

North Essex Theatre Guild
Showcase Festival

Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs
Wickham Bishops Drama Club
Matinee Saturday 9th January

Front of House

We were warmly welcomed by a friendly team and shown to good seats in the centre of the auditorium amongst a very full hall, where sweets and goodies were available show and during the interval as well as cold drinks.

The programme was a delight with a very bright cover, cast photos, and lots of informative information about the cast and the group.

Set & Properties

The sets were beautifully designed colourful and imaginative, I loved the Diamond Mine and Forest. The Scenes we changed quickly and quietly which enhanced the flow of the production.

Was a little bewildered to see the that the Dwarfs were using axes rather than pick axes to dig in the mine.

Lighting

The sets and atmosphere were greatly enhanced by the lighting design and operation.

Colours were used to highlight certain characters and spotlights were used for the soloists. The greatest compliments that can be given to the lighting designer is that you didn't really notice the lighting as was the case in this production

Sound

Generally, the sound was good with taped music used replacing the normal live music to accompany the actors singing. However, there were a few occasions when the taped music was too loud and drowned out the singer's voices even those having the benefit of mics.

Thunder and lightning gave a haunting sound whenever something evil was about to happen adding to the ambiance of the production.

Half the cast had the benefit of radio mics (if you consider that a benefit) which of course means the other half didn't! This created a very distinctive imbalance in the quality of the sound and projection of the actors and I understand that some of the audience were unable to hear some of the unmiced actors. A great pity!

Costumes

What a wonderful collection of costumes, rich, colourful and beautifully matching.

The Chorus were well blended in yellow and blue, the young members of the cast so sweet in their animal costumes and spirits of the forest

All the principles wore costumes which enhanced their characters. Wigs and make up were well thought out

Well done

Choreography

Heather Howard obviously worked very hard with her movers, the dance and movement was well designed and well-rehearsed adding much to the overall production

Performances

Snow White- Natasha Newman

Making a very attractive heroine Natasha had a lovely smile and her movements were mostly very graceful in the main, I felt that as one of the principle characters in the play she needed to command the stage more and to create more emotion and connection with her prince and more confidence in her singing

Prince Ferdinand -James Bacon

James had confidence and good body language as he strode on to the stage royally

The choice of his very difficult opening solo did not quite suite his voice range also he needed to create a more romantic connection with Snow White

I would have liked to have seen more pace in in the character and positive movement rather than the tenuous moves from foot to foot

Queen Avarice - Moira Monti

Tall and arrogant Moira dominated the stage, as indeed the character needs to do to establish her evil dominance, I think she used every evil trick she could muster, Moira established a real stage presence from the time she first appeared until her banishment to the diamond mines at the end of the production.

It was a pity that Moira didn't have the benefit of the radio mic as the one thing her performance lacked was volume and a deeper tone would have made the Queen even more evil

A very good performance

Edna Bucket- Jack Williams

Jack made quite a different Dame, young, slim and very energetic, but also with touches of tradition.

Jack built up a great rapport with the audience and also interacted very well with the other members of the cast, especially with chuckles, their banter was very amusing and well timed

His characterisation was amusing and lively, quite exhausting at times. Jack made a lovable cheeky Dame.

Chuckles- Sam Knott

What a great sense of Comedy and comic timing Sam has. Bounding on stage with loads of energy and confidence he was the perfect jester.

His enjoyment was obvious, makes me think he should consider "Stand Up2 comedy as an extra job as he is naturally funny.

If his accent was assumed it was very good, but a little at odds with everybody else.

Justice Quill- Ian Lodge

As the Legal Man of the piece, Ian's Justice was hopeless and dithering, just how the character should be played, with a good sense of timing with hi assistant Scribbles

Ian created a very worthwhile addition to the production.

It was a pity that he didn't have the benefit of the radio mic

Scribbles – Linda Burgess

Scribbles defiantly outsmarted the Justice, Linda had a cheeky and animated persona I loved this characterisations of the Village Scribe, as with Justice Quill the sense of comic timing was excellent.

Her body language was lively and confident, she engaged herself to the audience

As with the Ian Linda didn't have the advantage of the radio mike and I felt that some of the audience would have lost some of her dialogue.

Fairy Fortune – Jane Smith

Animated and Magic, moving with grace, she glided about the stage trying hard to make everything right, a lovely magical character

Merlin of the Mirror-James Milne

Looking and sounding mysterious from the mirror, James wove quit a magical character> I loved the trio's performance to Queens "I want to Break Free" with Edna and Chuckles

Slurp

As the dirty toilet cleaner, given the job of killing Snow white, Slurp was never going to do it! Graham was far too loveable, He obviously enjoyed the cameo role and so did we, he showed that one of the smaller parts can have a great impact on a production

The Bear- Ben Howard

Ben played his role well chasing about.

The Dwarfs- Jenson Bacon, Caitlin O’Sullivan, Rocc Madden Any Cheah, Isabelle Judge, Joe Cole, William Colnbrook

All the Dwarfs characters were well maintained throughout the story, they moved as one, but needed a little more volume when placed at the back of the stage

The enjoyed themselves a great deal in during their performance

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Jenson as Brainy was definitely in charge, as he spoke with authority and confidence

Summery

This was a very enjoyable production with good casting and characterisations full of dreadful joke, as any good pantomime should be.

As already mentioned the different volume from those wearing mics and those who were not became irritating.

A few of the cast members had the habit of “wandering” rather than moving positive movement of fixing the feet firmly in a stage posture

The pace was rather slow at times, but the chorus numbers certainly upped the pace as did the comic moments.

The cast certainty appeared to enjoy themselves as did the audience including ourselves

Anne Sexton

Adjudicator

