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STAGE · THEATRE

Broadway's Phantom

BY LAURATWK — 2026-01-23



A Phantom Haunted By Its Own Ghost (But Still Brilliant Anyway)

Fresh from their triumph with **Les Misérables**, the **Broadway Productions** company has returned with a bolder, more lavish endeavour: a performance of **The Phantom of the Opera**. Moving to a larger venue, the ambition was palpable from the moment the audience entered the grander space. It felt akin to moving from a humble cabaret hall to a full blown theatre.

Importantly, the little details weren't forgotten in this transition, such as the entrance carpet being branded with the production's iconic Phantom's mask motif. Hopefully a detail that many others picked up on as well - a small but perfect touch that signaled the care and theatricality to come from director **Vibrent** and her team.

This was a clear step up in scale, and the production delivered a visually stunning and musically potent evening that resulted in a marvelous night out - one I highly recommend without reservation



My personal relationship with Phantom is rooted in the backseat of a family car, subjected to its soaring score on cassette during long journeys (yes, I am showing my age...). What began as a source of childish resentment slowly gave way to a begrudging fascination followed by mature appreciation.

Two songs captured my imagination more than others: the seductive "**The Music of the Night**" and the title track, "**The Phantom of the Opera**"; its driving rhythm and iconic bassline became the definitive sound of the story in my mind. And that's before Nightwish's peerless cover¹ (arguably the best metal cover of all time) made my love for the song swell immeasurably.

This familiarity made my viewing a double-edged sword. I could anticipate and appreciate the dramatic crescendos, feeling a visceral thrill of recognition. However, it also made omissions keenly felt. The most significant was the glaring absence of - *spoiler warning* - the title song, "The Phantom of the Opera."

This wasn't just the loss of a number that has infiltrated pop culture more successfully than any other from musical theatre; it meant the absence of the Phantom's iconic, gothic organ from the set and the visceral, rock-opera energy that defines his creative and obsessive power. For me, this omission left a slight void where the show's most recognisable heartbeat should have been.

¹<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tL25rbnvM4o>



Let me be clear, however: this one personal disappointment in no way eclipsed my immense enjoyment. The achievement on stage was spectacular, and all involved should be thoroughly proud of their work. I genuinely feel terrible for spending so much time dwelling on this one point because everything else about the show was overwhelmingly positive and I'm sure there was a very valid reason for this creative choice.

Plus, there was still the consolation of hints of that unmistakable and menacing musical motif - the iconic 5 note chromatic progression that has transcended the musical genre over the years - being woven into the fabric of a couple of the other musical numbers. Hearing those dark, familiar echoes in the underscoring provided a subtle but satisfying nod to the missing centrepiece.

To bridge the narrative gaps in this abridged version of the story, each scene was introduced with a succinct and elegant narration. This device provided crucial scaffolding early on, though as the drama accelerated towards its climax within the whopping 85-minute runtime, the music itself - dense and expressive - took on more and more of the primary storytelling role.

Structurally, The Phantom of the Opera presented a stark contrast to the company's previous Les Misérables production. Where that was a sweeping ensemble piece, Phantom is, by its very nature, an intense character study of a central trio. This is not a criticism of this production at all, but simply the nature of the beast they chose to stage.



The laser focus on **Christine, the Phantom,** and **Raoul** makes the story digestibly clear and provides immense depth for the principals. But that comes at the cost of the rich human variety and stirring collective purpose of *Les Misérables*, giving fewer performers an individual moment in the spotlight. This production excels spectacularly in other ways though: namely, in lavish spectacle and profound character intensity.

That spectacle was realised on a truly impressive set. The production design fully embraced its larger canvas, featuring a lavish, sweeping ballroom staircase flanked by ornate balconies for "Masquerade", a moody dressing room complete with its haunting mirror that is so integral to numbers such as "The Mirror", and a shadowy, candle-lit lair where we were treated to my personal musical highlight, "Music of the Night" (although the lair was notably absent the organ that I had so wished to see on-stage).

And a special mention for the technical crew who engineered some truly wonderful practical stage magic. This magic was most evident in two breathtaking moments. The first was the memorable mirror scene, where a clever use of lighting, smoke, and a perfectly timed reveal allowed the Phantom to materialise within the glass itself - a simple yet utterly effective illusion that drew gasps from the audience. The Phantom's ability to apparate from out of nowhere featured a few further times and was satisfying each and every time, but the mirror reveal was the trick performed at its finest.



The second was in the Phantom's lair, where a suddenly activated trap, ensnared Raoul in a cage of implied mechanisms, delivered a genuine jolt of theatrical surprise. These moments proved that spectacle doesn't require digital trickery, but can be achieved through clever, old-school stagecraft. Oh, and dare I forget to mention that there was in a fleeting use of fireworks and pyros? Of course not. I would never overlook such a treat.

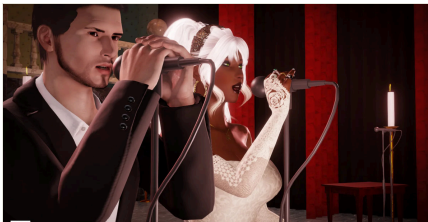


But no amount of visual spectacle matters if the performances are not on point. There was no such worries here though. The principal cast commanding this world were nothing short of superb.

FeliciaBlack's Christine was a revelation, her voice moving from a fragile purity in "Angel of Music" to a powerhouse of emotion during the final lair confrontation. Her chemistry with **JesterPaul's** Phantom, who was a masterclass in tragic grandeur, was the engine of the show.

JesterPaul balanced menace and vulnerability perfectly, his snarling rage in moments like "The Mirror" giving way to the breathtaking, controlled seduction of "The Music of the Night", which was the undisputed vocal highlight of the evening.

Meanwhile, **McGalaxy** made for a dashing and vocally assured Raoul, providing a noble and vital counterpoint to JesterPaul's Phantom. His clear, heroic tenor in "All I Ask of You" established a believable romance, and his determined anguish in the lair was compelling.



The supporting cast, though with less individual material, made every moment count. A bright **Scarlettt** as Meg brought a emotive sisterly feeling to her chemistry with Christine, while **Aspiria** embodied the scene-stealing diva Carlotta by providing the right amount of diva-ish preening and levity.

THE CAST

This review is based on Monday's performance but it is important to point out there is an equally talented and devoted cast performing on Saturdays:

Saturday

- *Carlotta* played by **Aspiria**
- *Meg* played by **Scarlett**
- *Monsieur Richard Firmin* played by **Darkshade**
- *Monsieur Gilles André* played by **Hikikomori**
- Dancers: **Scarlettt**, **Agitator**, **Riley Freeze** and **Serenity**
- *Christine Daaé* played by **Neenna**
- Phantom played by **DaveDD**
- *Raoul de Charny* played by **DaveEEE**
- Producer & Director: **Vibrent**
- Assistant Director: **Scarlett**

--- Monday

- *Carlotta* played by **Aspiria**
- *Meg* played by **Scarlett**
- *Monsieur Richard Firmin* played by **Darkshade**
- *Monsieur Gilles André* played by **Hikikomori**
- Dancers: **Scarlettt**, **Agitator**, **Riley Freeze** and **Serenity**
- *Christine Daaé* played by **Felicia Black**
- Phantom played by **Jester**
- *Paul Raoul de Charny* played by **McGalaxy**
- Producer & Director: **Vibrent**
- Assistant Director: **Scarlett**

At its heart, The Phantom of the Opera is a primal, gothic fairy tale whose genius has always been its dual nature: it is both a bombastic spectacle of crashing chandeliers and a painfully intimate story of a wounded soul. This production masterfully navigated that duality. The grandeur was present and impressive, but it never overwhelmed the human drama at its centre. It proved that the show's true longevity lies not just in its iconic effects, but in its capacity to make an audience feel profound sympathy for a monster.

In the end, this abridged The Phantom of the Opera is a resounding success and a credit to amateur theatre. It is a visually opulent, musically powerful, and dramatically compelling spectacle. For a newcomer, it is a dazzling gateway. For someone more familiar, like myself, it was a sumptuous and deeply satisfying revisit that, despite the echo of one missing song, provided a thrilling and complete night at the theatre that I cannot recommend highly enough.



The standing ovation as the cast of The Phantom of the Opera took their bows at the finale was richly deserved. Bravo!

To learn more about Laura's online experiences, check out her [blog](<https://www.lauratwk.co.uk>).

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

PRODUCER & DIRECTOR
VIBRENT

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
SCARLETTT

SHOW DATES
JANUARY 12TH,
17TH, 19TH
& 24TH

DOORS OPEN
9:00 PM CET
3:00 PM EST



CAST
CHRISTINE: NEENNA & FELICIA BLACK

PHANTOM: DAVEDD & JESTERPAUL

RAL: DAVEEEE & MCGALAXY

RICHARD: DARKSHADE

ANDRE: HIKIKOMORI

CARLOTTA: ASPIRIA

MEG: SCARLETTT

DANCERS

DARIA, AGITATOR

SERENITY, RILEY

SCARLETTT

PHOTOGRAPHY
ALERT

BROADWAY PRODUCTIONS