

Bovingdon Players - "STEAMING"

Director: Liz Lewis

3rd – 5th December 2009 at Bovingdon Memorial Hall

The set was exactly right for the play, and worked well – the off-stage plunge pool was very effective in the context of the play. A play set in a Turkish bath was always going to be quite difficult to achieve – but the undressing, use of towels etc, was well done.

I liked the music that was used between Scenes, it was nicely chosen, giving an upbeat feel to the play, and having the effect of keeping the audience attention during the scene/costume changes.

There were some good characterisations, which created depth and dimension to the piece, although I felt that pace was lacking at times because the cast were relying quite heavily on the prompt. Unfortunately the prompt wasn't always loud enough for the cast member to hear on first offering, which was a shame as it interrupted the flow of the lines.

Having said that the ladies kept their different persona's going the whole time, I particularly liked Mrs Meadow (Sue Tubb) and her daughter Dawn (Tiffani Vinyard), good attention to detail in their characters and one could really believe the way they were, and how Dawn became to be type of person she was, with a mother like that!!! Well done. I loved the 'plastics' – so right for them both!

I felt that Imogen Roberts as Violet the baths attendant started very tentatively, but she gained in confidence as the play progressed, and ended up giving a very nice performance.

Nikki Clough gave good feeling to the part of the down-trodden Josie, but she was one who struggled most from time to time with words – hopefully, it was just first night nerves, as one could really feel for the poor put upon Josie, in her life with an abusive man, and the realisation that she could better herself. It was good to see the change in her demeanour towards the end when she was leading the protest.

Marie Fuller gave Nancy a good edge, coping with being alone and not so well off as she was used to. I would have liked to see more of her face, it was slightly covered by her fringe, which meant that some of the very well-studied facial expressions were obscured.

Sally Bull gave us a very natural Jane, it was as if she was breezing along as if it was real life, and that added credence to her character.

I should also just give mention to Andrew Jamieson as Bill – who only appeared at the curtain call, but added a few interjections to keep Violet informed!!

The differences between all the characters was very marked and well thought out, and there were some very funny as well as poignant moments, which helped keep the play alive. The play was not quite as slick as other productions from this Society, but it stood up well.

The costumes were good, and looked comfortable and easy to wear, no-one was fiddling with anything, and the towels stayed in place remarkably well!!!

All in all a fun evening, with a good and appreciative audience, nice to see almost a full house – I hope the other performances were as well-supported.

Thanks to Iain and Liz for their hospitality on behalf of the Society, and for what was an enjoyable evening's entertainment.

Nova Horley