



Society : New Stagers
Production : Aladdin
Date : 24th January 2014
Venue : St Anne's Hall
Report by : Tony Sweeney

Report

General

A traditional panto done in traditional style which was clearly appreciated by a full and very vocal house that entered into the spirit and helped make it a really excellent evening's entertainment. All the elements were there in spades and this helped the audience feel comfortable and able to fully relax into it. It was also clear that the cast were enjoying themselves not only as characters but also in reaction to the audience.

Players

Pippa Nightingale (Aladdin) in the title role gave a confident performance and clearly enjoyed the experience. A nice light touch added to her portrayal.

Keith Barnes (Widow Twankey) gave an excellent performance as the dame. He really has perfected the style which requires the character to be very much a man in a woman's dress. His comic style and rapport with the audience really helped create the atmosphere within which the other characters could operate.

Joanna Dodd (Wishee Washee) as the hero's sidekick clearly enjoyed herself. Throwing herself into the part with lots of audience interaction meant she delivered a strong character in her own right.

Richard Allport (Abanazar) was an archetypal villain aided by a fantastic costume, his imposing stature and some iconic facial hair resulting in him exuding evil. This was a strong performance and one that stays in the memory for all the right reasons.

Becca Stafford (Princess Wow-wee) as the Princess was good in the part with a broad smile throughout giving the character a real presence.

Rory Curnock Cook (The Genie) as the genie was aided by a great costume and green body make-up. Coupled with his height this gave him a rather ethereal persona which helped his performance greatly.

Stephanie Kendrick (Karkus) as the villain's sidekick gave an accomplished performance playing the silliness rather well and helped make the villain even more sinister by contrast.

Mark Chittock (The Wazir) had an interesting supporting role as the Empress' right hand man. His obsession with the rule book gave the opportunity for some great gags around slamming his fingers in the book and this became a strong running gag which was not only funny in its own right but also undermined his characters pompous air.

Charlotte Alexander (The Empress) as the lofty mother of the Princess had a small role which she delivered well, often acting as a counterpoint to the more over the top characters she encountered. This was an excellent supporting performance delivered well.

Paul Johnson (Prince Coolie) gave an excellent comic performance with some excellent comic timing and silly dance routines. Not a traditional character, nevertheless one that gave the show a bit more depth which worked well.

Director

Paul Johnson directed, wrote and performed in the show and displayed a real feel for pantomime which has developed over the years and throughout this show. An accomplished and well cast group of players worked well under his direction and he must be pleased with the result.

Stage Management

Given this is a small stage and needed to accommodate quite a large cast the stage management was worked out very precisely which helped the flow of the show no end.

Sound

A good clear sound enabled the audience to follow the dialogue with ease. Using familiar songs with alternative lyrics was used well to move the plot along.

Lighting

The lighting was used well mainly to flood the small stage space. A routine involving a magic carpet was well lit to give contrast. The lighting played a key part in generating and sustaining the overall atmosphere.

Make-up

The make-up was used well with the dame's being wildly over the top as it should be. The rest again reinforced the characters being portrayed.

Set Design

A simple set design which given the space needed was essential. The show included 11 scenes and these were all accommodated well with some in front of the curtain and some against painted boards. The painting of the boards all reinforced the oriental theme well.

Props

The props were used well and fitted into the show well. In particular, the magic carpet demonstrated an exceptional use of props. It was unfortunate that one of the dummy's heads fell off, but this only added to the humour. An early scene using fake licence plates worked really well to get the show rolling.

Costumes

The costumes reflected the characters well. The dame and villain's costumes were especially striking and were a good choice for two of the biggest characters.

Programme

A simple programme which gave all the information needed. Some history of the story using a cast photo as a cast list was a good idea which served both purposes well.

Front of house

As always, the front of house team was efficient and friendly, helping everyone feel comfortable and therefore more able to enjoy the show. They worked hard to assist the audience and thus play a part in the overall experience.