

North Essex Theatre Guild
Full length Drama Festival
Brantham Amateur Theatrical Society
Holiday Snap
By Michael Pertwee & John Chapman
11th June 2016

Introduction

To my shame this is the first time I have visited BATS and on this showing it won't be the last!

We were welcomed by Front of House staff into a very warm atmosphere, possibly just right for a comedy set in Portugal! The programme had two photographs of the production on it together with the cast and production team listed, simple but effective.

The Set

We were introduced to an open stage, without front tabs, giving the audience time to take in the set and furnishing which I rather like. I did find the set rather plain with just white walls and blue doors and I would have liked to have seen a little more colour on the walls,

The settee and chair I felt were completely wrong, heavy dark brown furniture did not look right in a summer Time Share in Portugal. Lighter cane or a pine type would have been more in keeping and lighter to move. It would have saved having to fit large casters to the settee in order to easily manoeuvre it, although, I must say that the moving around of the furniture was dealt with very smoothly and efficiently.

The louvered doors centre back were left open after the initial "problems" with the curtains which enabled us to see the view to the sea.

Properties

Lots of fallen curtains and bottles! What more do you need to make a great comedy performance just add in a telephone that sometimes works and a dictaphone with an inebriated man trying to use it. It all "worked" very well indeed.

Lighting

Lovely bright lighting just right for a bright summer's day but the one table light didn't seem to work when Chittenden tried out the electrics at the beginning of the play.

Costumes

The costume plot was excellent just right for the holiday mood. The only one I would query was Chittenden who looked a mess right from the start with trousers too long for him and his look rather dishevelled. He had been a Naval officer and I felt would have started out smart even if he deteriorated as the play progressed.

Acting

Commander Chittenden

Dishevelled, inebriated, forgetful and with poor eyesight, poor old Chitto has it all, Keith gave a great portrayal of the Naval Office gone to seed. I would have liked his character to have grown as the play progressed rather than from his first entrance this would have given the character more depth. However, we grew to love Chitto and his obscure ways. He managed to hold the pause just long enough, so that we could see the wheels turning in his mind whilst he thought of his way through the various situations that he found himself in.

Eve

Eve bounced in full of excitement for her one week in the Share a Lux apartment. Lesley gave us the most of this character full of pace and excitement exactly what this comedy/ bordering on farce required.

Leslie

Eve's other half after a bit of extra martial "hanky panky". Len and Lesley worked very well together to create a believable comedy partnership. I loved these characters they were so slick and kept up the comedy pace that was required.

Henry

Mark gave us a slightly reserved more apprehensive character than Leslie's and this added to the fun of the production. He was hell bent on changing the furniture round and, like all the actors, kept up the pace so necessary to make a success of the production.

Mary

Henry's other half and as with Eve Mary kept the pace of production alive. I particularly liked the confusion with Pedro and Maria each couple thinking that the other couple were the servants. The changing round of the furniture added to the fun of production.

Celia

Henry's Mother in Law, the straight character in the extra marital confusion, was very well played by Geneva with wonderful expressions of being totally lost in all the mayhem. Her interplay with Chitto was a treat to watch.

Perky

I did feel that Gordon was a little on the old side to be a contemporary of Henry from their Harrow days but, saying that, Graham established a very lively performance. I loved the conversation with Chitto trying to explain each other's names!

Well Done!

Kit

Played by three different actresses during the run of the show on Saturday evening she was played by Pauline. It's very difficult waiting until the end of a show and then appearing for just a few minutes but the play had to have an ending and the character of Kit provided it. After the manic production we had witnessed a wife with a sprained ankle brought suitable if confused conclusion.

Direction

I have had great difficulty in writing this adjudication without it being full of superlatives. The direction *was* superb the pace was right the characterisations were spot on. The very high quality of the acting was a delight to watch. Angie even managed to get the right amount of heat in the auditorium so that we could really believe we were in Portugal!

A really great all round production

Michael Poole

Adjudicator

