

Cinderella Trophy (Moderator) Review

What better way to see out the old year than to watch a pantomime bordering professionalism in places and surrounded by hundreds of screaming children! This I did as I made my way into the Strode Theatre in Street where Glastonbury and Street Musical Comedy Society were performing Jack and the Beanstalk.

The script, written and directed by Matthew Maisey, contained all the ingredients that you would expect from this very well-known pantomime. What really shone through for me was the standard of acting and singing from all principals. Their training in vocal technique certainly paid off thanks to the talents of tutor Laura Lewis.

In terms of direction the show contained many contemporary allusions. Pace was excellent throughout and crowd reaction impeccable. This was certainly a resplendent show and all principals, dancers, chorus and junior chorus (Team B) held the production together with flair.

Although your adjudication report will provide an in-depth account of all characters, I would personally like to mention a few who really caught my eye.

Without comedy, pantomime cannot flourish. The best shows are those productions where humour is delivered with confidence. Matt Wilson's Simple Simon was first class. From the moment you appeared, you commanded our attention. Your energy flooded the stage, you had all the right qualities as a linkman and your delivery was perfect.

Dave Bonser's Fleshcreep gave a terrific performance. You had excellent physicality and evil precision. Your strong relationship with an audience full of children was well established and you marked the nature of this character with a distinctive vocal tone. An accomplished piece of theatre!

Niamh Small's Princess Violet gave us a strong and sweet portrayal that certainly fitted the genre. Violet's Lament was a memorable highlight for me. A sound performance.

Using sets from Scenery Hire Ltd and Little Shop of Hires was an excellent choice. The scenery made the show what it was and changes were smoothly undertaken, swiftly and silently throughout.

A wonderful array of colourful costumes were provided by Triple C's Costume. However, I would liked to have seen more outrageous and over the top dresses worn by Dame Deirdre. A hoop and padding certainly would have enhanced this character.

Lighting and special effects were created well. I enjoyed the growth of the beanstalk. The litter falling out of the bin added to this 'magical moment'

While we could certainly hear the giant – although a little distorted on occasions – it was a pity we were not treated to any brief sightings of him – or at least parts of his anatomy!

Just a thought – as a magical entertainer for over 40 years I am aware that many young children actually believe in magic, as they do Santa. Seeing cast in costume 'out of character' after a show destroys the magic and fantasy of pantomime immediately. I have always strongly advised players to keep their distance from the audience to protect the theatrical mystery. While it is natural for some of us to want to meet the cast, it is best if this happens backstage. **[G&SMCS comment to readers: The post panto line-up is a society tradition and is not specific to this show]**

This was an excellent production that I enjoyed from beginning to end. The audience were with you all the way and I would personally like to applaud you for an entertaining spectacle.

Nigel Ford.

Moderator SFD