

## Review Woodfield Entertainers 2015

### Babes in the wood

As old as I am, I have never seen "Babes in the Wood", and so was looking forward to my first panto version. Even though the first half was a little on the long side, I found that it ran quite well.

The opening song needed a bit more volume, and I did struggle to hear some of the dialogue, but the story was told well, especially by the narrative fairy, Cara.

Dangerous Dave played by Tim managed to get the audience on side quite early, so he took them with him, and despite a few fumbles gave a good performance, in fact some of the resulting ad-libs gave the audience a few extra laughs. He was loud and clear.

The villain was well played by Neil "it does exactly what it says on the tin"! In fact it was good to see him in something other than the fools' role. "I want it all" song was a good choice. Nice hair!

Principle boy Robin, performed by Hannah was equally well played and was a good balance against the villain, the audience finally got with the thigh slapping, so well done for persevering. The Ed Sheeran solo was one of the highlights of the evening and could not have been better. Robin and Maid Marions' song was a bit lacking, perhaps a different number may have worked better?

Kenny as the dame was well cast, the part suited him and as the evening went on he appeared to connect with the audience. I do feel however that the "Love Machine" number would have benefitted from a more popular song, but that might just be my personal choice. The comic cooking scene was well done (Excuse the pun!) timing was good, as was the school room episode and the audience were brought along with both, I suspect they went down even better on the matinee showing?

Block and Tackle were a very good duo and had the audience with them from the start, clever lines were crisply delivered with the good comic timing, that we have come to expect from both Jenny and Elaine, nicely done.

George played the part of Maid Marion very well. She has good clear diction that projects.

The many Merry Men were, many and merry, exactly what they should be, they worked well together.

The Babes were played well with good clear diction and plenty of confidence, I suspect we will be seeing them again, perhaps not so Babe like! Well done to Millie and Thomas.

A small criticism, I was not familiar with the song offered to the Babes whilst they slept, perhaps "Under my Umbrella" by Rihanna may have been more suitable? Sorry it might just be my age showing and as always the use of hind sight is easy!

I found both the walk down and the finale confusing. The audience were a little wrong footed, when they found themselves clapping at a point that appeared to be the end of the story, when there was in fact, a little more storytelling to be done. The actual finale number between Maid Marion and Robin with support from the cast was a good round up number. The walk down style appeared to be rather disjointed with individual music for the characters. This created a bit of a start stop feel to the finish, it would have been smoother had it been one set piece of constant music.

Uptown Funk was a great final song and had the audience clapping along.

Overall I thoroughly enjoyed the show. You will always have a good audience at Christmas, as many consider the Woodfield Entertainers Pantomime a part of their festivities. Never be afraid to use popular songs as familiarity is what people want.

Well done to you all. I apologise if I have not mentioned everyone, but Sara asked me to write something on the spur of the moment, as you did not have a NODA representative in attendance. All I had was the back of an envelope and a blunt pencil.

I for one appreciate the effort that goes into these shows, I also realise that there is a lot of work that goes on both back stage and prior to the performance. It is a team effort so well done to everyone involved.

Regards

Mike