

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee a hilarious night

If you didn't think a musical about spelling bees could be funny, you'd be wrong.

Globe Productions The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee is a hilarious and fun way to dive into the competition that takes place all over the world. With catchy songs and in-depth storylines for each character, you're transported to the home-life of every character and their intentions for winning the bee.

To say the musical is funny is an understatement. First, audience members get a shot to participate in the bee, spelling words alongside the actors. With quick directions, they're put into the production itself, dancing and spinning and in some cases, being sung to. Watching Miss Jane (Fogal, Halton Hills councillor) and Mr. Mike (Albano, Halton Hills councillor) as well as two residents Matt and Suzanne, try to keep their composure while the spotlight on them was light-hearted entertainment.

It is sometimes easy to pick the best performer, but this was not the case. Each actor was perfect for their role, both in delivery and in their musical skill. Not a note was missed, and the intimate setting of the stage was perfect for use without microphones. Danny Harvey, who played vice-principal Douglas Panch, was the perfect fit for the gruff character who clearly wanted to be doing anything else. Jennifer Centrone, who played Rona Lisa Peretti, sang with grace and confidence, and her kind nature was something to admire. Steve Kirk, playing time-serving criminal Mitch Mahoney, was hilarious in his quick costume changes and his ability to switch personalities on a dime.

The show would not be so successful without the talent of the actors and actresses playing the main characters: the spelling bee contestants. Kailea Banka, who plays prep school goody-two-shoes Marcy Park is exact in her movements and in her voice. Katrina Gibson, who plays Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre, gave a great performance hitting those high notes and keeping up the eccentricity of her character. Kirk De Palma, who plays Chip Tolentino, was boy scout gone hopeless romantic, leaving a particular audience member laughing loudly in her seat. Jordan May, who plays Leaf Coneybear, was the contestant I found myself most rooting for. Fashioned in a helmet and a blanket for a cape, his innocence plays really well into the hilarious nature of the show. William Reill, who plays William Barfee (sorry, Barfee), plays a quiet, unkempt character, and his delivery is spot on. Lastly, Cheyenna Stodolny, who plays Olive Ostrovsky, is undoubtedly the crowd favourite. Her voice is sweet, charming, and her songs leave a lasting impression. She is easily the star of the show.

This production is funny, witty, and plays into the innocence of children and the various different lives we all live every single day. It is marked for mature audiences only, and unless you want your children to come home singing about unexpected boners, I would adhere to their warning.

Congratulations to artistic director Rob Woodcock, music director Kelly Baker, choreographer Elizabeth Bell, stage manager Kevin May, producer Lee-Ann Jones and assistant director Laura Hachey on such a wonderful production.

The show will continue at the Old Armoury April 7-9, and if you hadn't planned on attending, change your mind. It makes for a hilarious night.

Kathryn Boyle

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