



**SALOS      SHREK The Musical**

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**As seen by Debi Weaver (NODA Southwest District 13/16) on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 at The Wyvern Theatre.**

**DIRECTOR: Russell Langdown**

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR: Sandra Gilbert**

**MUSICAL DIRECTOR: Richard Abrams**

**CHOREOGRAPHY: Gemma Short**

It was great to be back seeing SALOS performing their production of Shrek The Musical after a long break and many rearrangements and postponements, I hear this has not been an easy feat with many complications along the way, but I think you can all be proud of what you have achieved with your 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary production.

Director Russell Langdown and Associate Director Sandra Gilbert have put together a great show and as always with SALOS the production values are extremely high, with a detailed professional set, bringing the audience into Shrek's world. The stage crew led by Sarah Wrixon generally managed the tricky scene changes. Lighting design (Will Burgher) enhanced the performances well, walking into the very green auditorium a nice touch. There were some issues with sound on the night I was there, with radio mics falling in and out. I was not clear if all the supporting cast were mic'd as at times, we did lose some dialogue and solo singing lines from the Fairy tale creatures and other ensemble members. The costumes were outstanding and the makeup, I believe designed and carried out by students from Swindon college was brilliant. Musical Director Richard Abrams ably led the 11-piece orchestra.

The supporting cast played multi-roles, as Fairy-tale characters, Duloc villagers, tap dancing Rats amongst others and were very strong, showing lots of energy and liveliness on the stage, bringing their individual characters to life. Their choral singing led by Judith Sharp as Chorus Musical Director, was of a very high standard and this, along with some excellent choreography by Gemma Short, provided a wonderful support to the main characters. I particularly enjoyed the tap-dancing Rats and the 3 Blind Mice.

Stuart McQuade took on the title role with confidence demonstrating strong vocals throughout. Ellen Sheridan was fabulous as Fiona a real triple threat with great comic timing. Rob Curnock was endearing and energetic as Donkey. A standout for me was Richard Webb as Lord Farquaad delightfully and hilariously villainous, great characterisations and beautiful vocals (also loved the plastic horse) Dragon voiced by Nadia Imbert-Terry gave us some powerful vocals, the Puppeteers doing a great job bringing her to life which can't have been easy in the space. Jill Carter-McCrae (Sugar Plum Fairy/Gingy) and Kyle Iles (Pinocchio) both gave strong performances, just be careful with diction when using a strong character voice, as we lost some of their dialogue here and there.

I need to mention the excellent youth performances from the Red Group: Holly, Gabe and Matilda who all gave great performances. I Know It's Today, a song I love was beautifully sung but also showed us Fiona's quirky character. I have no doubt that the Blue Group: Lillie-Mae, Ethan and Olivia were of an equally high standard.

The rousing finale of I'm A Believer got the audience up on their feet dancing and singing, its lovely to see all the youngsters in the audience having a fabulous time.

Congratulations everyone involved and to Alan Wrixon for his hospitality.

## **National Operatic and Dramatic Association**

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*These comments solely reflect the view of the Representative and can only relate to the performance seen.*

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