

Wonder.land review



Wonder.land is an exuberant and mind blowing play from outstanding vocals to jaw dropping lighting and set design that conveys a story we follow with Ally in the harsh reality of the real world to the welcoming world inside her phone, wonder.land. This appeals to a large audience which relates to the technology dominated world we live in today. Created by Damon Albarn, Moira Buffini and Rufus Norris this is an incredible play that can lift your spirits and dazzle you with tremendous acting.

The main characters in Wonder.land lift the show beyond what it could be without them. Starting with Ally played by Lois Chimimba splendidly, she played a big contrast in a difficult part, the excited, energetic girl she can be when she is happy in Wonder.land but also the grumpy, unwilling girl in the real world who conveys her problems by talking to uninterested 'net friends'. The acting was top class and the singing was good. Overall, a brilliant performance. Moving on to the white rabbit, played by Joshua Lacey this iconic character may look low budget with the disjointed costume, however don't be fooled by this because he is presented as an untalking, quirky character. Now, the evil, devilish, LONELY? Mastermind- at first in this play we are shown a classic villain, Ms Manxome, that at first glance shows an easy character to play. Almost in response to this the character opens up a new sad, lonely dimension to her, throwing the audience and dissuading us she is the classic villain. Even though it is uncovered she has had a sad life we find it hard to find empathy for her because of her wickedness, a solid performance as Ms Manxome by Anna Francolini. As the avatar of Ally, Alice, Carley Bawden acts as a very puppet like controlled character whilst also having a unique personality and side to her character. We first meet her when Ally creates her as different to her real self as possible. She is played well and has a right balance between being almost robotic and also being her own person.

All of the cast show off good vocals however you could argue they aren't west end quality and the lighting, costume, sound and set design are all unmatched to any other play, mainly because of the brilliant idea of a very modern, computer based adaptation of Alice in Wonderland, a stroke of genius. The acting throughout throws the audience in different directions and many dimensions of characters break out throughout the performance. The songs chosen fit well to the characters and scenes. My favourite scene was the tea party when the mad hatter lives up to his name and causes chaos watched by many shocked civilians. Overall, this is a brilliant performance.

