
BMYP
FROZEN JR

As seen by for Debi Weaver (NODA SW District 13 Representative) and Matthew Heaton (NODA South-west Regional Editor) on Friday 10th November 2023

Director & Choreographer: Vicki Klein
Musical Director: Brendan Casey
Director of Acting: Chris Paslow

The Olympus Theatre, Filton, Bristol

Frozen Jr is the stage version of the Classic 2013 Disney film and even as the 'Junior' version followed the original story pretty closely.

This is a well-known and much-loved story and has some major staging requirements to overcome to be successful. We are very pleased to say that you met both the storytelling and technical aspect challenges and put on an excellent production.

The stage in the Olympus is a great open space and you made the most of it. You had integrated your set and lighting so well that we'll detail both as we go through.

It looked like a relatively simple set design, but actually it was anything but. The recessed entrance at the back worked really well as doors and gates. This design allowed some excellent and effective rear lighting and colour too. The shaped side flats worked really well – with both the removal panels for different scenes, and the magnetic ice forming worked really well. The LED lights on them worked well too and the white background made the blue and green used really effective for the ice scenes. Scene change transitions were effectively made, generally by the cast. It may have been possible to have worked around the few where we saw the crew, but in general scene changes were slick and flowing.

The Snow Sheet dropped from the balcony looked really effective and the costume transition for Elsa worked brilliantly and deserved the round of applause it received! The use of a single follow-spot was a little curious at times, particularly with two or more soloists on stage as you weren't always focussed on the right performer. However, the lighting overall was excellent, with a great use of side, rear, haze, and projection to generate some incredible and memorable effects.

The sound and balance were generally very well-controlled. The music was via backing track but was expertly cued. Radio microphone management itself had good cueing and control.

The costumes were excellent in terms of both quality and fitting and a real feature of the production. This was for the whole cast – the attention to detail was incredible, from the townspeople to the wedding scene, the dancing reindeers, the sauna staff, and the woods-people. This showed some innovative creativity as well as strong references to the original film. Olaf's costume was great fun, but Sven's in-particular was an amazing creation.

The quality of the direction was very good.

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

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In reviewing the principal performances:

- **Elsa (Poppy Beresford)**. This was a lovely mature performance – you clearly showed the transition from young woman scared and isolated, to finding her own strength. Vocally you were strong and performed the iconic song the audience was waiting for with confidence, a big responsibility.
- **Anna (Scarlett Gilbert)**. You played this role with energy and enthusiasm, demonstrating the contrast between your character and Elsa clearly.
- **Hans (Ambrose Shufflebottom)**. You skilfully navigated Hans' transformation from charming suitor to conniving villain.
- **Kristoff (Des Coghlan-Forbes)**. This was a lovely, charming performance encapsulating the character, and managing the comedic moments very well, some great dance moves in there as well, a triple threat in the making, I think.
- **Olaf (Evie Coghlan-Forbes)**. This was a confident performance with some great comic timing.
- **Sven (Thomas Wiltshire)**. Firstly, well done for coping with the costume, it is difficult to demonstrate a character in a full costume like this, but you got Sven's mannerisms to a tee and the audience loved it.
- **Young Elsa (Otilie Stuart-Hunt) and Young Anna (Dulcie Smithson)**. Had a beautiful relationship. Vocally you were both very strong. Ones to watch, I think.
- **King Agnar and Queen Iduna (Ben Partridge and Sayo Kubo-Richards)** You worked well together and performed with confidence.
- **Bulda and Pabbie (Lottie Livingstone and Arlo Deane)** Your characterisations were very good.
- **Oaken and Mrs Oaken (Elias Arango and Lily O'Carroll)** Great characterisations and partnership.
- **Weselton (Bob Steggle)** Another strong performance and a fabulous moustache and sideburns!
- **Teen Elsa (Bea Kohn) and Teens Anna (Bonnie Williams)** lovely vocals as Elsa and Anne grew up.

The cast in the ensemble supported the production really well too and were given plenty to do with the many roles they took on. The Choreography was very impressive too – from the May Pole dance in the opening, to the brilliant Reindeer tap-routine in 'Summer' and the fun of the Olsen's Sauna number. The quality of the dancing with some complex routines was a real feature of the production.

As well as the principals singing well, the quality of the chorus singing was excellent too – with some great harmonies. The performance in the Coronation scene was a particular highlight.

In summary, *Frozen-Jr* was an excellent production and a really great night-out. The performances, the singing and the staging all worked brilliantly together, and the cast and production team are to be warmly congratulated on their achievements. Thank you for great evening of high-quality entertainment. We wish you every success with your future productions.

PLEASE NOTE:

Any observation made by the reviewer can only be based on what he sees at the performance in question. The reviewer may have received information in advance of the performance, and it is inevitable that his assessment will be effected by that knowledge.

The N.O.D.A. Representative's intention is to give an objective critique of the overall production and in particular the performance viewed. It should be remembered that any review of this nature can only be objective as far as the

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techniques used during the performance observed. Any criticisms expressed may not have been valid at other performances, and are only made to encourage higher standards in Amateur Theatre. It is hoped that the audience's appreciation of your efforts will have given everyone a lift and encouraged you to greater achievements in the future and that the observations made by the reviewer will prove helpful in improving future productions.

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