

NODA Review – “A Doll’s House” – Huntingdon Drama Club

This was an ambitious but very effective production that played on the strengths of the Society and created some particularly dramatic moments. Ibsen always presents a challenge but this version of the familiar classic was both fast moving and held the attention of the audience throughout. Times have changed, even in Norway, but the basic issues of this story can still produce a strong empathy and response.

To begin with, the music, the very detailed set and the muted colours of both the set and costumes created exactly the right atmosphere and this was enhanced by the original introductory poem, spoken in the darkness, as the play began.

The cast were well selected and created an almost perfect ensemble piece with no weak links. The smaller roles all created consistent characterisations that smoothly supported the central plot and none seemed out of place. I especially liked the small cameo role of Ann Monk as the Children’s nurse but equally accepted the quiet efficiency of Jane Crittenden as Helen and the competent delivery of the Christmas tree by Guy Makey. Jeanette Brown always gives a strong performance and her quiet, low key interpretation of Christine Linde was no exception, contrasting beautifully with both the character of Nora and the complex personality of Krogstad. In the latter role, Phil Green was appropriately unreadable and, at times, threatening.

However, the real success or otherwise of this production always rests on the shoulders of the three main characters and here the casting was inspired. Scott Hutchison gave a very sensitive performance as Dr Rank and was totally believable in all his scenes. This was a very sympathetic portrayal which tended to act as an ideal foil for the sudden mood swings of Torvald himself. In this pivotal role, Dean Laccohee gave one of the best performances that I have seen from him. While the character is always going to be an unpopular one in this day and age, Dean managed to explore and convey all the different facets of the man. His dramatic final scene provided a fitting climax to his story. Finally, in the difficult role of Nora, Kirsty Pickering was perfect. Her reactions, changes of pace and facial expressions were all excellent and she brought a charming simplicity to the part. The interactions between these three actors were superb and helped to make Ronald Stevenson’s fine production a very memorable one. Congratulations to everybody concerned.

Review for NODA by Michael Williamson