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Society : Potters Bar Theatre Company
Production : SPAMALOT
Date : 10th April 2019
Venue : Wyllyotts Theatre
Report by : Michael Monk

Show Report

Thank you very much for inviting me to review this side-splitting and bonkers production of Spamalot.

This show proved to be much more than just a stage adaption of Monty Python and the Holy Grail. It is a full-blown musical telling the tale of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table as they seek to locate the Holy Grail. With witty routines and clever updates to the script, incorporating modern day references which made the performance most enjoyable.

Director – HAYDEN BOXALL is to be congratulated for delivering a fast paced and hysterically funny upbeat production from beginning to end. This show acts as a great pastiche of musical theatre highlighted for example by the numbers 'The Song That Goes Like This' and 'You Won't Succeed in Showbiz'. Clever use of the auditorium for entrances and exits. The whole company gave such energy and enthusiasm throughout their performances, it was very clear to see that the show had succeeded in its mission as the audience were humming 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life' on their way out of the theatre.

Musical Direction in the hands of DAVID RANFORD. Principal and Company singing was strong and very good. At this performance it was regrettable that the sound balance between pit and stage was not good. The band were far too loud for most of the musical numbers and the underscore for dialogue. The clever and very witty lyrics need to be heard to make the show even more enjoyable. I have it on good authority that adjustments were made as the week progressed.

Choreographer – AMANDA LING excelled in producing some clever choreography throughout, tailoring it just right for this company of dancers and singers. Well drilled and together. The Broadway number with the additional tap break was a highlight. Bravo!

Lighting Design – ADAM BOTTOMLEY - All lighting cues were very well executed with good area and mood lighting giving the right ambience throughout.

Sound Design – PETER DONAGHEY. Busy evening controlling the balance between Pit and stage! Having said earlier in my report about the band being too loud, all cues were executed very proficiently.

The set design by the company and construction by TREVOR HODD & DAVID BOTTOMLEY looked magnificent, bright and fresh. Thus enabling all the scenes to move quickly from one to another led by Stage Manager TREVOR HODD ably assisted by GLENN HODD.

Please do consider entering your set into the annual Shinfield Players Scenic award competition at the end of this year. More details can be found on the NODA website.

Wardrobe Team – LORRAINE BOTTOMLEY and JENNY COLLEDGE with the company sourcing from Charades Theatrical Costumes and The Costume store. The costumes looked clean and fresh everyone looked very authentic for the period.

Props in the safe hands of CHRISTINA TAKKIDES and JULIE MARKEU - were well managed and very appropriate. The prop signs were very witty and clever.

King Arthur – DAVID BOTTOMLEY – A very accomplished performance from beginning to end. In total control. He never stopped acting whenever he appeared on stage. Great interaction with Patsy and all your knights. Comedy timing was also exemplary. Excellent facial expressions and good vocals throughout with competent dancing skills too. The 'sshh' sword moments were genius!

Lady of the Lake – SARAH BREALEY – A fabulous performance with clear diction and lovely facial expressions adding to the comedy. Every entrance in a different frock! Good movement around the stage and superb exemplary vocals skills. One particular highlight for me was your rendition of 'Whatever Happened to My Part'. Wow ! what lung power!

Patsy – MICHEL CHAMPNESS-D'ABREU – Lovely confident performance throughout. Good vocals and comedic and dance skills. Very good interaction with Arthur. Every time you appeared on stage without any dialogue you never stopped with the facial expressions. Your rendition of 'Bright Side' was delightful.

Sir Robin – LUKE RICKETTS – Good performance from an accomplished performer. Great facial expressions and stage presence throughout - good chemistry with all your fellow knights. Great vocals too! Your rendition of 'You Won't Succeed in Showbiz' was most enjoyable with excellent support from the company.

Sir Lancelot – BEN MARKS – Excellent stage presence and good interaction from this versatile performer. Great comedic timing with all your fellow knights and of course Herbert. I am sure you will not forget wearing those 'gold lame shorts' in quite a while. So brave!

Dennis/Sir Galahad – ALEX BUDD – Great all-round performance from both your characters from beginning to end. Great vocals, movement, facial expressions and comedic skills. I do believe you were enjoying wearing your wig!

Sir Bedevere –MAR COPUES-OUT. An enjoyable performance. Had a good stage presence and interacted extremely well as one of 'The Boys' with all your fellow knights throughout the show. A little more confidence with the dialogue, as you were quite quiet at times and we could not hear everything you said. Having said that you had good vocals and excellent dancing skills.

Historian – SHARON LOTTARI – Delivered the History of the story with perfect diction, heard every word and with that saucy naughty glint in the eye, set the show up beautifully.

Prince Herbert – STUART PIDDINGTON-WALL – Fabulous cameo performance, lovely timing and great vocals. Well done!

All the Supporting Artists gave valuable support throughout the show each adding their own amusing characterisations. Particular stand out highlights to name a few:- The multi parts of GARY COLLEDGE, JENNY COLLEDGE as the Minstrel and GEORGE BANNISTER as Concorde.

All the ensemble sang and danced well giving great support throughout, all adding their own individual touches.

The programme compiled by JENNY COLLEDGE was very well presented and informative. Do please consider entering it into the poster and programme competition.

Thank you once again Martin Leigh and team for your very kind welcome and generous hospitality.

Best wishes

Michael Monk
Regional Representative
NODA London District 10 (Musicals)

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Summer School (See NODA WEBSITE FOR MORTE DETAILS) 27th July – 3rd Aug 2019

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