

Review

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July 9, 2010

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## The Magic Pot: Three Tales from China

A young girl finds herself in the middle of ancient tales, and her own extraordinary adventure, that teach her about life, honesty, and true happiness. It is performed by TADA's ensemble of youngsters, age 8-17.

**Keywords:** Kids & Families, Woman Author

*Pictured: A scene from The Magic Pot: Three Tales from China*

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[Wendy Remington Bowie](#) · July 9, 2010

TADA Youth Theater's newest production *The Magic Pot* is an original musical based on three Chinese folktales. This production is the New York premiere of the piece, which was co-commissioned with the Stepping Stone Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The Emperor Chuan calls together all of the children in the area and tasks them with determining what is the greatest power. They are given one week to make their decisions and prepare to present them in a parade where the Emperor will choose one of the children to be the next Prime Minister. For many of the children the choice is easy and they quickly form groups to begin their presentation to the Emperor—some believe that might is the greatest power, some believe beauty, some technology, some money. However, young Mei Lin isn't quite so sure the answer is that easy, and though the children all ask her to be part of their groups, she isn't convinced that any of these is the answer that feels true to her heart. She journeys to the city with her cousin and uncle who tell her parables along the way, acted out by the ensemble. The stories help Mei Lin discover the answer that feels true to her heart and give her the courage to present her own, unique choice to the Emperor.

TADA makes not just theater for young people, but theater by young people. I was mightily impressed with this cast who range in age from 9 to 18 years old. Their dedication and hard work are unmistakable. The performances are tight, the dancing impressive, and this cohesive ensemble certainly exceeded my expectation from a cast of this age (while proving that expectation naive). The sets are exquisite and the production value of the piece is unusually high.

As an audience member, it was fantastic to have the opportunity to bring a child to a proper theater that is purely designed for young people. There is a special space down in the front for kids to get right up in the action and booster seats for little ones who want to stay in their seats with their parents. The play runs about an hour and is suggested for ages five and up, which seemed appropriate. Though littler kids in the audience were easily wrapped into the story (and rapt with the cast) I did notice them getting restless about 3/4 of the way through. Bring some pocket change: there is a "please, mommy, please!"-inducing concession stand in the lobby stocked with irresistible goodies.

The play itself is a lovely story with a great message, unique characters and some fantastic songs. And my kid loved it. But fun as it was, as a parent, honestly I got the most joy from watching these kids perform. It's clear that TADA has created an environment where young theater artists are given a chance to shine in their own right.

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## **VENUE**

[TADA! Youth Theater](#)

## **OPENED**

July 9, 2010

## **CLOSES**

August 4, 2010

## **RUNNING TIME**

1 hour

No Intermission

## **CREATORS & ARTISTS**

### **Cast**

Katie Lerner Lee (14, Brooklyn), Anthony Sanchez (16, Bronx), Darius Davies (17, Brooklyn) Taylor Hogan (17, Queens), Donna Falzone (15, Queens), Jordan Austin-Harmon (15, Hackensack, NJ), Austin Tippograph (14, Manhattan), Romello Rodriguez (12, Bronx), Amiri Taylor (14, Brooklyn), Allison Korby (14, Manhattan), Victoria Cotton (12, Queens), Danikha Katada (13, Manhattan), Chinue Ellis (12, Brooklyn), Logan Riley Bruner (12, Manhattan), Martine Bowman (11, New Rochelle), Reynoldo Nunez (12, Bronx), Chloe Pae (10, Manhattan), Jacob Ross (12, Brooklyn), Kristin Callahan (12, Manhattan), Ceanna Bryant (11, Manhattan) , Miguel Maldonado (11, Jersey City), Tatiana Rosario (13, Bronx), LeAnn Martin (10, Irvington, New Jersey), Josiah Fluker McInnis (10, Brooklyn)., Brielle Raddi (13, Cedar Grove, NJ), Sofie Fusco (9, Manhattan)

### **Director**

Janine Nina Trevens

### **Book, Music, & Lyrics By**

Dane Stauffer