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Theatre Orangeville holds annual ?Twas the Night gala at Hockley Valley Resort

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Orangeville's most anticipated day of the year arrived on Saturday, Nov. 15, as actors, staff, board members and supporters, both new and old, gathered for a night of entertainment and food.

?Twas the Night is the theatre's most important fundraising event, and is responsible for a significant chunk of funding for the local theatre each year. The fundraiser, which took place at Hockley Valley Resort, raised thousands to invest in bringing higher-quality entertainment to the town.

Guests were initially greeted with drinks and snacks upon arrival, then brought into the large ballroom to be seated and served a three-course dinner, with, of course, live entertainment.

Theatre Orangeville Artistic Director Jennifer Stewart said that the night was a roaring success.

?We had so much fun, we were in a glorious resort, and everyone was dressed to the nines,? she said. ?Everyone here was excited to be able to support Theatre Orangeville, and of course, they're excited to be able to dress up and go out to have a nice meal and be entertained, too.?

Entertainment wasn't pulling any punches Saturday night.

Theatre Orangeville's Young Company made their mark as they took the stage to perform parts of the production of Hadestown: Teen Edition. Showcasing their superb skills on stage, their performance, led by a youthful cast, was a reminder to guests of who their donations would support.

Evidently, the theatre's focus on high quality is paying off. Stewart said this year is even more successful than last, as the performing arts continue to recover from the COVID pandemic.

?We're actually up from last year, which is so exciting for us,? she said. ?All we want to do is keep building our sponsors and donors. We just want people to have a good time, have a good meal and spend time with friends.?

The sentiment was shared by Board Director Laura Austin, who praised the Young Company cast for delivering a performance that amazed the crowd.

?The night went excellently, it was full of enthusiasm and support,? she said. ?Young Company did a stellar job as the entertainment, which is what this is all about. Supporting our youth programs.?

Austin said that this year they were seeing a reassuring mix of both old and new supporters of the theatre, including generational supporters, such as parents whose kids are now grown adults, who continue to donate to the theatre.

Following Young Company's performance, the cast for the upcoming production of Rapunzel: A Braid New World took the stage to sing for guests, showing off the upcoming pantomime's all-star cast.

To complement the food and entertainment, Theatre Orangeville added some extra incentives for people to donate. A live and silent auction was held throughout the night, offering guests the chance to win exclusive prizes they couldn't get anywhere else. Offers included exclusive tickets to the most prestigious theatrical performances in the region, as well as a very special lamp made from a

mannequin's leg.

The silent auction at the back of the room, with dozens of items ranging from gift baskets to sports tickets, offered guests a chance to walk about and mingle.

?Twas the Night 2025 offered something for everybody to enjoy. From good food and live entertainment to fundraising incentives, the community came out in force to support the local arts.