



Society : Beaufort Players
Production : New Directions
Date : Sat 27th March 2010 (Matinee Performance)
Venue : Church of the Ascension Hall
Report by : Sam Webb

Report

New Directions

How lovely it is for an Amateur Dramatic company to nurture and give new writers and new directors an opportunity to be creative. The evening, named New Directions, was not only executed with success, it also contained moments of flair and ambition.

Overall it was clear that all three plays were well supported by a talented technical team, lighting with clear appropriate choices made throughout. It was also pleasurable to see members of the company/directors and continuity personnel taking a role in the execution of the lighting. Music, although I would question the length of one of the pieces, was on cue, clear and well balanced. The music choice set the tone and played well to the genre or emotion being conveyed. Sound recordings were also clear and made sense.

A Resounding Tinkle

In it's surrealism and Beckett-esque style, A Resounding Tinkle was superbly produced. ALAN ROBINSON playing Bro was very comfortable and at ease in his characterisation enabling him to experiment well with facial and physical interaction. His dialogue was convincing and reflected the peculiarity of the subject matter; as did KATE MARTIN in her equally anomalous character Midi. Her interaction was exceptionally well placed and used eye contact within the stage frame to great effect.

The physical comedy was timed and placed well within the context of the scene, although at times, was possibly milked beyond the accepted boundary. The setting was realistic and the colours and style of the set successfully reflected the characters depicted. Despite the repetitiveness and non-naturalistic style of dialogue, actions and interactions resounded truth and honesty. Use of the telephone sounded genuine, as if a real conversation was being played out.

LAURA KING as Uncle Ted was played with definition and stage awareness, although she failed to knock on the door as she entered! KITTY MARTIN reading the radio sermon was good. I especially liked her reference to the church of the Ascension Hall in her broadcast! There were some wonderful subtleties, generally, in the acting shown by all the characters.

Congratulations to new director CRAIG McCRINDLE who manipulated an odd script well to an excellent result and well done to the actors for learning such a repetitive script!

The Trial

Our second offering was the marvellous 'The Trial'; a powerful and exciting play, acted with integrity and raw emotion. I loved the story, however the wonderful acting shone above the plot.

JANE QUILL as Brent represented the brutality of the subject matter in her brawny presentation of the character. Her dialogue was competent and displayed a good use of pauses and held tension perfectly. ROSIE OLIPHANT as Colins was at the top of her game, with her effective, incomparable display of emotion. Her acting was intensely engrossing and displayed great talent. JAYNE BOWMAN added further depth and intensity to the theme of attrition throughout the play. Her posture was firm although diction was sometimes slightly blurred, however, she made up for this in her focus within the role. ESTHER HOLT played her role with conviction and gusto and should be congratulated as I genuinely felt fear for her! Finally, ANGELA NORTH was successful in displaying her emotional and character intentions as part of the overall feel of the piece.

The lighting and music in this piece added further dimension to an epic, impressively staged and wonderfully powerful production. Congratulations to director MATT TYLIANAKIS for an excellent piece of theatre.

The Fabulous Zucchini Brothers

The original writing by THOM COBB gave us a wonderfully comedic, enjoyable piece of writing. There was strength and awareness in the original writing. Preconceptions of the characters were written well into the dialogue, reaction and interaction was strong in the plot and movement of the characters. Clearly the director knew what he wanted from his own piece as there were some lovely moments of inter-play, eye contact and physical representation from the actors.

MARTIN PERROTT as Alfredo played with strength and wonderful comedy timing and great connection with the audience, as did JAMES KING as Marco, both pantomime-esque in the play. Accents were strong and the diction in the delivery was clear. When called out of the audience the reactions by the characters of Colin and Mandy (played here well by PAUL MALHOTRA and GEMMA BREAKELL), their responses and elements of surprise were played with successful awkwardness and a natural sense of surprise.

Props and set, integrated well and used as part of the proceedings help further the comedy potential of the proceedings.

Playing such a big comedy routine to a small audience is never easy, however the task was undertaken with skill and commitment. Praise must be given to a talented writer and director who understood the genre and helped his actors become believable yet melodramatic.

In conclusion, what a wonderful evening?! Sumptuous and enjoyable at all points, if anything a roller coaster of emotions throwing us from the belly laughs to the shocking. For this reason I shall be nominating this production for the Dorothy Lawson Drama Award at the NODA conference. I hope you can come along and enjoy a splendid day of mixing with fellow thespians, awards and theatre workshops.

Many thanks for the warm reception,

Sam Webb

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