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Review: Alice/Neo-Futurists

SEPTEMBER 23, 2004 AT 5:27 PM BY [ILANAKOWARSKI](#)

RECOMMENDED

Residents of Andersonville will be treated to the spectacle of single files of adults clutching enormous pencils being led by a bunny-eared guide for the next several weekends, as Noelle Krimm's Neo-Futurist adaptation of "Alice in Wonderland" transforms their neighborhood. As much a mini-festival as a single play, "Alice" enlists members of several of Chicago's more adventurous theatre companies (House Theatre, Kapoot Clown Theater, David Kodeski) to each adapt an episode from Lewis Carroll. The results, as might be expected, are mixed. Kapoot Clown Theater offers a brilliant version of the Mad Tea Party as performed by demented futuristic mimes—a cross between Beckett and the Teletubbies. And Brian Torrey Scott, Nicholas Monsour, and Jeff Harms enact a lovely bit of Tarantinoesque nonsense in the confines of Simon's Tavern. Episodes that stick more closely to the book sometimes threaten to fall into children's-theatre clichés. Even these lapses, though, make sense given that the White Rabbit's elementary-teacher tirades (leading us, for instance, in "buddy chants") transport the audience to the vulnerability and mystery of the second grade. Throughout, the production displays impeccable logistic skill and a striking sense of space; in the best environmental theatre tradition, it renews the audience's sense of wonder at their surroundings. (John Beer)

"Alice" runs at six Andersonville venues, with walking tours beginning and ending at The Neofuturarium, 5153 North Ashland, (773)275-5255, through October 24.

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