Seattle's Child
YOUR GUIDE TO A KID-FRIENDLY CITY

Parent Review: 'Chicka Chicka Boom Boom' musical kicks off SCT's season

Beloved kids' book comes alive thru Oct, 12

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Seattle Children's Theatre presents "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom: The Musical", a vibrant new addition to the world of family theater Seattle audiences love. The uplifting, interactive original musical is based on the children's book of the same name — and it's a tall order to create something new from a property over 35 years old and as well-loved as this. Regardless, writer-director Nina Meehan, the cast, and crew have pulled together a show that appeals to

kids of all ages. The production will leave audiences yearning for more time with A, B, C, and all the letters that come together at the top of the coconut tree.

Syllabary Synopsis

The children's picture book written by Bill Martin, Jr. and John Archambault and illustrated by Lois Ehlert has been charming families since its first publication in 1989. Filled with bright pops of color, simple shapes and catchy rhymes, the board book follows the alphabet of lowercase letters as they make their way up a coconut tree. One after another, the letters begin to weigh

down the tree until, eventually, they all fall out. Rescued by their uppercase parents, the little letters are comforted through their injuries and reminded that perseverance pays off.

"Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, will there be enough room?" posits the board book, as more and more letters climb up the coconut tree. In this inspired stage adaptation written and directed by Meehan with music & lyrics by Austin Zumbro, the alphabet come to life through costume design, puppetry and stage props, bringing personality, warmth and a mischievous fun to their epic quest up the coconut tree. Each grouping of letters will razzle dazzle with their own distinct musical style. H, I, J and tagalong K put on a "hold up horses" rodeo extravaganza. L, M, N, O and P give hip-hop stylings. W, X and Y take on the most absurd skit of the show, a faux-solemn religious ceremony including hooded capes, dramatic archways and candlelight.

Though the book did not overexplain the story or over-characterize its subjects, "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom: The Musical" breathes fresh and new life into the story, while still maintaining its bouncy and bright aesthetic. With jokes that both kids and adults will find endearing and humorous, SCT opens their 2025-26 season with a "skit skat skoodle doot / flip flop flee", leaving viewers begging to get back to the coconut tree.

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Kids will explore letters, phonics and rhythm with this interactive production that is as educational as it is fun. Encompassing themes of self-confidence, literacy and problem solving, “Chicka Chicka Boom Boom: The Musical” isn’t just a retelling; it’s a reimagining that pops off the stage. The show opens with a gradual introduction to the letters and the words important to the story, drawing in kids of all ages who may otherwise be hesitant or nervous in a theater setting. I was accompanied by two 5-year-olds and a novice 3-year-one who was experiencing her first live performance. The show was a hit with all three.

There is nothing overwhelming about this production, which retains the high-contrast design, uses a bevy of colorful props and includes the audience for collaboration, asking for call-outs and encouraging viewers to dance and sing along. At the end of the show, all three of my young

guests were in agreement: “That was so fun!” “I liked the horsey skit!” “I liked the pop stars!” Each had a different answer to what they enjoyed most, and all were asking to see the show again.

While normally someone would be asking when the show was going to end, there was not a peep from any of them. They sat transfixed. As an adult viewer, it was also an enjoyable theater-going experience. Though I could recite the board book “Chicka Chicka Boom Boom” from cover to cover, there was a thrilling element to the production, knowing that the universe was being expanded, but not changed, and that all the parts my family adored about the book were going to be lovingly translated before our very eyes.

“Chicka Chicka Boom Boom!” is a magnificent opener for SCT’s 2025-26 season, which Seattle family theater audiences will surely love!

