

Review: Grease The Musical



Grease was the word at the Edinburgh Playhouse on Monday evening as the original West End production of the famous musical commenced its six-day run in Scotland's capital city.

The cast was led by international pop star Tom Parker (The Wanted) playing Danny in his first ever theatrical role while the role of Sandy was played by stage star Danielle Hope (Les Misérables, The Wizard of Oz)

It's nearly forty years since the iconic film on which the musical is based came out. It's hard to believe that it was way back in 1978 that stars John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John first cast a spell on the big screen.


The stage version now touring the UK is a massive effort and a triumph of hard work and no little talent. There are some 140 costume changes and there are set changes galore as the production team try to recreate the Rydell High School atmosphere which is the backdrop to the blossoming love story between Danny and Sandy.

The show began with an intro from Danny and Sandy before the whole cast gave a rousing rendition of *Grease is the Word*. I say rousing but there did appear to be a problem with the acoustics at the beginning of the show and when some of the cast sang into a hand-held microphone they sounded much clearer.

The two main characters worked hard throughout. Tom Parker is billed as the lead and was impressive, but Danielle Hope seemed to struggle at times as goody two-shoes come rebel Sandy. That said, her rendition of *Hopelessly Devoted to You* was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the evening.

We Go Together was another impressive number while *Greased Lightnin'* notched up the energy levels even higher. Then there were the old favourites: *You're the One That I Want*, *Summer Nights*, *Sandy*, and many more.

The energy of the show never drops with the ensemble of T-Birds and Pink Ladies driving the pace.

Many of the audience at the Edinburgh Playhouse will have  remembered the original film fondly hence, presumably, why they were at the musical on Monday evening. They knew what they were going to get – music from the 1950s, songs which have been lodged in their subconscious minds for years (that's the hypnotherapist in me!) coming to the fore once again, rekindling memories of more innocent times. And, it's fair to say, they weren't disappointed. The standing ovation at the end told its own story.

Some funny moments, big hair and equally big skirts and a raucous evening of good old-fashioned entertainment, *Grease the Musical* is billed as the ultimate feel-good, pick-me up musical – an electrifying extravaganza, packed with fun, energy and vibrant physicality. That it has energy and vibrant physicality is without question. The description of the ultimate feel-good musical is open to debate. Perhaps you need to be a huge fan of the film to truly appreciate the show.

Grease the Musical is on at the Edinburgh Playhouse until 16th September 2017. Tickets [here](#).

Edinburgh Reporter review: ***