

ARTICLE BY **MATTHEW BUTLER** ON OCTOBER 24, 2011



Nickleby is a hit with the ladies. (L to R: Alanna Boucher, Jessica Allen, and Chris White). Jim Smagata/PHOTO

"Theatre Erindale is back in full swing ... with a brilliant production.... The skilled Peter Van Wart with assistance from Kevin Bowers ... bring their own fresh and innovative take to an already enduring classic. The material is superb, ... filled with a robust accent and custom that enhance the rich text and consistent character development.

This production is flawless in terms of collaborative execution and organization. The complex story and intricate design and details are handled with care and precision. The technical aspects are sublime as well ... the lighting ... the set ... [the] solid stage management.

The energy of the cast was sensational: it filled the room with inspiration. ... Chris White portrayed the protagonist strikingly; Nicholas Marinelli also gave an outstanding performance as the evil Wackford Squeers ... Intelligent, hysterical, and timeless ... a flawless presentation."

Ontario Arts Review

Review by **Terry Gaisin**, Oct. 22nd, '11

"*Nicholas Nickleby* [is] ... a test for the director; an ordeal for the cast; a hardship for the crew and a creative nightmare for set design; Theatre Erindale has aced almost all of these hurdles.

Peter Van Wart & Kevin Bowers have focused on a strategy that offers their audience continuity and a progressive flow while still managing to flesh-out both their major and minor characters.

Alison Blair (Kate Nickleby), and *Chris White* in the title role, both project realistic sibling affection & mutual reliance. ... Surprisingly, it is the anti-hero uncle – Ralph [Jack Morton] – who garners the most attention. Posture, phrasing and an innate sense of timing add weight to his malevolent psyche. ... [As] his major domo 'Noggs' ... *Adam Cresswell* gives a full measure of thespian insight into his strong portrayal. For comic relief, *Julio Ospina* is a standout. The pathetic & challenged 'Smike' ... is given a most sympathetic interpretation by *Hannah Drew*.

The imaginative set by Peter Urbanek is both creative and truly functional.... Clever lighting further enhances the essence of the Yorkshire, London & Portsmouth locales. Costuming by Joanne Massingham is effective ... That so many crew aspects can dovetail and successfully interrelate is a mark of the standard to which [Theatre] Erindale holds its faculty and students....

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY Part 1 needs to be seen. It runs until Oct. 30th."



The Mantalinis have their ups and downs. (L to R: Julio Ospina, Jake Maric, and Charlotte Cattell). Jim Smagata/PHOTO