



Adelaide Theatre Guide

www.theatreguide.com.au

Supporting live theatre in South Australia

PO Box 738
MODBURY SA 5092

info@theatreguide.com.au
ABN : 93 297 960 525

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST JR

TB Arts

The Parks Theatre
Until 24 September 2017

Review by Talia Gaertner-Jones

"Beauty and The Beast" is a much-loved Disney classic and a favourite among many. It's a tale of the unexpected, enchanting love between a girl, Belle, and beast.

Due to the short nature of 'Junior' productions, complex scripts are often condensed into much shorter versions. Here, it is even more crucial that performers develop strong characters from the get-go, which all of the performers on stage did very well!

Verity Lopresti-Zotti kicks off the show as the narrator. Lopresti-Zotti weaves the story through its highs and lows with enthusiasm and intensity. The expression in her voice definitely adds excitement to the scenes. As Belle, Issy Darwent is strong, yet sweet. Once overcoming initial opening night nerves her character flourished on stage, her performance of "Home, Reprise" created a touching moment between Belle and The Beast. Opposite Darwent, George D'Agostino featured as the Beast/Prince. D'Agostino was defiant in character, however allowed his humorous side to show in "Something There".

As the 'villains', Jeremy Thomas as Gaston with side-kick Kayla Ruggiero as Lefou are a delightful pairing. Thomas plays the vain character of Gaston with ease, but it's during "The Mob Song", when releasing his anger, that he truly shines. Ruggiero looks comfortable in her character and creates a fun performance of "Gaston" along with Silly Girls Stephanie Keley, Imogen Brown and Emily Rawlings.

The 'enchanted' objects as a collective are all very strong in character. Alexander Aarao-Ward as Cogsworth and Oliver John as Lumiere are perfect opposites however complement each other nicely. John's "Be Our Guest" along with Mrs Potts, Sienna Bertram and the chorus of cutlery are all smiles and shine! These characters along with Pru Cassar as Babette, Matrim Grover as Chip and Lian Takayidza as Madame de la Grande Bouche create a lovely rendition of "Human Again". Bertram's "Beauty and The Beast" also creates an enchanting moment on stage between Darwent and D'Agostino.

Producer Joni Combe and General Manager Michael Eustice, together with Directors/Choreographers Michelle Davy, Laura Brook, Mitchell Smith and Zak Vasiliou have created an excellent family show. The set, although minimal is supported with projection by Warwick Smith, which adds to the setting of scenes.

The performers should be proud of what they have achieved for this production. Their energy and enthusiasm are sure to put a smile on your face and make for a lovely night out!