Fever and Spread The Love Around.

I know that Sian and Martin's vision for the show included lifting up both the audience and performers and to spread the love around. They certainly did all that and deserve huge congratulations.

The message of *Sister Act* reminds us that music is such a force for good, it can bring us such joy and bring so many different people together. I thought this as I was greeted with a hug by a stalwart BROS member directing traffic to the lower terraces. When I took my seat and was waved at and blown kisses to by many different people from all different sections of the theatre: BROS members old and new, production team, committee members, friends of friends, Mums of friends, members of the band... as I was spotted – sat next to my husband in his beacon of a yellow coat. And again, as I wended my way out of the theatre post-show and was gleefully hailed down by the young son of one of our performers... music lifts us up, it gives us joy – it unites us and makes friends into a family. How true that is of BROS as a company.

There are a huge number of people within or connected to the wider BROS family who gave their time, talent and support to make this show possible. I look back on *Sister Act* and wholeheartedly agree with what the show's finale so wisely says – "All things being even, here's what I believe in, nothing matters more than love. Friendship and affection, real connection. It's a gift from above."

Amen to that!