



JUNIE B. JONES

Reviewed by Roma Tore

TheatreworksUSA has done it again. Not only is the company's latest production (*Junie B. Jones*) yet another extremely delightful book adaptation for children, it's free... yes you heard that right... something really fun for the kids in Manhattan this summer with air-conditioning that won't cost a penny.

For anyone with a little girl these days, the name "Junie B. Jones" should be pretty familiar. The series of books about a precocious first grader has captivated an entire generation of kids, my eight year old included.

From the moment you enter the Lucille Lortel Theatre to find that whimsical set featuring Junie's trademark journal, you know the creative team got it just right. Marcy Heisler who wrote the musical's book and lyrics and her partner Zina Goldrich who composed the music, have come up with an energetic and genuinely comical take on what I expected to be a strictly-for-kids exercise. Like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, *Junie B. Jones* deliciously combines polished professionalism with a sweet innocence, and the result can be spell-binding for both children and those old enough to be called adults. The gifted and very versatile cast of six infectiously captures the wacky charming wisdom that is kids.

Junie B. Jones is one splendid hour of music, laughter, life lessons and the art of putting on a show.