

NATS 'There Goes the Bride'



JANE MURPHY

The NATS summer production had the audience laughing from start to finish with all the usual elements of a great farce - mistaken identities, confused characters, slamming doors etc., but with the brilliant twist of an imaginary individual who appears to only one character on stage.

We sensed impending disaster when introduced to the father of the bride Timothy Westerby, (played by Matthew Fyleman with his usual energy and enthusiasm, whilst cleverly leading his cast at a brisk pace from start to finish,



with barely any time off stage). On the morning of his daughter's wedding day, he attempts to juggle business with paternal duty, as he works on his



twenties flapper advertising campaign for a new design of bra, while trying to get to the church on time ...

An accidental knock on the head causes him to hallucinate and his beautiful flapper model comes to life as Polly - (a part very skillfully played by Lisa Hannant). Will Murray adds weight and humour as Bill Shorter, Timothy's business partner with an eye for the bride's mother, who is just as baffled as the rest when it becomes all too clear that no-one else can see or hear Polly.

My favourite part of the play was in Act 2 when Timothy gets another bump on the head and is transported back to 1926 and the Savoy hotel. Timothy



imagines that his daughter's prospective father-in-law, over from Australia for the wedding, is a Hollywood producer. Mr Babcock subsequently becomes increasingly irate and threatens to call the whole thing off. (Andy McMillan plays Charles Babcock, with a very convincing accent. His confident performance integrated with the chaos that went on in the production helped maintain the pace.)

The carefully laid wedding preparations disintegrate into chaos and we are treated to song and dance routines from Polly and Tim trying to convince the 'film producer' that they are Britain's answer to Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire - hilarious! Polly's asides and facial expressions to the audience are well timed and so funny.

Poor Becky Monk as an increasingly distraught Judy Westerby, is suitably hysterical at the prospect of getting married without her father to give her away at the altar She has a great rapport with Yvonne Hannant - as Ursula, the very glamorous mother of the bride, who patiently copes with all that is thrown at her, particularly as Judy goes from being 'dreamy' to the



whole experience of being married to the love of her life, to completely hysterical and rushing off to lock herself in her bedroom at every twist and turn of the plot: "there goes the bride!!"

Lyndsay Millington's is wonderful as the bride's grandmother. Her costume suited her part to a tee and she gave a really strong performance, as well as co-directing with Alan Bywaters who played her husband, a splendidly bewildered, slightly eccentric 'grandfather of the bride'.

NATS has set a truly high standard of production - definitely no wobbly sets when doors are slammed! The sound and lighting designs are simple but used cleverly to enhance the action on stage, really adding to the effect of the production. A 'NATS' production is something that you don't want to miss, as can be wholeheartedly substantiated by more than a few individuals who had to be persuaded to hit the record button for the Champions League Final, playing at the same time on Saturday night! So, well done and huge thanks for another great evening, to all involved. NN



NATS News

The play is over and on with the Pantomime! This is the usual schedule for the society, with drama workshops in between. As a cast member of this years play I really enjoyed the challenge. There were a lot of lines and action, very funny characters and a convoluted plot: a good recipe for an excellent farce? I loved this play, but would have to ask the audience if they enjoyed it as much?

We are now rehearsing for 'Alice in Wonderland' a pantomime by 'Limelight Scripts', Edited by Amy Lines, our new Director. We welcome Amy to her first production with N.A.T.S. She has introduced some new and exiting ideas to encourage and inspire her cast. There will be familiar faces on stage as well as some new ones, including Amy who has a cameo role. 'Alice in Wonderland' gives a great opportunity for imagination and creativity.

The society has been seeking funding to provide our members with a safe and enhanced stage experience. We have now purchased new stage steps to provide safe exit and entrance to the stage. We are in the process of obtaining funding for new stage curtains, which will give the productions the start and finish they deserve.

We are a community run society for Newport and the surrounding area and we welcome anyone who has an interest in theatre and drama, either 'treading the boards' or backstage. We also organise theatre trips for our members who get the opportunity to see a professional show in London's West End.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the pantomime which will be performed on Friday 8th, Sat 9th and Sun 10th February 2013. There will be 4 performances, with 2 matinees at 1.30pm and two evening performances at 7.30 pm. Tickets will be available from January 2013. Adults £7.00, concessions £5.50. We are introducing a family ticket which will include 2 adults and 3 children for £28.00. As usual, the tickets will be sold in Newport Post Office and Costcutters. We wish to thank our local businesses for their continual support which is greatly appreciated! So come along and have a fun packed and whacky experience with N.A.T.S.

Yvonne Hannant



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