BRECON FESTIVAL BALLET

NUTCRACKER – December 2024

REVIEW

Another triumph for Brecon Festival Ballet

Christmas time – and Nutcracker ballets are being performed all around the world, Theatr Brycheiniog included, and how lucky are the people of Brecon and the surrounding area to have such a wonderful venue for performers of all kinds and for all tastes? Once again, the Artistic Director and founder of Brecon Festival Ballet, Katy Sinnadurai BEM, together with charity secretary, Lesley Walker, have succeeded in bringing us their sparkling production of the Nutcracker ballet. With a live orchestra, stylish costumes and Katy’s brilliant choreography, the whole performance enchanted the packed auditorium for five shows.

As most people will know, the Performing Arts have suffered huge financial cutbacks leaving so many companies struggling to survive. Despite this, Brecon Festival Ballet pulled out all the rabbits from the seasonal hats and brought us again this well-loved ballet as exhilaratingly and beautifully performed as ever.

Amalgamating professional dancers, actors, semi-professional dancers and pupils from a variety of dance schools across Mid and South Wales (including Brecon’s own Mid Wales Dance Academy), together with help from costume makers, singers in a choir, technicians and stage staff, relentless hard work, dedication and many hours of rehearsal over many months culminated in performances that allow us all to experience the joys of Christmas with gusto! Bravo Katy, Lesley and Tchaikovsky, and the entire company. I have seen many, many Nutcrackers during my long career including my own production in Tokyo, and I can honestly say that the Brecon Festival Ballet production stands out magnificently.

I have decided this year not to pick out and review individual performers because in my opinion every single dancer and character was a star in his or her own right; but I feel I have to express huge admiration for the corps de ballet Snowflakes at the end of the first act. The dancers were thrilling to watch, the choreography was ideal, the costumes were beautiful, and the steps and intricate patterns were perfectly performed by dancers with shining, happy faces and obvious delight in dancing this most looked-forward to snowy scene. Congratulations to the entire cast for bringing their joyful presentations to each of their roles.

So… carry on BFB Nutcrackers with all your hard work - and would-be audiences make sure you book your seats for the 2025 performances as soon as dates are given because they sell out very quickly indeed.

Lastly, let me wish a Happy New Year to everyone at Brecon Festival Ballet, Mid Wales Dance Academy and Theatr Brycheiniog.

Susan Carlton-Jones, former ballet dancer with The Royal Ballet.