

# Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

## Oslo's De tre Musketerer Provides a Flurry of Colors, Sounds and Audience Adoration

Tod Hardin · Wednesday, February 18th, 2015

### *Lilyhammer* Stars Provide Two of Many Good-Time Performances



Trond Fausa Aurvåg's King Ludvig VIII takes a leap.

Let me begin by saying that I am not an aficionado of theatre, especially not big-production musicals. They typically leave me bored and quickly annoying anybody seated next to me with my drooping head and occasional snoring. Thus, I'm certainly no qualified critic of the art form, and don't claim to be. However, last week I had an experience that has stuck with me since, and perhaps might be worthy of sharing here. I hope it is.

Over the past year, I have had the pleasure of coming to know the versatile Norwegian actor Trond Fausa Aurvåg. If you haven't seen his scene-stealing performances in Netflix's *Lilyhammer* series, you are missing out on one of the best hidden gems on "television." So when Trond emailed me with an offer to come check out his new production in Oslo, I couldn't resist, especially given his description: "Well, I'm not sure how good it will be, but it's a musical production of The Three Musketeers set to the music of the 80s – where glam rock battles pop rock." Despite my scorn for musicals, I knew with my love for the Dumas classic, and for the horribly delicious sounds of the 80s, that I was in! *De tre Musketerer*, the vision of director Alexander Mørk-Eidem, would be on my docket for my weekend getaway to Norway.

[alert type=alert-red ]Read Our Interview with [Trond Fausa Aurvåg](#).[/alert]

"I sat down and wrote a script where Dumas' story of scoundrels meets the pulsating music scene of the 80s," offered writer/director, Mørk-Eidem. "Where guitars challenge synthesizers in duels, where the good guys do rock and the bad guys do pop, whilst following country boy D'Artagnan's adventurous journey from rags to riches in the big city."



Nader Khademi's Rochefort drewFor three hours I participated in what could only be described as a laughter at every turn. love fest of sounds, colors and nostalgia.

Is the show art? Is it great theatre? Hey, I'll leave that up to the theatrically intellectual crowd to decide. I only needed to observe the sold out audience of 1,400 at Oslo's Folketeateret, not to mention my own realization that I was laughing, singing, and clapping right along with them from

the opening scene all the way to the end. And did I mention it was three hours long ... and that 70% of the dialogue is in Norwegian?!? FYI: I don't speak Norwegian.

Aurvåg, who portrays King Ludvig VIII and the Duke of Buckingham, offered these insights:

“The show has over 40 hits from the eighties so most of the audience are familiar to the music they will hear and perhaps they have good and nostalgic feelings to some of the songs and that alone could put them in a good mood. And the costumes and make-up are comically exaggerated (as well as the acting).”

If there is any criticism on my part, it's only that a few of the vocal performances could have been stronger, but that did not take away from the spectacle provided by the memory-provoking song selection, the impressive multi-level set, the comedic flare offered by many of the characters – especially Trond's King Ludvig VIII, Nader Khademi's Rochefort, and Porthos, played by Robert Skjærstad's, who can also be seen on *Lilyhammer* – and the breathtaking costumes designed by Maria Gyllenhoff. And don't misunderstand my assessment of vocal quality. There are many wonderful performances in this production and even those that might be a tad lacking certainly don't keep you from enjoying it. Perfection was not required and certainly did not keep the audience from having what I would describe as a rocking good time.

Producer Karianne Jæger closes us out with these comments when I asked here what has most surprised here:

“The amazing response from the audience! They are absolutely crazy about the show. ‘This is the best show that we have ever seen!’ comments have been very common.”

De tre Musketerer is currently silent, but opens another run at Oslo's Folketeateret Theatre on Thursday, February 26. If you happen to be in Oslo, catch this show! For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).



L to R: Mattis Herman Nyquist as Aramis, Henrik Rafaelsen as Athos, Benjamin Helstad as D'Artagnan, and Robert Skjærstad as Porthos.



Solveig Andsnes (center) stood out in The Ensemble.



The Duke of Buckingham was a riot and a bit Rotten.



More of Trond's King Ludvig VIII



Kjersti Botn Sandal plays a devilishly likable Queen Anne.



Ellen Dorrit Pedersen is elegant and sassy as My Lady.



Eindride Eidsvold is divine as the Cardinal.

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