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'Fate': Ambitious musical a success

By: Tracy Cummings - For the North County Times

Sometimes, people lose everything. Their loves, their lives. Must they also lose hope?

"Fate the Musical," written and directed by Heather Megill, depicts the most painful thing we know: loss. It pins loss next to our greatest joy, eternal love. "Fate" draws its strength from our hope that love will endure forever.

In "Fate," ghosts wander the Earth. Mrs. Porter and her daughter, Elizabeth, can't see or hear Mr. Porter's loving ghost beside them. It is World War I, and Elizabeth will be a nurse in the battlefields of France. The man who loves her, James, will be a soldier there. Elizabeth doesn't love James, and he stalks her even after she falls in love with William. James' obsessive love can only lead to a tragic end.

Eric Anderson (James) is superbly sinister. His voice is so exceptional; his solo, "James' Song," stuns --- and chills. His conflict with William



"Fate"
When: 8 p.m. today-Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday
Where: Carlsbad Cultural Arts Center, 3557 Monroe St., Carlsbad
Tickets: \$15, general; \$12, seniors, students and military
Info: (760) 724-2110

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(Brian Maples) is accentuated by Maples' voice. It is beautiful and suits his gentle character. Both Karensa LeGear (Elizabeth) and Lauren Gira (Emily) have emotional range, with LeGear marvelous at singing despair. Gira brings amazing maturity to Act II, set 26 years after Act I. To top off this incredible cast, Elizabeth's mother (Cathy Gene Greenwood) hits notes so beautiful that we wish they would never end.



Despite the tragedies of Act I, William and Elizabeth are destined to be together, and James is destined to trespass in on them. Although Act II's "Why Can't I Remember" is complex and revealing, "Confrontation," a duet with Maples and Anderson, should be more potent, given these actors' strengths. The end of Act II feels rushed, something normal for debut productions. Indeed, some might find this welcome: Fate is two hours, 45 minutes long (including intermission).

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Nonetheless, as a director and a playwright, Heather Megill has achieved the amazing and compelling. Some don't attend new musicals, but "Fate's" structure is familiar and never boring. Under Megill's expert direction, interesting and often comedic action always happens. Her songs are beautiful and memorable. Megill achieves all her highest ambitions.

What Megill achieves is a voyage past common sense and directly into the human heart. "Fate" offers us a hope we dare not trust and delivers a wise faith. It should become part of the American musical repertoire. But do not miss

it now, destiny doesn't hurry, and missing "Fate" would be a great loss. Take the time now.

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- Kulchin to run for seventh term
- Pennsylvania attorney general sues vest manufacturer
- Drunk driver receives two-year prison term
- County names Anthony fire chief
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- County to form creek panel
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