

“Where the Rainbow Ends” - children’s spectacular show

Peter Pans Productions – in other words, St Michael’s School, Ingoldisthorpe – have some notable productions behind them, but it is certain that never before have they staged a more enjoyable or professional than “Where the Rainbow Ends”, which opened a five-day run at the Capitol Theatre, Hunstanton, on Tuesday and ends tomorrow night.

With its spectacular scenery, lavish costumes, imaginative lighting and some immensely enjoyable and infectious acting, this production is of a quality one rarely – if ever – sees in a school production.

This is a show for children predominately by children. It has plenty of adventure and excitement, moments of near slap-stick comedy and moments of high tension plus an easily-understandable plot in which four children aided by a genie, a lion cub and, eventually St George, pursued by a wicked uncle and aunt and threatened by the dreaded Dragon King, finally reach the land where the rainbow ends and find the missing parents of two of the children.

But this story by Clifford Mills and John Ramsey with music by Sir Roger Quilter is more than just a delightful children’s fantasy. St George is more than just an ally of the children, more than just the champion of the right whose cause triumphs in the end. He is the embodiment of England’s national spirit.

Vitality

In the programme notes, Christopher White, as producer and director was responsible for this highly imaginative and colourful production, writes that “Where the Rainbow Ends” was performed for many years in London but, he adds wistfully latterly, like St George, it has fallen out of fashion.

The tremendous vitality of the show – the pace is remarkable - is exemplified a rousing rendering of Ralph readers “we’re Riding Along on the Crest of a Wave”, but its underlying message, modestly subdued until the final scene bursts through just before the final curtain when the audience are invited to stand and join the 60 strong cast in singing “Land of Hope and Glory”.

This is stirring stuff. The whole show is well worth seeing, but the finale is extra special.

Confidence

Robert Maskell and Caroline Sutton, who played Peter Pan and Wendy in the last production, play Crispian and Rosamund with all the easy confidence of veteran troupers and they are well supported by two pleasant performances by Paul White and Pauline Carr, as the friends who share in their adventures.

Callum Kirk and Adrian Catt as the wicked uncle and aunt supply most of the humour in the show and never miss a trick. Their timing is excellent.

Christopher White makes a fearsome Dragon King and Stephen Mounsey is a notable St George.

Notable features of the show were the delightful dancing of Dianna Potter and the children whom she trained, the work of Peter Smith at the organ and the Kirby Flying Ballet equipment which contributes greatly to the success of the show.

Energy, Talent

Those who shared in getting this show on stage, especially those responsible for the scenery and the costumes deserve a tremendous amount of praise. The final tribute, however, must go to Christopher White for an outstanding production. One suspects that in addition to his tremendous energy and talent this production has quite a bit of himself in it.

Other roles are well played by Richard White, who is a delight as the lion cub. Peter Saunders, Allison Doel-Davies, Dianna White, Ian Calder, Stephen Gray, Thomas Morton, Susan East, Lawrence Dewhurst, Andrew Forman, Roger Morton, John Robinson, Elizabeth Hollands, David Calder, Robert Stuart, James Beech, David Perry, Enos Albert, Jens Anderson, Nigel Packer, Rene Albert, John Wafer, Ian Crowhurst, Geoffrey Read and a host of elves, fairies, rabbits, frogs, rainbow children, hyenas, dragon flies and a leopard.

The show continues with matinee and evening performances today and tomorrow. - KMA