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STAGE · THEATRE

Broadway's Rocky

BY LAURATWK — 2026-08-01



Let's do the Time Warp again?

Broadway Productions' fourth offering sees them dive headfirst into the gloriously unhinged world of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Following their more structured abridgements of *Les Misérables*, *Phantom*, and *Grease*, this production embraces the beautiful chaos that [Richard O'Brien](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_O%27Brien)¹'s cult classic demands. Under the assured direction and stewardship of Vibrent, the show wears its rough edges proudly, delivering an evening of pure, anarchic entertainment that had the audience dancing in the aisles and cheering from the stalls.

The production runs across four performances with separate Monday and Saturday casts, although there is significant overlap between the two ensembles. **SerenityBunny** reprises the role of *Dr Frank-N-Furter* throughout, alongside **HallieC** as *Magenta*, **RileyFreeze** as *Columbia*, **Scarlett** as *The Criminologist* and **Agitatorx** as *Eddie*. This continuity gives the production a confident core, even as the delightful chaos unfolds around it. *Brad*, *Janet*, *Rocky* and *Riff Raff* are shared between **BenL**, **NinaSin**, **Paulinus** and **JesterPaul** on Saturdays, and **CurtWoodman**, **FeliciaBlack**, **Hikikomori** and **Daveeee** on Mondays.

¹https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_O%27Brien



Beware - major spoilers follow!

The evening opens with **ImTimka** alone on stage to deliver a rendition of Science Fiction/Double Feature. Serving as both overture and mission statement, the song pays tribute to the B-movies that inspired O'Brien's creation while inviting us into this bizarre tale. And yes, the show's iconic lips are present from start to finish on ImTimka's microphone stand.

From there we are plunged into the wedding of Brad and Janet's friends, played with infectious enthusiasm by **Kuroyamm** and ImTimka, before Brad himself proposes in the delightfully upbeat Damn It Janet. Whether portrayed by BenL and NinaSin or CurtWoodman and FeliciaBlack, the central couple capture the wholesome innocence that makes their descent into Frank's world so entertaining to watch. Their chemistry gives the opening scenes a genuine warmth before everything inevitably spirals into delicious madness.

Then, enter my personal favourite character, the brilliantly deadpan Criminologist whose job it is to guide us through Brad and Janet's ill-fated journey: a heavy burden placed on Scarlett's shoulder, which depends on her remaining utterly sincere while narrating increasingly ridiculous events. A task that Scarlett never wavers at. Her dry, matter-of-fact delivery provides exactly the straight-faced anchor that Rocky Horror needs amidst the mounting insanity.

Brad and Janet's ill-fated journey to visit their former science teacher, Dr Scott, soon takes a turn for the worse when a punctured tyre leaves them stranded outside the looming Frankenstein Place. Over at the Frankenstein Place is given an appropriately eerie atmosphere, with Riff Raff's silent, watchful presence in the shadows creating a genuine sense of unease before he finally cracks open the front door to greet the unsuspecting couple.

JesterPaul and Daveeee both do a great job of embodying Riff Raff's gaunt appearance and unsettling stillness make him an imposing figure long before he speaks, while the production's excellent costume design perfectly captures the character's iconic look.



The arrival of the Transylvanian chorus heralds the explosive Time Warp, a number that has the entire audience on its feet. It's a song that has always held a special place in my heart. I loved it long before I realised it came from The Rocky Horror Picture Show, having first heard it on the radio as a youngster, and its infectious, wonderfully nonsensical energy has never failed to raise a smile. Seeing it performed live with such commitment was an absolute joy.

HallieC and RileyFreeze are magnetic as Magenta and Columbia. HallieC brings a knowing confidence to Magenta, balancing a quiet, almost predatory menace with a sly sense of amusement, while RileyFreeze's Columbia is a whirlwind of infectious enthusiasm, throwing herself wholeheartedly into every beat of the choreography. Even in the background, she constantly reacts to the action around her, making the character feel alive throughout the performance.

The Transylvanian ensemble, played by combinations of **lwWwl**, **SoulzXOXO**, **KUROYAMMI**, ImTimka and NinaSin across the two nights, deserves enormous credit. It is wonderful to see so many performers sharing the stage, and the choreography is genuinely excellent from start to finish.

There is something immensely satisfying about watching a large, committed cast execute complex routines in near-perfect unison, and Time Warp delivers exactly the chaotic spectacle audiences hope for. The customary audience participation, from jumps to the left to enthusiastic pelvic thrusts, is embraced with gusto, transforming the theatre into something closer to a party than a conventional theatre performance.



The costumes are equally impressive throughout, but special mention must go to Riff Raff's wardrobe which looked as though it was lifted directly out of the film. Admittedly, I might be a bit biased about this but more on that later...

Combined with the atmospheric lighting and confident choreography, the production fully captures the strange, seductive energy that defines Rocky Horror. After the comparatively restrained worlds of *Les Misérables*, *Phantom* and *Grease*, Broadway Productions revels in the opportunity to embrace complete theatrical anarchy.

However, if *Time Warp* belongs to the ensemble, *Sweet Transvestite* belongs entirely to Dr Frank-N-Furter

SerenityBunny makes a spectacular entrance as Frank, descending from the rafters; a neat nod to the traditional lift seen in the film version. It is a simple adaptation to suit the limitations of the venue, but one that works remarkably well, instantly announcing Frank as the undeniable centre of attention.

Unfortunately, this part of opening night was hampered slightly by technical issues with the music, though these were taken in good spirit by the audience. If anything, a few rough edges almost feel appropriate for Rocky Horror, and by the second performance everything ran smoothly, allowing SerenityBunny to fully command the stage.



Rather than attempting to imitate [Tim Curry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Curry)²'s legendary portrayal, SerenityBunny wisely makes the character her own. She captures Frank's confidence, arrogance and irresistible charisma while embracing the non-conformity that makes the role so iconic. Every entrance, pose and lingering glance feels completely assured, and she commands attention even when surrounded by a full ensemble.

And, whilst the gender bending of the role may raise eyebrows among some purists, Rocky Horror has never been a show interested in rigid conventions. If anything, the casting feels entirely in keeping with the production's celebration of identity, self-expression and joyful defiance and adds an extra layer of subversion to a character already defined by his defiance of the norm.

The stripping of Brad and Janet to their underwear by Riff Raff, Magenta and Columbia follows, a bold choice that immediately signals that this production has no intention of playing things safe. The pair remain in this vulnerable state for much of the evening, serving as a constant visual reminder that they have left the safety of their ordinary world behind and become completely immersed in Frank's.

I am curious to know if there was any deliberate meaning behind the very different choices of underwear for Curt's and Ben's respective versions of Brad when all other wardrobe choices are so faithfully consistent between both casts?

²https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Curry

Frank's subsequent unveiling of Rocky is accompanied by some wonderfully realised practical effects. Crackling electrical displays bring the laboratory sequence to life and perfectly capture the exuberant B-movie aesthetic that lies at the heart of the show. Broadway Productions has consistently demonstrated an impressive knack for making inventive use of practical effects, and this sequence ranks among the company's strongest visual achievements to date.



Whether portrayed by Paulinus or Hikikomori, Rocky emerges as an imposing physical presence whose innocence contrasts sharply with Frank's flamboyant confidence. The Sword of Damocles is delivered with genuine vulnerability, presenting Rocky not simply as a muscular creation but as someone overwhelmed by a world he has only just entered. Frank's response, I Can Make You a Man, allows SerenityBunny another opportunity to revel in the character's playful manipulation, delivering every double entendre with obvious delight.

Agitatorx makes the most of Eddie's comparatively brief appearance, bursting onto the stage with gloriously chaotic energy for Hot Patootie - Bless My Soul. It is a pure shot of rock and roll that injects fresh momentum just as the production threatens to settle into Frank's laboratory antics. I've always had a soft spot for the song thanks to its driving rhythm and infectious swagger, and this performance captures exactly that spirit. Agitatorx throws himself into the role with such commitment that Eddie's all-too-brief appearance leaves a lasting impression before Frank abruptly cuts his time in the spotlight short.

The sudden murder of Eddie serves as a sharp reminder that, beneath all the camp humour and outrageous spectacle, Rocky Horror has always harboured a surprisingly dark streak. Frank's casual brutality lands particularly well here, and the reprise of I Can Make You a Man quickly reasserts his complete dominance over both Rocky and everyone else in the castle.



With the Criminologist once again stepping in to guide the audience through events, Brad and Janet retire to their separate bedrooms, where each is visited by Frank. Here, Nina and Felicia manage to embody the polar opposite ends of Janet's growing sexual awakening. Nina perfectly captures her initial innocence whilst Felicia very much leans more into the more liberated version of Janet that we soon meet

This journey culminates in Touch-a, Touch-a, Touch-a, Touch Me, delivered with infectious enthusiasm as Janet sheds the last remnants of her earlier innocence. This whole bedroom sequence is handled with a little more restraint than the original, with Janet's encounter with Rocky being a little more implied rather than explicitly staged. This is a sensible compromise, though it inevitably loses some of the wonderfully awkward comedy that makes the original scene so memorable.

It is here that the production makes its most significant structural alteration from the usual plot. Until this point, it is almost a one to one reproduction of the show that you may be familiar with, but we now find that the character of Dr Scott has been removed entirely, save for a brief mention of him by the Criminologist early on in the show, resulting in a sizable section of the narrative being skipped entirely.

Broadway Productions has previously demonstrated a knack for using narrators to smooth over cuts in its abridged adaptations, but here there is simply too much missing material for the Criminologist alone to bridge comfortably. Those already familiar with Rocky Horror will have little difficulty filling in the gaps, but newcomers may find these latter stages of the story challenging to follow.



This is at least slightly mitigated by a surprising curveball. Rather than attempting an awkwardly rushed transition, a brief interlude softens the harshness of the cut section. Scarlett sheds her scholarly look as the Criminologist and takes to the stage as Madonna, joined by the chorus performers for a performance of Vogue.

On paper it sounds utterly random. And I certainly have no idea what the inspiration for the choice was. But, in practice, it proves to be an inspired piece of pacing.

I'm not a huge Madonna fan but Vogue is an undisputed classic. Dare I even say, her finest bit of work? Either way, I certainly wasn't about to complain about this particular choice of intermission entertainment. More importantly, the interlude provides the audience with an entertaining breather while the cast prepares for the final act. Without it, the narrative leap that follows would have felt considerably more jarring. Instead, the production pauses just long enough to reset itself before plunging headlong back into the wonderful insanity.

On a side note, and I appreciate this would have put an even greater burden on cast members who were already more than earning keep with their amount of stage time, but I feel like it would have been interesting for each performance to have a different interlude song. Wouldn't it be fun to reward repeat audience members with a truly unique section of the show for each and every viewing?



Anyway, the show resumes with Columbia, Rocky, Brad and Janet prepared for Frank's cabaret floor show. Those familiar with the film will immediately notice another omission immediately before this: the sequence in which the characters are transformed into living statues has been removed entirely. Here they simply reappear in their new, saucier costumes without explanation. It is a slightly abrupt transition, but one that keeps the production moving at a brisk pace and avoids lingering on a sequence that would have been difficult to recreate convincingly.

Rose Tint My World opens the floor show with plenty of energy, giving the principal cast another opportunity to demonstrate both their vocal ability and the production's consistently strong choreography. The number flows naturally into Don't Dream It, Be It, which SerenityBunny delivers with a surprising amount of sincerity beneath Frank's usual theatrical bravado. It is easy to forget, amid all the outrageous costumes, innuendo and spectacle, that Frank is ultimately a tragic character, and this quieter moment allows a glimpse of the vulnerability hidden beneath the confidence.

The energy quickly returns for Wild and Untamed Thing, bringing the cabaret sequence to an exuberant climax. By this point the audience is fully invested, enthusiastically dancing along once again and embracing the joyful chaos that has defined the evening from the outset.

If I have one criticism of this section, it is that the staging becomes slightly static. Earlier scenes make excellent use of the various sets, constantly shifting the action around the stage to create a sense of movement. During the floor show, however, many performers remain in roughly the same positions across several consecutive numbers with the central microphone being the constant centre of attention rather than the focus ever being allowed to shift around the stage a bit; something that Broadway Productions usually pull off so well.

It is only a minor observation, but it does make the climax feel a little less visually dynamic than the wonderfully inventive opening half despite the great choreography. I appreciate that that might feel like a bit of a contradiction but it is what it is. And there is a danger that the quickfire nature of the songs at this point does make them become a little bit of a slog without more visual cues to break up the relentless flow of music into slightly more digestible section.

Mind you, this is some thing that could justifiably be thrown at the source material as well as there can be a certain degree of musical fatigue setting in at this point.



All of that is quickly forgotten once Riff Raff and Magenta re-enter the fray though, appearing in their otherworldly uniforms.

The reveal remains one of Rocky Horror's great theatrical moments, and the production wisely allows it to breathe. HallieC and both incarnations of Riff Raff, whether it be JesterPaul or Daveeee, project a newfound authority that immediately shifts the balance of power. The eccentric servants who have quietly observed events throughout the evening suddenly become commanding figures, and the change is handled with impressive confidence.

This, in turn, leads into what is perhaps the show's most unexpectedly emotional moment.

I'm Going Home has always stood apart from the rest of the score. After over an hour of gleeful anarchy, sexual liberation and wonderfully ridiculous excess, the song strips everything back to reveal Frank at his most vulnerable. The bravado fades away, replaced by genuine melancholy as the character reflects on everything he stands to lose. Combined with a dramatic dimming of the lights, which isolates Frank in a beautifully defined spotlight, the result is one of the production's strongest dramatic moments.

Riff Raff's execution of Frank follows with appropriate shock, though this adaptation takes a notably gentler approach than either the stage show or film. There were a couple of other characters who I was expecting to meet their demise alongside Frank (I won't spoil who on the off chance that there are those that don't know how the finale plays out), but seemingly manage to escape unscathed, leaving Frank as the sole casualty of the finale act. It is an interesting creative decision that gives this version its own identity, even if it slightly softens the tragic inevitability of the original ending.



Super Heroes and the reprise of Science Fiction/Double Feature bring the evening full circle. After everything that has happened, the familiar melody provides a fitting sense of closure, gently bringing the audience back to reality after spending the show's runtime inside Frank's wonderfully bizarre world.

The atmosphere throughout the evening is nothing short of electric. Long before the curtain rises, audience members arrive dressed in fishnets, corsets, lab coats and an assortment of wonderfully eccentric Rocky Horror-inspired outfits, transforming the theatre into something closer to a celebration than a conventional performance. By the time Time Warp arrives, any distinction between cast and audience has all but disappeared. People dance in the aisles, enthusiastically join in the callbacks, and embrace the participatory spirit that has always been at the heart of The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

It is this atmosphere that Broadway Productions captures so well. Unlike many of the company's previous productions, Rocky Horror does not demand polished perfection or heartfelt earnestness. It thrives on spontaneity, audience interaction and a healthy dose of theatrical chaos. The occasional rough edge never detracts from the experience. If anything, it enhances it, making the whole evening feel delightfully unpredictable in exactly the way it should.



Now, before concluding, I must indulge in a brief detour into a little personal reflection.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show was my late brother's favourite musical. He attended countless sing-a-long screenings over the years and, in a curious twist, bore a passing resemblance to Richard O'Brien himself, albeit without Riff Raff's famously wild hair (think O'Brien during his Crystal Maze years). His costume choice whenever he attended was therefore something of a foregone conclusion. And now you know where my earlier bias towards him having the best wardrobe in this production comes from.

Every time I watch Rocky Horror, I find myself thinking of my departed brother.

However, far from making the experience a melancholy one, it reminds me of the immense joy this wonderfully strange show brought into his life. Watching Broadway Productions' interpretation, surrounded by laughter, singing and unabashed silliness, I could almost picture him standing somewhere among the audience, completely immersed in the glorious absurdity of it all. It is a thought that never fails to bring a smile to my face, and one that made this production resonate with me on a very personal level.

All of this is to say, Broadway Productions' Rocky Horror Picture Show is an anarchy-embracing triumph that understands exactly what makes this enduring cult classic so beloved. The choreography is consistently excellent, the costumes are superb, the practical effects are inventive, and the performances are delivered with infectious enthusiasm throughout.

While there are some awkward narrative leaps that may leave newcomers scratching their heads, the performance more than compensates with sheer energy, confidence and an obvious affection for the source material. But, then again, the whole thing is so unhinged that maybe any incongruities in the story don't even feel out of place. You don't question such things; you just go with it.

More than anything else, this production understands that Rocky Horror is not a show to be observed politely from a distance. It is something to be experienced, celebrated and joined in with. Broadway Productions embraces that philosophy wholeheartedly, delivering an evening that is chaotic, joyful, gloriously camp and utterly unforgettable.



However, if I have one wish for any future runs of this productions, it would be for Columbia to receive a little more of the spotlight. Her tragic journey from fawning devotee to discarded lover is, for me at least, one of the show's most poignant threads and a superb counterpoint to Brad and Janet's journey in the completely opposite direction. I do understand why the slightly abridged format necessarily trims some of her more vulnerable moments leaving us with

just hints of the tragedy of her character. It still would have been nice to see these given chance to develop a little further though.

With Rocky Horror they have once again demonstrated a willingness to take creative risks, push the boundaries of what can be achieved, and, above all, remind audiences why live theatre remains such a uniquely communal experience.

For longtime fans, this is an affectionate celebration of everything that has made The Rocky Horror Picture Show a cultural phenomenon for over half a century. For newcomers, it is a wonderfully bewildering introduction to a world where the normal rules simply do not apply, even if they might come away scratching their heads a little.

Let's do the Time Warp again? Abso-bloody-lutely!

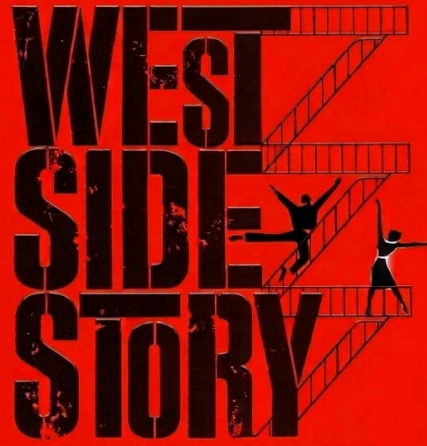


*Broadway Productions will be back in October with their newest production:
West Side Story³*

³<https://thehiddencircle.com/west-side-story/>

Broadway Productions

WEST SIDE STORY



**Producer & Director
Vibrent**

**Choreographer & Assistant Director
Scarlett**

**Show Dates
October 17, 19, 24 & 26**

**Doors Open
8:45pm CET | 2:45pm EST**

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