George's Marvellous Medicine

at Lowry Theatre, Salford
Reviewed by Matthew Dougall February 2018

A Curve, Leicester and Rose Productions joint venture, this was a slick and entertaining stage adaptation by **David Wood** of the Roald Dahl children's classic story.

On entering the auditorium we were presented with an excellently designed and compact set which aided the play and our understanding of the situation and place. Grandma's rise from the caravan was especially well designed. This, combined with some excellent special effects really helped the audience to be complicit in a rather bizarre and difficult to create on stage storyline.

The story stayed true to the Dahl tale, and using only 6 actors, the whole show was presented in a very charming and audience-pleasing manner. Just the right amount of singing, just the right amount of audience interaction and participation, and just the right length of show for their target audience... the tweens.

Preston Nyman played a very amiable and empathetic George, easily interacting with the audience and getting them on his side, whilst his parents were played with ease by
Catherine Morris
and
Justin Wilman
. The harridan grandma whose nasty and ungrateful disposition gave rise to George deciding to make a medicine for her, was played with Wagnerian grandiosity by
Lisa Howard
.

Physical theatre skilled **Chandni Mistry** made a very believable chicken, and **Matthew Coulton** played basically everything else needed to bring the story to life.

One thing that I found really quite odd was the decision to use a mixture of both live and pre-recorded music. Undoubtedly the performers today were skilled musicians, as they displayed their skills at playing an array of wind and string instruments, but they served only to augment the soundtrack not create it. That being said though, the majority of the children in the audience today were engaged throughout and were in awe of the 'magic' on display. And if, by managing to enthuse and delight tomorrow's audiences in such a fashion, then it is most definitely 'job done!'.

A well conceived and intelligently directed piece of children's theatre which finishes with a good warning for them not to try what happened on stage at home! One of the best Leicester Curve touring shows I have seen in a good while.