**Woodfield Entertainers Christmas Panto 2023 Review**

 **Pinocchio**

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| It’s good to see another Woodies Panto, a nice lead into Christmas. Your audience are eager to get stuck into a bit of local entertainment at this time of year. |
| I arrived at 7.15 and was greeted at the front door with a friendly smile, perhaps the team could have been wearing false noses, Pinocchio style. I think it would have helped to get the audience going before they sat down (it’s panto!). Once in, the raffle tickets were offered which is good for revenue (a bit more about the raffle later). The hall appeared to be virtually sold out which was good to see. |
| I browsed through the programme, it was well laid out, nice to see a bit of blurb on the cast with the odd light hearted line, does it cost a lot more to have it in colour?? |
| Cricket (Heather) opened the show, nice gentle start for the younger ones, but don’t be afraid to push yourself out there. Good make up, perhaps some antennae stuck to the hat would help to emphasise the character. |
| Atmosphere opening number was a good choice, starts the show off well, gets the audience going.  |
| Dame Constance Noozing (Simon) good projection nice and lively, welcomes audience groups (don’t do too much though, it delays the start). Geppetto (Mell) seemed get into character quickly and made it obvious who he was, nice bit of stooping and bent knees, maybe a walking stick would have helped to emphasise his age? The Dog (Xander) always works well with the younger audience, they look for this. Good animation. |
| Fox and cat (Jo and Louise), good interaction, seemed to enjoy the roll. The younger members of the audience need to know they are on the sly, a bit dodgy (mind you they caught on later). The kitchen scenery was very believable. Perhaps you could have made the love potion and dog food prop a bit bigger and more obvious, stick a huge label on it, after all it is panto. Total Eclipse of the Heart, great choice and well performed. |
| Blue fairy (Denise/ my wife!) good projection, costume may have benefitted from more fairy ateing (Blue wig maybe, pinned on glittery blue scarfs maybe).The “Blue Crew” (Dawn, Alison & Alex) Great name, push it out there, I could see the different character types, but don’t be afraid to shout it out.  |
| Pinocchio puppet prop could have been bigger (It’s a big hall, hard to see at the back). The transition from puppet to the living Pinocchio worked well. The song staying alive, good choice, nice lyric change too. |
| The enchanted forest scene was very beleiveable, the dangling spider butterfly etc. really made it look good (great idea). Stand and deliver song well suited, liked the meowing, nice touch. The trip through the mountain pass had the song Thunder in the mountain, good lyrics but perhaps a bit niche for the audience. The dog poo eating, loved it, not just the kids were cringing (perhaps actually take a bite, chew swallow then say how horrid it was) but still very good, made me laugh. |
| Pinocchio (Mia) “A star is born” A little bird told me she was nervous, let me tell you, if that was a nervous performance, I’m a Monkeys Uncle. She was crisp, clear and well timed, absolutely no doubt who she was and what was happening. The song puppet on a string was the highlight of the show (perhaps more puppet animation during the song). You should be very proud of yourself. I’m sure we will be seeing more of you Mia. Great costume and make up. |
| The interval allowed the audience to get their teas, coffees and snacks, I timed it and it was just on 35 mins and too long. Tim did a great job with the raffle, well animated, but again too many prizes. Just need to cut it down (20 mins max) |
| The second half saw us meet Stromboli (Claire) good costume, good character, well animated. A part that was handed over late on. Well done Claire. Gypsies Tramps and Thieves song, perfect (few more backing vocals might have push it out more). Geppetto puppet show was very clever, it got the audience chuckling, well executed (I think I’ve seen you do it before), perfect for this panto.We also met Antonio (Betty) Nice and positive, clear, chucked it out to the audience, well done. |
| The audience participation number was a really good choice (Cha, Cha slide) well known by all, especially the younger ones.  |
| The prison sketch with the two jailers (Neil & Kenny also directors) worked well, good characterisation, I like the card game, it got people laughing. Not sure about the locking and unlocking of the jail, just have the keys on a chain and chuck them in jail, the audience understand. |
| Loved the magic booth and dust it worked well and was a clever sketch. As was Pinocchios ever growing nose, very clever and well executed. They were great props. |
| I quite liked the finale mini rhyme, it might have been clever to include your request for new members in the rhyme as well. Walk like an Egyptian song, not sure?? Good to round off with the Atmosphere song. |
| I have written this based on what I saw on the Friday evening sitting at the back. I also came along with friends on the Saturday evening and sat in the centre of the hall (it did make a difference). It does however prove, that you have to push it out there.I felt the second half ran smoother than the first for some reason.Cut down the interval.Be mindful of too much adlibbing.If you’re telling a joke slap your thigh, hold your hands out to the audience, remember it’s panto.Personally I think the sound was a slight issue, I’m sure its not an easy job, (I would hate to do it!).As I’ve said in the past, this is a hobby, you all do a great job of entertaining the locals, well done to everyone. Do I get my wife back now. She can turn a puppet into a little boy, no problem, but she can’t make me a cup of tea in the morning!!Merry ChristmasMike |