



Be inspired by amateur theatre

Bristol Musical Youth Productions (BMYP)
WE WILL ROCK YOU young@part

As seen by Matthew Heaton (NODA South-west Regional Editor) and Debi Weaver (NODA SW District 13) on Friday 24th February 2023

Director: Vicki Klein
Musical Director: Brendan Casey
Drama Coach: Chris Parslow
Choreographer: Vicki Klein

The Redgrave Theatre, Clifton, Bristol

We Will Rock You young@part is a specially adapted version of the award-winning West End 'juke box' Musical, featuring the Music and Lyrics of Queen with a linking story and script by Ben Elton. Set in a dystopian future, where individual expression through music and the arts are suppressed by a powerful entity known as the 'Globalsoft Corporation', our hero Galileo and the resistance group known as 'The Bohemians' have to find the legendary guitar to bring music and thus freedom back to the world.

We were really excited about seeing your production – we loved your 'Spongebob The Musical' back in August and were keen to see what you were able to do with a quite different type of show. We were not disappointed - this production was incredible too, with a tremendous energy from the whole cast and team, maintained throughout the entire show.

The performing venue at The Redgrave Theatre has a reasonable stage area but has some limitations, such as wing space. Though some of the set had been used from a recent Clevedon production it was of a great standard and fitted really well into the venue. The rear doors with the slide out Killer Queen Throne was very effective, with the flats for the Hard Rock Café and Graceland gates too. Using the cast to change the scenes really helped maintain the pace and continuity of the production as well.

The lighting design was excellent too and in keeping with the rock style of the show. The on-stage rear and side-lighting worked really well, using the two angle bars. Coverage was excellent. There was a good use of moving heads, haze, air blowers, LED bars and floor projection to create a range of effects. Using the bank of moving heads together into the audience to help disguise scene changes worked well too. We weren't sure if the UV effects were accidentally in a few blackouts – they were good and there may have been the opportunity to do a little more with them.

The other stage effect to mention was the incredible projection (or 'Screen Visualisation' as described) by Mike Kleinstreuber. The quality and complexity of this was incredible. From the corporate messages before the start, through to the moving images used throughout the production, it enhanced the overall effect of the enforced 'Globalsoft' digital culture and the sensory overload the production required. The cast show-reel at the end, linked into a number of Queen videos was a lovely touch. Many of the audience staying right to the end to see it all.

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

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The sound was generally very good too. We're sure stopping the show a few minutes in (to address an issue with the sound) felt like a total disaster but such things do happen. The trick is how you deal with it and you did so both calmly and professionally. Vocal balance with backing tracks (and rock music in particular) is notoriously difficult but you managed it well, for the principles in particular. Radio microphone management had excellent cueing and control. The backing did overpower the chorus singing a little in a few of the louder numbers making it difficult to hear - though this is always difficult to address fully. The cameo from guitarist Will Provis in 'Bohemian Rhapsody' was a great touch.

The costumes were spectacular too – from the grungy almost post-apocalyptic look of the Bohemians, through to the ordered and futuristic styles of Globalsoft employees and the police. There was as much detail on the costumes of the chorus members as the principles, which added to the overall spectacle. Killer Queen has some phenomenal dresses! The wrist bands and glasses for Globalsoft followers worked really well as feature too. Hair and make-up needs were equally demanding and really enhanced the overall look. Very well done to the whole team here!

In reviewing the principal performances:

- Galileo (Max Brewer). Some great strong vocals, and you clearly put every ounce of energy into the performance. Don't be afraid to bring the vulnerabilities into the character, bringing the intensity of the performance down a little at times to show all the dynamics of the character.
- Scaramouche (Lily O'Carroll) Another great vocal and confident performance, demonstrating the independent spirit of the role very well
- Killer Queen (Daisy Bullock) You portrayed this powerful, larger than life character with great confidence, the vocals were stunning, with this type of role you just need to completely let go and let your inner Diva out.
- Khashoggi (Ben Kenna) You made a great villain and seemed to really enjoy eliminating anyone who challenged the authority of the Globalsoft.
- Buddy (Kieran Alford) A confident performer, you brought out the comedy elements with great effect. You also managed the show stop with great professionalism.
- Brit (Des Coghlan-Forbes) A real triple threat in the making here, you seemed to have endless energy, and the relationship between you and Oz worked really well.
- Oz (Ruby Clements) Beautiful vocals and strong acting, working well with Brit and matching his energy levels.

The supporting cast were excellent as the ensemble – always acting and supporting the overall performance, from the Policeman with the robot-moves, through to the cast members given the solos to complete at the start of 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. The dialogue isn't what this show is all about, but the plays on puns around Queen song lyrics and Brittany Spears were delivered well and obtain the required laughs.

The Choreography was well-executed and pitched at the right level for those involved. This ranged from the regulated movements in 'Radio Ga Ga' through to the full company rocking in as the encore. Audience participation in the iconic moves and numbers was actually encouraged too, enhancing the atmosphere.

In summary, this was another excellent and memorable production from BMYP. The performance had very high production qualities from the technical team, which the performances of the actors, singers and dancers

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were all able to match. Very well done to everyone for a wonderful night's Be inspired by amateur theatre entertainment and for keeping it all-together with the technical challenges, which did not detract from the performance at all.

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 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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