

DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS – THE MUSICAL (SYDNEY)

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, though, is the playground for Sheldon and Hetherington, and they consistently, and reliably, anchor the show with their stellar performances. Sheldon, a Tony nominee, has been missed on Australian stages, and his performance is delightfully unexpected; he has a way of twirling his proverbial villain's mustache with nuance and grace. Hetherington brings that recklessness into his excitingly careening vocals and his rakish, enthusiastic character, and together they are a well-balanced, well-oiled machine.

Reviewed by: [Cassie Tongue Aussietheatre.com.au](http://CassieTongueAussietheatre.com.au)

Hetherington's slapstick is particularly impressive. He borrows a lot from Steve Martin, but pushes it even further so that it translates to stage. His vocal performance is absolutely stunning, and shows remarkable versatility.

By *Ben Neutze*

Never before has a more charismatic duo existed on stage than **Tony Sheldon** and **Matt Hetherington**! These gentlemen are exceptionally talented singers, actors and comedians, who are an absolute pleasure to watch in action. I haven't laughed this hard in the theatre for a very long time.

The character everybody was most excited to see is **Ruprecht**, which Steve Martin nailed so perfectly in the film! (See video at the end of this article). Matt Hetherington takes this role to new and hilariously seedy heights with the song "All About Ruprecht",

Simon Edds

Matt Hetherington gives a masterclass in the power of understated, authentic comedy, resisting every possibility to mug or go over the top. Back in the role that won him the 2009 Green Room Award, Hetherington's singing and acting are in peak form. He is a joy to watch.

Simon Parris

Hetherington is the dishevelled, cocky goofball whose charms would be extremely dubious indeed if not tempered with sweetness and boyish buoyancy. Let's put it this way: he manages to sell a scene in which Freddy pretends to be Lawrence's chromosomally challenged brother, a scene replete not just with sexual innuendo but graphic sexual horseplay. As I say, sweet.

- DEBORAH JONES
- THE AUSTRALIAN

Steve Martin possesses a comical style all his own and while Matt Hetherington, as Freddy Benson, draws conspicuously on the former's lexicon of facial expressions, he (and, presumably, director Roger Hodgman) have had the good sense to use it as an influence, rather than a hard-and-fast template, or blueprint. The result is an entirely realised opportunity for Hetherington to remake the role at least somewhat in his own image and to consolidate his position in the top echelon of musical performers. As the sleazy Freddy, he's excruciatingly good.

BY LLOYD BRADFORD SYKE

Matt Hetherington has a powerful rock voice and he does a great job on Great Big Stuff. He is also brilliantly cast as the apprentice scoundrel as he has the most enchanting cheeky face.

By John Holden

Matt Hetherington was absolutely scintillating, rendering the best impression of Norbert Leo Butz (originator of Hetherington's role, playboy Freddy Benson) that you'll see this side of the Pacific.

Written by James Gauci

DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS 2009

Brown and **Hetherington** are a wonderful comic duo. **Brown** providing a solid straight man to **Hetherington's** show stealing funny man, *Freddy*.

Hetherington has a captivating charisma and fearlessness, humping (quite literally!) and bumping about the stage with abandon. '*All About Ruprecht*', in which *Freddy* plays as the mentally-challenged *Ruprecht*, brother to *Prance*, was too funny to be deemed offensive. Most entertaining, however, was the gospel-inspired '*Love Is My Legs*', in which *Freddy* plays as *Sergeant Buzz Benson*, a war veteran with 'dance fever' (i.e. no feeling in his legs), who learns to walk again with the power of love (or, perhaps I should say, lurve) – and *Christine Colgate*.

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels is currently wowing audiences at the Theatre Royal in Sydney showcasing a hilarious script, entertaining musical numbers, a talented cast and a simple but brilliant story.

I must start the review by saying one thing: **Matt Hetherington**, take a bow.

Wow, what a performance! I definitely did not realise just how talented this man is when I watched him on the original season of *The Voice*. **Matt Hetherington** steals the show as *Freddy*, the loveable con man keen to charm and trick his way to owning lots of 'big stuff'. *Freddy* forms a love-hate bond with fellow con, *Lawrence*, played by the charismatic **Tony Sheldon** who agrees to take *Freddy* under his wing and teach him the ways of the trade.

The show has you laughing from beginning to end as the two con men compete to steal the spotlight both in the show and in reality. The musical is based on the hit 1988 film of the same name starring screen legends **Michael Caine** and **Steve Martin**. Unlike many movie to musical translations, this one is certainly not a flop and is definitely worth seeing. No-one will leave the theatre disappointed. The two lead men were superbly cast and made the roles their own. To their credit, they didn't just try to be **Michael Caine** or **Steve Martin**, they delivered it their own way and embraced the nature of their characters even in their smallest movements on stage.

by Emma Cambey

Matt Hetherington as Freddy Benson is a perfect fit; one can hardly imagine any other actor more suited for the role. Hetherington is the proverbial “triple threat” incarnate, with a killer singing voice, impressive command of choreography, and seriously hilarious comic abilities. His star shines irresistibly bright in this production.

SUZY GOES

Mr Hetherington plays, nicely harnessed in the flamboyant and dangerous possible excesses of the low, low comic role of Freddy, with masterful hysteria, balancing expertly with physical confabulations of Chaplinesque/Stooges extremities, to beautifully counterbalance the poise and elegance of his partner-in-crime, Mr Sheldon. A duo of meshing professional restraints that elevates their comedy teaming to a higher art form of considerable taste and charm of effort, which has, of late, been much missed, on our stages.

Kevin Jackson

2013 SYDNEY THEATRE AWARDS WINNERS (20JAN14)

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels scooped the pool in the musical awards, winning Best Production of a Musical, the Judith

Johnson Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Musical (Matt Hetherington)