

Cinderella Trophy Review

On my arrival at the Strode Theatre in Street anyone would have thought it was Black Friday at John Lewis! There were queues upon queues and excitement everywhere. This was to be a unique show and, as its title suggests, Goldilocks and the Three Amazing Bears seldom makes an appearance on the stages of Somerset.

I was welcomed by all your friendly front of house staff and many thanks for the complimentary drinks too! It was also good to meet up with director Matthew Maisey, although his concerns were a little greater than mine! He informed me that he had decided to edit some of the script at the eleventh hour as the pantomime had been over-running. I believe two scenes were deleted. This was a brave and considerate decision to make, and an hour before curtain up! (As a guide to all societies an hour and a quarter is ideal for the first act and, with a twenty minute interval, an additional fifty minutes for act two. Hopefully within this time you should have the story completed!)

The easy-to-follow script, also written by Matthew, contained all the necessary pantomime ingredients that we come to expect including joke after joke after joke. Some were very funny, others very subtle and some that made you cringe. Exactly what pantomime is about!

The cast consisted of ten principals and what a fine troupe they were. Acting was to a very good standard, diction was crystal clear by all and movements indicated total confidence by the whole cast.

Daisy Gray's Goldilocks was played with distinction. You had outstanding stage presence Daisy with excellent vocal attack and tremendous enthusiasm. Working well alongside talented Elisha Webster's Gilbert the romance kindled was believable.

This society is extremely fortunate not to have one but four energetic comedy performers. Christian Lockyer's Lenny commanded our attention at all times, having a natural flair. Everyone warmed to you the moment you came on stage.

Matty Wilson's many disguises included a Fortune Teller, Porridge Seller, Sign Holder, Fairy and Lion. You certainly had your work cut out Matty, but each character you made your own with some great one-liners and facial expressions.

There was never a dull moment when the fine and energetic duo Splat (Tris Hann) and Tumble (Matthew Maisey) were treading the boards. You both showed real commitment to your roles and had tremendous rapport with your audience. I thought the house number was handled extremely well and what a great idea to incorporate some appropriate props as well. A great little routine was this.

Matt Turner's Whipcracker gave us a nasty yet likeable character. At times you needed to be more aggressive. A good performance though.

And what can I say about the 'Trio of Teds'? Well, you were simply all amazing. The casting was 'spot-on' and what a great little team you were. Glynn Webster's Mummy Bear was an outstanding performance. I am uncertain if you have played a traditional Dame before but if you haven't then you need to. You had a great voice and your antics were a delight. Working well alongside Dave Bonser's Daddy Bear we were treated to a duet as well. Excellent pairing. Bethany Baker's Baby Bear gave us a loveable character who was energetic, responsive and whose antics always amused us all.

The team of dancers and junior chorus worked hard and it was undoubtedly clear that you had done everything the Director and Choreographer had asked of you. Most of you were smiling as well!

Congratulations to Musical Director Shaun Rigby and the band. There were some great numbers in this show. Although one or two were dated, they were a joy to listen to again. 'Yes Sir, I can boogie' and 'Living on my own' were most memorable. Sets were hired from Scenery Hire Ltd with the Bear's Cottage looking tremendous under the lighting. Costumes were hired from Triple C's and added colour to the production.

I appreciate there may have been a few technical issues at the start of your run but you finished 'bang on' time so it was most certainly the right decision to cut back.

This was a good all round production that was primarily aimed at children but which the adults also loved.

Thank you Glastonbury and Street for inviting me. I thoroughly enjoyed my afternoon with you.

Nigel Ford

Moderator, SFD