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Disney's Beauty and the Beast - WOW!, Witham

by Guest Reviewer - Christine Davidson

If you want somewhere to take the children this half term then this fantastic production is for you. Director Nikki Mundell-Poole and Musical Director Emma Nash have yet again given the audience an absolutely wonderful show.

This production was a feast for the eyes. First a very clever set. A backdrop of the castle with arch windows and in the centre a book which opened to show each scene. Incredibly clever, leaving a clear stage for the large cast of very talented young performers.

The costumes were amazing. Colourful and true to the Disney film they were a dream. I especially liked Lumiere's, but just how he kept up his arms all that length of time, I really don't know. Each costume was meticulously thought about and Belle dance dress was stunning. Over 50 wigs were used for this and praise must go to Patsy Page for getting these done so quickly and added to the look of the whole show.

Such a feast of talent and I can't name everyone but be assured the whole cast worked as one with smiles on their faces and energy bubbling over to give such a great evening out. They gave us a heart-warming quality performance. Each and every one should be very proud of their achievements.

The leads were amazing. Belle played by Georgina Warren had a crystal clear singing voice. She gave a heartfelt performance, showing love for her father Maurice (Fionn Crickett). Their song 'No Matter What' was beautifully sung with lots of emotion from both of them. I loved the invention so whoever made this backstage well done.

The Beast Played by Frank Thornton had the most rich commanding voice and really looked the part. His song at the end of the first act 'If I can't love her' brought the house down. Frank is a true performer and a real pleasure to listen to. I do hope he goes on to performing arts as this young man has so much talent.

Hard to believe that Gaston (Sam Howard) is just 15. Tall and commanding he gave us the boorish handsome smug character ready to marry Belle whilst disappointing the ladies of the town. Again a great characterisation and with his sidekick LeFou (Max Midgely) brought a lot of comedy to the role. It was good to see young Max again on stage. I last saw him as Gavroche in WOW's last show of Les Mis and commented then on his comedic talent. He also has a clear beautiful singing voice and obviously loves being on the stage.

Mrs Potts and her child Chip (Madison O' Grady & Lucy Goodman) brought smiles to my face. The maturity shown on stage by Madison was incredible. She displayed a motherliness, showing great care for the other characters including the delightful Chip.

One of my favourites was Lumiere (Luc Roberts) who brought this character alive. His exuberance and pure joy of the role and his number 'Be our Guest' was one of the highlights of the evening. Splendidly crafted and directed by the director, with added pyrotechnics, I think all the audience were commenting in the interval about this number and just how amazing it was. Bravo Luc.

The very proper Cogsworth , Flirtatious Babette and Diva Madame De La Grande Bouche all had stage presence and presented their characters really well. Good to be able to hear clearly all the accents.

The large orchestra added to the show although a couple of times drowned out Lumiere whilst he was speaking. Maybe a tweak needed so all can be heard but this did not deter from their beautiful performance.

Backstage crew are to be commended as they were quick and efficient and the lighting was good. Front of House again were caring and friendly and I always feel part of a family when I enter the auditorium,

This was a really splendid production and I urge you to get a ticket as you won't be disappointed. Congratulations to everyone. You deserved the standing ovation at the end.