

Rotherfield Players Production
Jack and the Beanstalk.

What is a pantomime without a few groan worthy jokes, cheesy sing-a-long songs and some very hammy acting? Well, it would be a play. This production is proudly a pantomime, as it should be.

The feeling that dominated the production from the moment it started was the overwhelming sense of fun and effort coming from the stage. This year's set could boast a giant castle with realistic lantern flames and an almost life-sized cottage, the chimney of which impressively bellowed smoke during the finalé.

The costumes were suitably over the top. The giant's papier-mâché head doubled the actor's height, the Dame's garish dresses and ample bosom doubled her width and Simple Simon's shirt could have induced migraines alone, but when teamed with a yellow waistcoat and green socks it really sealed the deal.

The lead members of the cast struggled to suppress their infectious giggles as they waded through the pun filled script, with most of the biggest laughs of the evening coming from a few quick witted ad-libbers. A boisterous audience tried to keep the performers on their toes, but an unexpected "He's behind you" and "Oh no he isn't" were handled with ease. There was even time for some romance too, with our title hero sharing a sweet duet with the princess. We were in fact treated to many a musical number on the story's journey. The cast belted out an eclectic range of hits, from "Holding out for a hero" to "Money makes the world go round" and often accompanied by dancers, a chorus of towns people or a hoard of evil minions. The panto's Royal Family all displayed impressive singing voices and the King's eldest Daughter graced the stage with an elegant solo dance.

Stacey Brackley is the youngest member of the Rotherfield players to take on the role of director and it cannot of been easy what with the large cast, all the props, songs and costume changes, but from the audience you would never know that it was her first outing as a director. The choreography gave the production lots of energy and certain members of the cast really shone, most notably were Gussie Penny as the Fairy and Adam Hardy as the hilarious Dame Dotty. Both finally playing roles that they were clearly born to play.

Scott Kingsnorth
@thekinglobotomy