



Society : The Pump House Children & Youth Theatre
Production :
Date : BATMAN IN LOVE
Venue : January 2007
Report by : The Pump House Theatre, Watford

Report

Josie Shingles, NODA London area 10

This was an amazing show which I really enjoyed from start to finish. **Cleverly** written by Roger Martin, interspersed with the wonderful music of **Queen** brilliantly arranged by Lee Farman, and performed by your young talented cast to an extremely high standard. It was truly amazing and great entertainment. Of course I was a bit biased as Queen has always been one of my favourite bands so their classical music stays on forever.

Direction by Roger Martin was excellent with each scene slickly following on and dialogue neatly linked to each song. It must have been difficult making these comic characters come to life but they really did, even though very tongue in cheek. It seemed to me that the cast really threw their heart and soul into this show making it more believable. There were a lot of creative ideas too which were mind-boggling at times.

Musically it was also superb with the band playing each number magnificently, especially **Bohemian Rhapsody** which was unbelievable. The young people sang this difficult rock music very well with some excellent harmonies too, so had been well schooled by M.D. Lee Farman. I loved all of the musical numbers but you truly excelled yourselves with the finale of Act 1 and Act 2 which had the stage jumping with energy.

I was also impressed with the choreography by Kelly Hardwidge as there were some lovely creative movements on stage depicting each number. Especially with the big ensemble songs as the cast really seemed to be enjoying themselves as well as expressing this so well.

I know you had a double cast and sorry could not get along to see both, but from the Saturday matinee I will mention those who made a particular impression on me.

Batman himself, played by Dominc Powell, was commanding and quite magnificent. He was also very comical when this strong upright man was seduced. Dominic did well with the difficult songs and his sensitive interaction with Robin. George Slater-Walker seemed a bit nervous at first playing Robin, but got into his stride later on and was both geeky and sweet in this role. George has an amazing mature voice for such a young looking chap and his singing was excellent. Lauryn Murdoch was great as the sexy Cat Woman. With marvellous characterisation and stage presence plus a good mover, she was also hilarious when seducing Batman

Emily Woods was very poised and believable as Tallulah and Adam Feighoney made a terrific menacing job of Al Cap. What can I say about Sophie Lardner playing the Joker other than she too was magnificent. She gave an imposing gutsy performance which was nasty but with vulnerable undertones, so even when she was being evil and twisted you just had to admire her..

The programme said that Sophie also played the Judge but I think that was a mistake. Whoever it was playing the Judge they did an excellent job taking charge of the court proceedings and being very comical too,.

Millie Lovett (Mary-Bel), Sean Lovell (Chad), Jenny Clifford (Blanche) and Emily Bannister (Jnr Little Boy) were all terrific in their cameo roles, singing and acting naturally.

I really loved the six kittens. Great dancers, marvellous animation, excellent movement, plus terrific singing, makeup and costumes. They were so good that occasionally I found myself watching them instead of the main characters.

The four Bat Boys/Band too were excellent singers and movers plus their costumes looked good.

As for the rest of the cast, well there was so much going on at times I did not know where to look. I really loved the various characters in their marvellous costumes and makeup, which were a kaleidoscope of colour and fun filled fantasy figures.

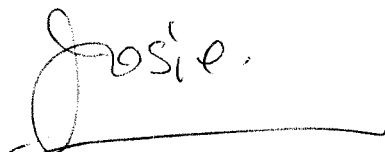
The set design was simple but effective, plus the amazing lighting design took things to a much higher level being absolutely brilliant. Loved the bats logo flying around at beginning and end too which was very effective. Sound too was great, even for a rock musical you could hear every word clear as a bell. As mentioned previously I really loved the costumes too and I can imagine a lot of hard work went into making all of these.

Only two little crits really. I hope you managed to control the smoke machines which really went berserk the day I was there and smothered the entire audience. The other one is programme, in which Lee forgot to mention that you are a member of NODA, although full of lots of other interesting information.

As you will gather from the above I really did enjoy this show very very much and impressed again at the vast talent your company has. My thanks to Ann and Kate for their warm welcome and hospitality and to the PHC&YT for asking me along. I am not sure if will be along for the March plays but hope to come to Aladdin Jr. in July if you let me know exact dates.

With best wishes

Josie

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.