

Theater: "King Charles III" Goes Back To The Future

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KING CHARLES III *** 1/2 out of ****
THE MUSIC BOX

The play's the thing and what a thing, to play
 With royals of today that we all know.
 Not dim, rememb'red names of long ago
 But Charles, Camilla, Will'am and Kate,
 Unhappy Harry bemoaning his fate.
 A spare -- no heir -- should be devil-may care.
 But fame's a bore with no burden to share,
 As dad can say. Who else can weigh the way
 A role -- sans play -- may cut the soul away?

For Chuck did wait and wait without abate.
 Not for his mom to die. (Who would? Who could?)
 But for a chance to do some kingly good.
 And now at last the sad and happy day
 Is here in bleak and wonderful array.
 The queen is dead, as Morrissey once said,
 And now, it's true, the King is glad and blue.

Yet here's a chance to leave his stamp anew!
 (And not just stamp his face on pape and glue.)
 A bill awaits, that nibbles at the press.
 And all it lacks is Chuck's pro forma yes.
 He hates the press; they press and press, I guess.
 But cut their rights and leave them less and less?
 Chuck lifts the pen and then he puts it down.
 Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.
 He makes them wait (a moment he did earn).
 The nation holds its breath and cities burn.

And that's the plot as Bartlett depicts it,
 In meter five and rhythm iambic.
 Oh, yes, he writes as Bill S. did way back
 (A talent he has and I sorely lack).
 And Piggott-Smith, Tim (a talented thing)
 Gives grace and pain to one almost crowned king.

I wish that Jess, the girl that woos Harry,
 Had more to say or do to convince me
 That she was more than just someone's fancy.
 Some smarts, some soul, some spark that would show off

That Jess was more than merely not some toff.
 Though don't blame Steen, she's good and quite blameless
 (The cast in all is good, though here nameless).

Tom Scutt does well with his classical set.
 And Pook has tunes that Glass would ne'er regret.
 While Goold does good in helming this new play
 The end drags on, though ain't that just Will's way?
 It's smart and sad and fun barely legal:
 A history play whose future is regal.

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Da no rating

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[Hamlet w Peter Sarsgaard at CSC](#) no stars

[The King And I](#) ***