

# noda

Be inspired by amateur theatre

|                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Production</b> | The Clamourings at Giggly Halt   |
| <b>Society</b>    | Bispham Castaways                |
| <b>Venue</b>      | Holy Family Church Hall, Bispham |
| <b>Review</b>     | 18.09.21                         |
| <b>Reviewer</b>   | Joe Clarke                       |

I was delighted to be asked to cover this production as I love to see and support different societies across the Northwest. I have to admit that I was a little late, due to an accident on the M6, so missed the opening scene. Upon arrival, I was instantly engaged in the play and was pleasantly surprised with the energy and pace. The Clamouring at Giggly Halt is a comedy by Richard Coleman. The writing is clearly very funny, and this society did well to try and keep the pace throughout. Directed by Sue Hope, this play was set in the train station at Giggly Halt with a more or less static set that was used quite well, despite the clear lack of space for the actors to move around. Sue did well to direct the play with pace which helped layer the comedic entrances and exits. Of course, there were a few niggles. Not all of the actors were on the same energy level and lacked conviction when entering and exiting. Overall, there was a distinct lack of diction and articulation from the majority of the actors, with some mispronouncing the character of Lady Felicity Anstruther-Plinth on far too many occasions. Generally, the set was used well, and scene changes were good. The lighting was an overall basic wash with some stage uplighters, which cast a shadow at times but overall, the lighting was effective enough. The music cues were excellent and added another layer to the overall piece (well done Hayley Price). There were loads of highlights in this production which the audience loved and laughed in all of the right places. Well done to Sue and her team for their hard work in putting on this production in such a short time period!

Having a cast of thirteen actors in a small space is no mean feat but they did well to convey the story and not once was I confused as to what was going on. Despite some of the issue with diction, there was great storytelling!

For me, the star of the show was Sue Hope herself who played the characters of Jemima Threadpurse and Daisy Chitterling. Both characters were unique in vocality and physicality, and both had an excellent energy. Sue is a great character actress and I hope that I get the opportunity to see her again in another production! I thoroughly enjoyed your interpretations. Sue (as Daisy) had an excellent rapport with her twin sister Maisy Chittering (Suzanne McEachran). I loved the characterisations and the way that you both talked in unison – this helped with the comedy and pace and provided much needed light entertainment.

Whilst I didn't quite engage with Suzanne's Nempnet Thrubwell, she was entertaining and a good character actress.

I also enjoyed the performance from Geraldine Brown's Sister Umberta Snorkel. Geraldine is also a strong actress and had lovely mannerisms and rapport with her fellow actors. She had great diction and projection also.

Other notable pleasing character interpretations came from Nicky Alladice (Footsie), Hayley Price (Hastie Dalrymple) and Harry Chambers (Harry).

There are far too many other characters for me to mention in this review but what I'll say is that a comedy is only as strong as the supporting cast, and whilst most gave a good performance, there were some that needed far more rehearsal time. Whilst it would be unfair for me to mention individuals by name, it was clear that some actors forgot lines, came on in the wrong entrances and lacked pace and energy. At times it was a little frustrating as an audience member as others were so strong. Whilst I understand that there a lot of lines in the script, it was clear that some actors were either rally nervous or really didn't know their lines, or cues.

Overall, the audience really enjoyed this performance. There was one audience member who laughed so hard I thought he was going to fall off his chair! It's clear to me that this society has tons of potential and I can see that with more time, they can produce more high-quality productions. I thank Bispham Castaways for their kind hospitality and wish them all the very best for their future productions.

Joe Clarke