

Wicked Act 1

Thursday 5th February @ 2.30pm

Good Afternoon and welcome to the Lyric and this afternoon's performance of Wicked.

My name is Sylvia and I will be describing Act 1, which last for 85 minutes. Following the 20 minute interval my colleague Denise will describe Act 2 which is 65 minutes.

L. Frank Baum's fictitious otherland has provided creative inspiration for a variety of works since the first Oz stories were published over a century ago. When American author Gregory Maquire reimagined the history of the witches of Oz in his 1995 best-selling novel 'Wicked; The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West' no one could have anticipated the musical sensation that his work would spawn.

Based on the legend that the Wizard's cart could be transformed into a stage known as The Clock of the Time Dragon. It formed part of the religion of Munchkin Land. It was said the dragon slept beneath and dreamt the Land into existence. It was believed that plays performed on this stage could predict future events.

The Sets

We have in front of us a large light brown canvas map of The Land of Oz. Top left the cardinal points N.S.E & W. Glittering under a green rotating central spotlight, a drawing of The Emerald City. On the right, the words Munchkin Land, at the bottom The Badlands. Above, a giant mechanical dragon with ruby red eyes juts out over the orchestra pit. Its large brown leather wings span the width of the map.

Outside the Wizard's Palace what seems to be the inside of a clock, its large translucent clock face has a number of smaller dials and roman numerals around the edge. On either side, tall wooden shafts encasing brass wheels and cogs. At the bottom of the right hand shaft a small wooden wheel. The citizens of Oz are celebrating as a mechanical swing descends spewing bubbles. As we move through Oz the clock face lifts up and away. Revealing an archway, with silhouettes of old buildings with domes and spires, this is the backdrop of The University of Shiz. The students move about the central square. The Lecture Hall is created by lowering wall hangings of diagrams and drawings of humans and animals. The students sit on wooden benches in the middle, in front a blackboard with a diagram of historical events. The sun streams through the skylight. The University Courtyard is dominated by a stone statue of a man. His right hand raised, holding a top hat, in his left a walking stick.

Later In the dorm two beds pointing away from each other. The one on the left is very neat with a blue blanket; the other is covered with pink cushions and a ruffled quilt. Alongside, shelves of high heel shoes of every colour.

The party is held at the Oz dust Ballroom; the décor is black and white with a central staircase. Dancing under glittering fairy lights and chandeliers are the guests, wearing elegant monochrome dresses or suits. The ladies have very elaborate hairstyles with net or lace entwined.

The Emerald City, with its magnificent archway of emerald lights embellished with the shining letters OZ, reflects the affluence of the citizens. The ladies in their most beautiful victorian style gowns of rich taffeta, silk or satin with jaunty hats perched on their wigs. Some carry fans or parasols. The gentlemen look very dashing in their frock coats, neck ruffles and flamboyant hats. All are in shades of green blue and yellow with a pair of dark green sunglasses perched on the end of their noses.

Inside the Wizard's Palace a huge golden throne dominates the space upon which sits a large clanking brace head. The glowing eyes change colour depending on its mood.

Much later the two sorcery students are in a tiny dingy room full of cleaning materials and an old broom.

Cast and characters

Ashley Gray, is the greener than green Elphaba, her dark hair worn either in a long plait or tucked under her crochet hat. Wearing a plain teal coloured long skirt with matching fitted jacket. Her light framed spectacles give her a studious look but she has a pleasant disposition. Later she changes her jacket for a white high collared version.

Emily Tierney is the beautiful Glinda. Wearing a sparkling tiara, her blonde ringlets caress her bare shoulders. She is dressed in a pale blue ball gown, with its jewelled bodice and encrusted scalloped shaped skirt. In her hand a diamond studded wand.

When attending University she has on a white tailored suit with a swinging skirt. Court shoes, beret and tiny handbag all in white.

Her party frock is a short pink tiered tulle skirt with fitted bodice. For travelling a yellow handkerchief skirted sundress.

Steven Pinder is Doctor Dillamond a goat with long wispy hair. His tail pokes through his brown thick fur coat.

And later as the charming good mannered Wizard of Oz. Dressed in dove grey pinstripe trousers, long light grey frock coat over a navy and silver waistcoat and black top hat. A pair of spectacles perched on the end of his nose.

Marilyn Cutts as Madame Morrible, the middle aged headmistress at Shiz. Her claret red damask bustle dress has long wizard sleeves. Around her neck a number of gold chains. Later Madam wears a similar styled emerald green dress.

Samuel Edwards is Fiyero a confident handsome fresh faced young man. He is wearing a short sleeved white shirt, red waistcoat and cream riding breeches. Tan coloured boots and slung across one shoulder a satchel. At the dance he is in a burgundy tailcoat with black boots.

Carina Gillespie plays Nessarose the younger sister of Elphaba. She also has long dark hair but a pale complexion. She wears callipers and uses a cane backed wheelchair. Her outfits are like others of her age. Her party dress has a long pale pink skirt and chiffon bodice with fitted sleeves.

Bog, played by Richard Vincent, first appears in an ill-fitting teal and cream striped suit over a green shirt and white tie. Later in a mustard coloured evening suit always with a red knitted beret.

Wendy Lee-Purdy as the midwife; wears a long smock dress.

The Chorus play different characters: Monkeys in brown lycra suits, bounce about on all fours. The leader Chistery has a bright red jacket with gold buttons.

As Citizens of Oz they wear their ragged everyday cloths, in autumnal shades.

Later, as students the uniform is teal and cream blazers, the girls' skirts have a high-low hemline. The young men in trousers or shorts either stripes or one colour.

The Imperial Guards, in mat green greatcoats with the initials OZ embroidered on the large yellow lapel. Black and gold chin strapped helmets, carrying long pikes.

During the performance there will be strobe lights, flashes, naked flames and smoke.

Music and Lyrics: Stephen Schwartz. Book: Winnie Holzman

Director: Joe Mantello Musical Staging: Wayne Cilento

Set Design: Eugene Lee Costumes: Susan Hilferty

Lighting: Kenneth Posner Sound: Tony Meola

WICKED – Act 2

Welcome back everyone to this exciting performance of Wicked. I am Denise your audio describer for Act 2.

We begin with the citizens of Oz peering cautiously out from behind towers at the back of the stage. As they engage in song a platform slides forward. On it stand Madame Morrible dressed in an emerald green bustle dress with long wizard like sleeves and a green feathered boa around her neck. Next to her, Glinda stands in front of a microphone to address the Ozians. She wears a beautiful high necked, long blue taffeta gown with a peplum style top over a very full skirt. One arm is bare whilst the other has a long sleeve. She wears her blonde hair up in a very becoming French pleat with a fascinator style hat. Within the crowd is Fiyero dressed in a smart Guards uniform of green jacket with gold braid and black trousers,

We move then to Elphaba's old home, the Governor's residence in Munchkinland where we find Nessarose in her new wheelchair, dressed more grandly now in a long black dress. With her is Boq dressed in blue servant's livery. Behind them is a large wardrobe in darkwood with double mirrored doors. To the right is a small side table.

At the Wizard's Palace there is a ball with Glinda and Fiyero dancing and looking perfectly in love. Glinda is dressed in a glittering white off the shoulder dress with beaded bodice and a full petal like sequined layered skirt. At the top of each arm she wears a white puff-ball garter. Her hair flows to her shoulders in tight curls with a tiara sitting neatly across the waves. Her shoes are ornate in silver. The guests wear similar elaborate Victorian style costumes in yellow, green and blue, as they did before, reflecting the opulence of the Emerald City.

Elphaba and Fiyero are alone at last in a clearing of a misty forest. It is nighttime and Fiyero carries a lamp to guide them. Elphaba is dressed in her long black dress with high neck, lace bodice and sleeves. Fiyero wears a short sleeved shirt and trousers.

Meanwhile, Glinda is in Munchinkland at the site of Dorothy's crashed house. She is dressed in a long white fairy style dress holding a glittering wand.

At Kiamo Castle, Elphaba is looking through her book of spells, which is held open by

Chistery, the leader of the monkeys.

Whilst outside the Wizard's Palace, an angry mob gathers, shouting and cheering, carrying various threatening tools. Madame Morrible and Glinda observe them from a balcony on one side whilst they are being addressed by Boq on a balcony opposite.

It is late at night back at the castle. A beacon at the back lights up the stage. To the right is a well with Chistery beside it. To the left is a flight of stairs. The sound of sobbing is heard as Elphaba emerges from another part of the castle.

Finally we return to the Wizard's Palace where the Wizard is slumped in a big armchair with Madame Morrible addressing him rather cheerfully over their latest achievements.

But all is not as it seems for Glinda, Elphaba and Fiyero as we return to the castle.

So sit back and enjoy the outcome of this magical show stopping story which is truly WICKED.

Please note that the next audio performance is Rebecca on Saturday 28th February at 2:30pm.