

REPORT FOR:- "The Wizard of Oz" The Wranglers Children's Theatre Group

Performance: The Muse Theatre, Lipson Community Collge, Plymouth Saturday 18th February 2012

Reviewed by: Nick Lawrence, Regional Councillor — standing in for Michael Simpson Reg. Rep. 3

Any observation made by the reviewer can only be based on what he sees at the performance in question. The reviewer may have received information in advance of the performance and it is inevitable that his assessment will be effected by that knowledge.

The N.O.D.A. Representative's intention is to give an objective critique of the overall production and in particular the performance viewed. It should be remembered that any review of this nature can only be objective as far as the techniques used during the performance observed. Any criticisms expressed may not have been valid at other performances, and are only made to encourage higher standards in Amateur Theatre.

It is hoped that the audience's appreciation of your efforts will have given everyone a lift and encouraged you to greater achievements in the future and that the observations made by the reviewer will prove helpful in improving future productions

This was quite an amazing performance with the powers of nature harnessed to provide extra and most realistic sound effects during the tornado scene. The heavy rain on the roof certainly sounded as though it was ready to come in and join us. How very appropriate for there was a warm and friendly welcome in store for any who came along and a thoroughly charming presentation to enjoy.

The settings were simple but effective. There was no attempt to make huge complicated sets, but suggestions which were most suitable. When the farm was swept away, the Land of Oz was truly colourful. The artistry of the set was matched by some excellent costumes and all was lit sympathetically offering plenty of help to capture the right atmosphere for each scene. The Yellow Brick Road worked very well and drew the audience into the heroes' journey. When, finally, we arrived at the Emerald City it was appropriately grand. The visual effects of this production and the use of the acting space were extremely successful.

The decision to base the characters firmly in the style of the well-known, well-loved film was a daring one. This could so easily have been disastrous, but all the characters were well cast, particularly in the case of the Scarecrow, the Tinman and the Lion, and the audience felt immediately connected. These three maintained the impersonations extremely well with vim and vigour. They were, as they should be, thoroughly loved by the audience.

There was some good singing. Voices were well coached and ensembles lively and enthusiastic. Diction appeared good – although it must be remembered that these songs are well-known and so it is not so necessary to be so clear as the audience knows what is coming. Molly Phillips did well with the deceptively difficult "Over the Rainbow" and Tom Davis, Lewis Peek and Ben Davis joined in some robust versions of "Gotta Have a Heart/Brain" and "The Yellow Brick Road" etc. The accompaniment was appropriate and sympathetic, giving just the right amount of support and colour.

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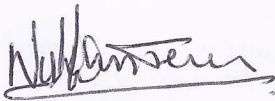
This show presents a number of challenges which were well met in this production. Characters were well drawn, company numbers were lively, commitment was strong and the expectations of the audience were clearly met. The journey element of the story was clearly worked with the promise of the Emerald City being achieved. The technical elements gave good support to the actors along with good musical content.

Along with Dorothy the audience felt pleased to return to boring Kansas after all the colour and excitement of the Land of Oz. The members of the cast appeared to be having a thoroughly good time and with this so did the audience.

Slightly disjointed I'm afraid because there are bits missing from my original, but I trust you get the impression that I enjoyed the presentation. The youngsters did well.

Once again, many thanks for the kind invitation.

With best wishes,



Nick Lawrence
National Operatic and Dramatic Association
South West Regional Councillor