

NODA WALES & IRELAND REGION

DISTRICT 1A

Reviewed By: Jackie Titley on 2 February 2018

Society: Aberdyfi Players

Show: Aladdin & His Magical Lamp

Type of Production: Pantomime

Directors: Des George and Ian Dods

Musical Director: Lisa Daley Allan

Choreography: Rachel Cartwright and Penny Gibbons

What a good choice of pantomime for performers and audience, set makers and wardrobe. Lots of scope for cameo parts and what was going to really surprise me. The home produced scenery and props looked very professional. Yes, the trap-door in the stage for Genie's entrance. You did it again Des and team. Another piece of magic, and who would have expected a flying Tardis enabling entrances from under the smoke-filled stage.

Aladdin (Jessica Jeavons) was quite relaxed throughout and he and Princess Jasmine (Nina Bussink) conveyed love to one another with their body language. Abanazer (David Gosney) had a great costume and revelled in his baddie character. He had a nice singing voice and sang well a lovely duet with Widow Twankey (Beth Evans). She was good at ad libs and involving the audience. Wishee Washee (Meurig Lumley) had two pet Giant Pandas called Kung and Foo (Leila Hiatt and Abby Hinton), who came running at any sign of problems and when the audience shouted them.

The opening chorus wore matching plain coloured Chinese suits and the scenery was certainly depicting a Market Place in old Peking. Charlie Chan (Ed Moss) kept his Chinese accent throughout. He made a superb entrance on a rickshaw accompanied by his Honourable Number One Son (Alison Sayes).

Princess Jasmine and her father, the Emperor (Vanessa Hughes) had excellent Chinese costumes. The two large dragons entered through the audience aisles also in creative suits, moved by lots of children's legs. Next we had the Slave of the Ring (Louis Hiatt) entering the stage via the trap-door, accompanied by lots of smoke, and speaking and singing in an Indian accent.

Of course no Aladdin panto is complete without a visit to Widow Twankey's laundry. She successfully shrank Kung and Foo in her huge washing machine. I have never seen a fluorescent washing line dance before – it was very effective.

Another treat was in store with the wonderful cave scenery inhabited by small dancing bats. The tinies have a great time in this panto, smiles on all of their faces and confident dancing. They stole our hearts with their "Be Happy" song.

When the Genie of the Lamp (Su Tacey) arrived, she appeared to be suspended above the lamp. She wore silver make-up and outfit. Really looked and acted the part – very magical.

There was still lots to come, a very effectively choreographed fan dance “there was a fan as a raffle prize”, the director thought of everything. Chinese kites, kung fu fighting number with the children in yet another costume. At the Slave of the Ring’s next appearance she danced with the air hostesses to short snippets of songs from the 50’s to the present time. Look out Ryanair!

The flying carpet was excellent, a superb effect. Not the only thing to fly, “what about a Tardis”, whatever next. The Tardis made use of the trap-door for seemingly lots of characters entering from the Tardis.

The final pandemonium song asked for, and got, audience participation – it involved lots of names of local towns to bring in the element of fun and heckling. Everyone on and off stage had a thoroughly good evening.