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Spamalot

Book and Lyrics by Eric Idle

Music by John du Prez and Eric Idle

TAOS Musical Theatre

Wednesday 22nd November 2017

Reviewed by Delia Lee, District 10 Representative, South West Region

Thank you for your kind invitation to review your production of *Monty Python's Spamalot*

As a fan of Monty Python and having seen this musical before, I was expecting an entertaining evening and I was not disappointed. On a cold November evening, this was just the right show to send you home with a smile on your face. The director, **Phil Courage**, did a good job in getting the balance right between telling the story and the complete absurdity of the Monty Python humour.

The set was very effective, with a castellated medieval building on each side and a screen in the centre. This was used very cleverly to project various images including, at the beginning, Donald Trump who segued into King Arthur; not something I was expecting to see! There were also many props and scene changes to cope with in this show, that were all carried out very professionally by an excellent back stage team.

The dialogue in the opening scene was delivered with great comic timing and Sir Robin, played by **Tim Hobbs**, sounded very much like Tony Robinson and put me in mind of Baldrick, which added to the humour.

The part of King Arthur was in safe hands with **Andrew Curtis**, who is an accomplished actor and singer and formed a wonderful double act with **Claire Warren** who played Patsy. They worked well together, always kept up a good pace in the dialogue and had excellent galloping and coconut playing skills.

Paul West, playing Sir Lancelot, played his part very well and obviously enjoyed 'finding his feminine side' for his big number in Act 2 'His Name Is Lancelot'.

Ashley Watson was a wonderfully over the top Sir Galahad and managed to pout throughout the whole show. His opening number 'I am Not Dead Yet', which is the epitome of Monty Python, was wonderfully silly.

Mike Holden who played Sir Bedevere, as well as other characters, gave a solid performance in each of his roles, as did all of the men in this company.

Leonie Macaslin as The Lady of the Lake was really exceptional. She had a beautiful voice as well as being an excellent actress. She really understood what was needed for the role and performed it to perfection. 'The Song That Goes Like This' was a highlight, as was 'Whatever Happened To My Part'.

The show has some big company numbers in it and the chorus did a good job with the various styles that were required. A few more ladies in the chorus might have been useful, but they obviously enjoyed their time on stage. I especially liked the opening number 'Fisch Schlapping Song' where they had a great time slapping each other with fish. It's nice to see a show with a good mix of chorus numbers and they performed all of these with great attack and humour.

The costumes and makeup were extremely good and, given the huge amount of costume changes, must have taken a great deal of hard work and dedication to organise. Well done to the wardrobe department!

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

Tel 01733374790 Fax 01733237286 Email info@noda.org.uk Web www.noda.org.uk

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There were times when the balance in sound was not quite right and some words were drowned out; especially during the dialogue of the Historian, who was barely audible. However the band produced a wonderful sound and kept the pace of the show going along nicely, under the expert direction of **Helen Heaton**. All of the singing was of a very high standard and had obviously been very well rehearsed

The choreography worked very well and was just right for each number. With a show that has so many different styles the choreographer, **Jamie Wright**, had a difficult job on his hands to make each number original and entertaining and he did this very well.

The cast clearly had a great time performing this show and their enthusiasm was infectious. It really was an excellent production and I left the theatre feeling thoroughly entertained.

Delia Lee

NB The comments above solely form the view of the representative attending and only reflect the performance seen.

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