

'Our play is preferred'

A Midsummer Night's Dream
by Sands School
at The Barnfield Theatre, 14/3/24
appraised by Holly Meechan

Congratulations Sands School for your fantastic reimagining of A Midsummer Night's Dream as part of the Spring 24 Shakespeare Schools Festival. It was a thrilling night of theatre, and I'd like to shine a spotlight on some aspects I really loved.

We were all wowed by your incredible costumes, that were playful, colourful and fantastical, giving your production a very professional and larger than life look. What was really great was that the energy of your characters matched their fabulous attire, your voices and physicality were carefully thought about and well-rehearsed and you made your relationships and status very clear.

You handled this comedy very well, delivering jokes with excellent timing and showing great physical comedy skills too. There was so much attention to detail in every moment and no missed opportunity for fun. I loved the little touches like Puck and Hermia jumping with fright as they both entered the stage at the same time, Helena and Hermia using their handbags as weapons, and the flowery bed shopping trolley crossing the stage.

You made some brilliant bold lighting choices - I love how every time the magic flower was used we were plunged into darkness and saw just a flash along with the sound of the guitar to indicate the spell. The fairies singing the lullaby by candlelight was not in any way twee but instead very eerily magical.

You had an outstanding command of the language and a confident delivery of the text. You also managed to showcase the many individual talents of the group so well from ballet dancing, to music, to comedy and playing strong emotions.

This was a bold, brilliant and energetic production of A Midsummer Night's Dream by a very talented and confident cast.

We're thrilled to have reimagined Shakespeare with you this year and have loved being with you on your journey from classroom to stage. We can't wait to work with Sands School again in the next Festival!

SANDS SCHOOL