

Snow White through the Looking Glass

Tramore Musical Society have taken a great community step forward by going back, as it were, to revive panto in the seaside town. It must be difficult for satellite towns to generate community experiences, when they are so near to a city that is exploding with lights and family entertainment. The re-organising committee decided to write their own 'alternative' panto, that should have been 'tailor made' to their own community and harness the youthful enthusiasms of hip hop, Disney Characters, and Gangnam style. So, Snow White through the Looking Glass was developed. At times it was a tad too 'literary' and wordy, but when the young cast exploded into life it was as happy as it needed to be. This is an ambitious group who intend to put on a musical, The Witches of Eastwick in May 2014. The panto went on in the heart of the community in the Glor na Mara School, that didn't have an audience friendly entrance, an emergency exit onto the street, and the facilities were basic but the welcome was warm and friendly. An ambitious and detailed stage set gave more than expected problems on the opening night. Tom O' Neill towered over this production, and he gave it his 'Almighty best' as Nurse - The Dame. He drove his scenes along and his fluffs, ad-libs and audience involvement were such fun. The storyline was a little complicated, and kept changing location, back and forward, more often than might have been necessary. Mairead Butler as the Singing Cheshire Cat got the show off to a fine start, as the chorus of Playing Cards delighted for the entrance of a very confident Narrator and Cheshire Cat. Nicole Dunphy was excellent in this part, and she 'popped up' with some witty one liners. The young chorus brought great excitement and fun to the show. They were Caoimhe Graham, Alana Carney, David O'Neill, Emily O'Neill, Jamie Phelan, Kimberley Power, Kieran Jackman (who was also a fine Dormouse), Rihanna Quinlan, and Jordenne Roche (who had a wonderful infectious smile, she lit up the stage, time after time). Laurie Butler was a happy White Rabbit, who sang with style. I liked the way this production gave singing opportunities to the whole cast, and it consolidates the community spirit. Yasmin Butler was a lovely Alice, and Katie McGrath was a Toto-less Dorothy, but she made her presence felt with pleasing singing. Lauren Brennan was an excellent Joker. Chris O'Neill was outstanding in two roles, Knave of Hearts, and Mad Hatter. John Power was a splendid March Hare who brought great energy and enthusiasm to his appearances. Leigh-Anne Hanlon was a beautiful White Queen, and Helen Dunphy was a glorious baddie - Queen of Hearts, and excelled in her Diva Song. Chris Hanlon was a handsome Prince Charming, and Christine Poole was an adorable Snow White. Perhaps the songs given to them were ill-advised, like I've Been Changed (from Wicked), and, The Song That Goes like This (from Spamalot), but they delivered the fun, and the warmth that pleased the audience. Char Conlon provided the upbeat choreography. Joe Mernagh directed, Stephen Carr was production Manager, and Izzy Carr was a busy Musical Director. Fiona O'Neill worked wonders on costumes with the help of Nomac Productions.