

The revival of the Castleton panto gave us a raucous night out in the village hall – the energetic cast bounced off the audience, who, knowing their bit of the script were up for it! However, we all go to a panto thinking we know what is going to happen. Predictability is part of the event. Nutty's production turned this on its head with “**Adrian – The Alternative Pantomime**” where we followed the journey of Adrian [well played by Penny Richardson] through scenarios we had sort of seen before with the usual suspects. Adrian had to deal with Red Riding Hood and the wicked Wolf, Cinderella and Prince Charming, The Dames Drippington [the Johns - Lovelace and Whitfield - offered us Dame Edna in stereo with a visual reference to psychedelia], Alice and Snow White, Little Bo Peep, who not only lost her sheep but did not really fancy looking after them in the first place as she had other stuff to do - like being Cinders, a defence barrister, and Long Tall Sally who had something going on with a gang of piratesare you still with me? Welcome to the Peveril stage to Di Povey. Good to see other fresh faces in Ed and Tess.

We also had Pinocchio and his creator Geppetto [*quiz question: how many parts did Moz have?*] Linda Wilson was a magical Fairy Godmother [when she wasn't Robinson Crusoe or Sleeping Beauty] – I wonder if she could wave that wand over Brexit while she's at it. Talking of which, why was that picture of Boris Johnson on the side of the stage – did I miss something? The audience loved the topical gags. Simon as the Wolf gave us the usual Yuletide 'hiss and boo' that reminded me of 'Question Time'! We also visited the Criminal Justice System with Lord Justice Iggo - Wee Willie Winkie was up on a charge. And Lo upon a star.....we found ourselves on Treasure Island with Bluebeard, or was Buck actually Blind Pugh in disguise? The scene had a spontaneity that was genuinely funny before Buck decided to steer the crew back towards the script – or was it all in the script? Oh no it wasn't..... Oh yes it might have been!.....

The musical numbers were sung with gusto with band and cast on the same hymn sheet. Well done once again to the band which turned in a professional note-perfect performance. Some of whom mounted the steps, crossing over from the Musicians Union to Equity.

The whole performance had an originality and genuine feeling for the 'bonkers' nature of Pantomime. In Panto you've just got to go for it and they did! Being slightly barmy is more fun than being a 'grown-up' anyway. It was a good night out and thanks for all the hard work to the back stage crew, cast and band.

Paul Borland