

## Ooooogy Green and Other Fables

Reviewed by Jon Steely

May 27, 2009

Playwright Page Hearn, with a little help from Brooke Pacy's original story, has created a weird and wonderful world centered on, of all things, a caterpillar-boy named Ooooogy (Brian Pugach), who is a good, old-fashioned misfit, just like a certain red-nosed reindeer who went down in history. Ooooogy is teased by his more ordinary peers, who target him for being "green" and "different." Enter a fox, a peacock, and an assorted forest full of friends (Michael Mullen, Joy Nash, Jennifer Grace, and Melanie Portney) to share the definition of a fable with Ooooogy.

From here, life's lessons are taught through enchanting enactments of Aesop's fables, featuring music, puppets, costumes, and songs, all punctuated by a creative array of sound effects. After learning the morals of a few stories—some people hate the things they can't have, what you can do is more important than how you look—Ooooogy gets the hang of it and makes up a fable of his own. Pugach (whose big eyes and big talent are reminiscent of a younger Elijah Wood) is magnificent as Ooooogy, nicely giving the young insect-boy a sense of bewilderment typically reserved for the face of a child discovering life's wonders for the first time.

The terrific ensemble cast shines as bright and colorfully as the variety of animals played. Director Louise Hung effectively glides this delightful gang of storyteller-actor-singer-puppeteers, backed by a fun original score (Pugach). In the end, Ooooogy learns his most important lesson: The very thing that makes us "different" is exactly what makes us special, so be proud of who you are! Aside from being a great outing for the kids, this production is a great reminder of a few lessons that wouldn't hurt us adults to brush up on from time to time.

*Presented by and at the Celebration Theatre, 7051-B Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood.*

*May 23–June 20. Sat., 10:30 a.m. and*

*1 p.m. (323) 957-1884. [www.celebrationtheatre.com](http://www.celebrationtheatre.com).*