

Cultural Daily

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Glorious Dame Edna's Farewell Visit?

Sylvie · Wednesday, February 4th, 2015

It's hard to get mad at Dame Edna Everage, the grandly mauve elder stateswoman from Australia with rhinestone everything, from butterfly glasses to sparkly clothes, to draping rivers of unnecessary jewelry that she couldn't possibly live without. Yes, possums (her term of endearment for all us civilians out there in the dark), Dame Edna's back and The Ahmanson's got her.

She's holding court on her *Glorious Goodbye Farewell Tour*, the first one anyway, and the opening night possums were regaling her by having a grand old time, whooping and hollering and clearly enjoying all the wink-wink and nod-nod that Dame Edna made sure was going on.

This time around, she had a pianist and a retinue of four eye-candy dancer/assistants brandishing lavender ostrich feather fans as both shields and weapons — just the right Sally Rand touch in this evening of music-hall humor, a little dance and lots and lots of mildly *risqué* down-home chumminess. All of it delivered, of course, from the dizzying heights of the Dame's grandeurness.



Dae Edna greeting the Possums. Photo by Matt Jelonek.

Dame Edna *is* an old friend — and I mean this in the best possible sense. She has been gracing us with these theatrical visits for some time now. If the jokes are a tad tired and the interactive improvisation runs to lengthy — see her attempt to marry a couple of audience members to each other, even though one of them was already married and the other had a son who had to be telephoned from the stage about all this — it was, yes, all a tad overextended. I bet the 90-minute intermissionless version of this show would knock your socks off. Perhaps she can surprise us with that on the next *Glorious Goodbye Farewell Tour*.

On the other hand, you can't beat a line that defines an ashram as “a trailer park for the soul,” which, by the way, is one of the places that Dame Edna explored in search of her “real” self. Finding that self, however, is not what this show's about. Searching for it is. Dame Edna *did* seem to do a good deal of meandering around the subject (spirituality and all that), but when the punch lines turn to Princess Cruises (why *do* the wrong people travel?), food, fatness and bodily functions, it does begin to seem a wee bit *déclassé*. Not quite up to this great Dame's vaunted standards.

And yet, possums, nobody seemed to mind. To quote another grand (and quirky) Dame, Dame

Muriel Spark: “For those who like that sort of thing, that is the sort of thing they like.” And there were very many of them/those in that opening night audience who were having a perfectly wonderful time.

WHAT: *Dame Edna’s Glorious Goodbye, the Farewell Tour*

WHERE: Ahmanson Theatre, 135 N. Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

WHEN: Wednesdays-Fridays, 8pm; Saturdays, 2 & 8 pm; Sundays, 1pm. Through March 15. **Exceptions:** no 8pm performance Jan. 31, Feb 20, March 5 or 7; no 1pm performance Feb 8 or 22; no 2pm performance Feb 14 **Added performances:** 6:30 pm Sundays, Feb 8, 15 & 22; 8 pm; Tuesdays, Feb 10, 17 & 24; 2 pm Thursday, March 5

HOW: Tickets \$25 – \$115 (prices subject to change). Available at the Ahmanson Box Office, at www.centertheatregroup.org and at 213.972.4400

Top photo: Dame Edna (Barry Humphries) & Company. Photo by Matt Jelonek.

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