

# Phantom

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approached composer Andrew Lloyd Webber with a proposal “that it was time to give ‘Phantom’ a fresh look.” Webber was amenable, and the new-look ‘Phantom,’ with its striking differences from the original, debuted during 2012 in the U.K. before hitting the road in North America, and the Detroit Opera House this week.

“Much like any production there comes a time to do something new,” associate director Seth Sklar-Heyn says by phone from the “Phantom” New York offices. “There are creative and practical reasons for revamping the show in this way. The way of performance as well as audience expectations have changed in the three decades since ‘Phantom’ has premiered. How directors tell stories and also technology has changed — set design, light design, sound design, all the engineering in those fields have come a long way in 30 years.

“So the goal is to provide this classic material to an audience, and as well as a physical world that aims

to satisfy and exceed one’s memory and expectations of the original, taking advantage of things that have happened in 30 years for what we can do on stage.

“It’s taking the same classic material and putting it through a different lens.”

Mackintosh, whose credits include “Cats,” “Mary Poppins” and a rebooted “Les Miserables,” brought in new director Laurence Connor and a fresh creative team, though he had discussions about the new version with original “Phantom” stage designer Maria Bjornson before her death in 2002. The production, Mackintosh writes in his essay “A New Chandelier,” seeks “to contrast the Phantom’s darker backstage world with that of the traditional opera world on-stage.”

There is indeed, for starters, a new chandelier.

“It’s a character in the piece,” says Sklar-Heyn. “It has a different design than the original. It can do more things — again, technology working to our advantage. There are a lot of special effects built into it. It packs more of a punch when it wants to make a statement.”

Those familiar with previous “Phantom” production will notice other



PHOTO COURTESY OF MATTHEW MURPHY

Derrick Davis and Katie Travis star in “The Phantom of the Opera,” at the Detroit Opera House.

changes. The journey to the catacombs, where the Phantom takes ingenue Christine Daae to prepare her for his magnum opus, has been “complete reconceived,” though a boat is still involved. New costumes were created, and the

sets and scenery have been expanded and fleshed out.

“The physical world is a little more tangible and a little less surreal,” Sklar-Heyn explains. We’re presenting the material in a different and I’d argue slightly more contempo-

rary way and pace and energy for the audience today — but still within the period drama, which is what it really is.”

There’s also a slightly altered perspective on the story, he adds. “While it’s called ‘The Phantom of the

Opera,’ we try to emphasize it is Christine Daae’s story,” Sklar-Heyn says. “It’s the story of this ingenue. Everything that relates is because of her, and we see it all through her.”

But while the look, and outlook, is different, nothing has been done to the music at the heart of the show. And that is fully intentional, according to Sklar-Heyn.

“When we started working on this production, we approached it from the standpoint that we needed to hold true to the music, hold true to the story and hold true to the characters,” he says. “People have a fantastic ownership of the original production of ‘Phantom,’ whether they’ve seen it one time or 25 times. Everyone has this sense that it’s their show, and they want to protect it in some way. They come back time and time again because of the story, because of the characters, because of the music.

“We knew that going in. We put it through a lot of different directions, but we’re still holding true to the things that are the core of ‘Phantom’ ... so people can appreciate the new without feeling like they’ve lost the rest.”

## Saturday’s Sudoku

7	5	2	4	8	1	6	3	9
4	9	3	2	5	6	8	7	1
8	6	1	9	7	3	4	5	2
9	2	7	6	4	8	3	1	5
5	1	8	3	9	2	7	4	6
6	3	4	7	1	5	2	9	8
1	8	6	5	3	4	9	2	7
3	7	5	8	2	9	1	6	4
2	4	9	1	6	7	5	8	3

## Today’s Crossword Puzzle 1

A	S	K	O	F	P	A	S	H	A	P	E	R	U	S	T	A						
L	L	A	N	O	A	S	C	O	T	R	E	I	N	H	I	P						
B	A	L	C	O	N	Y	S	E	A	T	M	E	L	O	D	R	A	M	A			
S	V	E	L	T	E	E	N	R	A	G	E	S	T	E	A	M	E	R				
C	P	L	I	D	O	G	L	O	W	E	R	S										
L	O	O	G	L	O	O	M	R	E	N	A	N	T	E	E	M	S					
A	M	E	C	H	E	R	I	S	E	S	S	T	A	U	N	T	O	N				
R	E	S	E	T		N	A	P	A			E	N	D	O	R	S	E				
A	S	S	E	S		A	M	I	S	H	O	R	G	Y	E	T	E					
S	I	R	V	I	V	E	S	P	A	C	E	O	C	E	A	N	S					
E	D	U	C	A	T	E				A	R	K	S		H	A	B	I	T			
R	E	S	C	U	E	R	S			M	I	T	E	S		R	O	T	A	T	E	
F	E	T	I	D		S	A	T	I	N	S	A	N	E	R	S	E	W				
C	A	S	A	V	A		A	P	E	S	P	A	R	E	S	T						
A	D	E	L	I	N	E				I	R	O	N	E	D		E	G	O	I	S	T
B	I	T	P	L	A	Y	E	R		S	E	T	D	E	S	I	G	N	E	R		
L	O	U	L	I	E	S				T	E	A	L	S		R	A	R	E	E		
E	S	P																				

## Today’s Crossword Puzzle 2

G	O	V	I	R	A	L	B	O	A	B	A	Y	O	K	R	A													
O	P	E	N	A	R	E	A	R	E	S	P	E	C	T	P	I	E	D											
E	A	R	N	I	N	G	S	P	E	R	S	H	A	R	D	E	G	A	D										
R	H	Y	S																										
H	E	R	D	S	L	O	O	K	I	N	G	A	T	Y	O	U	K	I	D										
E	M	E	R	S	O	N				T	E	E	N		M	I	D	I											
R	I	V	E	T	S					W	I	D	E	N	S			E	V	E	S								
S	T	U	N			T	O	T	E	S		S	A	N	D	A	D	V	I	C	E								
S	E	C	S			D	R	E	S			O	U	S	E			M	O	A									
M	O		A	S	T	I				L	O	U	P	E			K	E	N	T									
B	A	B	Y	B	O	O	T	E	D		G	E	S	S	O			T	O	R	E								
A	R	I	A							S	T	A	V	E	S			P	U	T	T	E	R						
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G	I	M	P	Y						N	I	C	E		E	T	T	U			K	N	I	T					
A	G	U	E							D	U	D	P	R	O	C	E	S	S	C	L	A	U	S	E				
P	I	N	E							S	T	E	A	L	T	H					Y	E	A	S	T	I	E	R	
E	D	E	R							L	S	D			E	T	O				S	T	U	T	T	E	R		

# No Barriers

Embracing the Eastern Michigan University School of Nursing philosophy of nursing, as both an art and a science, the EMU nurses in clinical rotation at Northeast Guidance Centers, Eli Z. Rubin Center, this fall also learned lessons in humility and stewardship. Treating people with respect, sensitivity, dignity, and as unique and whole beings -another of the EMU nursing philosophies-taught them that in the field of service there are no barriers.

Eastern Michigan University nursing students volunteer for Northeast Guidance Warm Coats

During their clinical rotation EMU nurses volunteered to distribute warm coats to needy children at the Eli Z. Rubin Wellness Center; Project Warm Coats is a NEGC annual initiative. This year the nurses in addition to handing out warm coats arranged the nearly 800 coats ranging in sizes 3T to 2X, hung signs for easy access and helped the children to pick their favorite color.

Nurse instructor Melinda Pate, RN shared that “the NEGC clinical rotation experience is a blessing.

The nurses are up close and personal with the consumers with no barriers.” She shared that the students are able to see, and act in real time with what many of the nurses may have been taking for granted. Being at NEGC this fall and volunteering for Project Warm Coats the students have found that there are literacy issues, people without running water, no warm coats, and no groceries stores; real urban issues. This experience will keep them grounded as many have aspirations to work in hospitals like U of M Ann Arbor. Nurse Pate said “she didn’t want the student nurses to become jaded in their future nursing endeavors.”

Sherry McRill, president & CEO said “I believe having the nurses learn in an environment where the subjects are the teachers is ideal. They are in a setting with no barriers where they are becoming competent professionals and learning to enhance health and quality of life within a global community.”

Northeast Guidance Center, an integrated health clinic has allowed the nursing students to understand the treatment for persons with substance use disorders (SUD) and serious mental illness (SMI), many who

need co-occurring treatment, interventions, and children, youth and families who are provided treatment, prevention and educational services to help the child successfully function in home and school settings.

Sharon Common, Fund Development Officer at NEGC said that “having the nursing students interact with staff and persons served, asking questions and observing” has been a plus not only for the program but for the nurses as well.

The Northeast Guidance Center will welcome another class of nurses returning for the winter sessions.

The Northeast Guidance Center (NEGC) is committed to the health of children, adults and families by providing innovative community-based services through behavioral and primary healthcare. **NEGC is a contract agency of Macomb CMH.** For more information about Northeast Guidance Center call 313-308-1400 or [www.neguidance.org](http://www.neguidance.org).

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