




Carrollian fantasy opera a delight from start to finish

All the energy of a university revue delivered with the resources of State Opera, and there's a Trump sequence added since the 1986 Adelaide Festival premiere.

Ewart Shaw

 less than 2 min read July 12, 2019 - 8:10PM

Frabjous, simply though not purely frabjous, this colourful, character filled, Carrollian fantasy from the Wesley-Smith twins, composer Martin and librettist Peter, is a delight from start to interrupted finish.

Two tenors, Adam Goodburn as Charles Dodgson and Brock Roberts as Lewis Carroll and two sopranos Katrina Mackenzie as Alice and Joanna McWaters as the grown woman link fantasy and biography at the heart of this tale which layers fragments from Wonderland onto the whimsical epic Snark hunt.

It has all the anarchic energy of a university revue delivered with the impressive resources of a major arts company, and there's a Trump sequence added since the 1986 Festival premiere.

Joshua Rowe, the bluff buffoonish Bellman leads the crew of unlikely adventurers with great warmth.

A couple of set pieces slow the pace but Mark Oates is the very hungry caterpillar of society, and Jeremy Tatchell and Norbert Hohl, as the Tweedles, get stuck into the travails of twinship with gusto.

Joseph Mitchell's light handed direction makes the most of the astonishing talent at his disposal, comedic and confident.

Warwick Stengard's disciplined conducting, with three fine players in the pit, Mark Sandon, piano, Sami Butler percussion and Louis Cann, double bass is key to the success of the show.

Simone Romaniuk's design, lit by Nigel Levings, complete with bathing machine is a joy.

There are lots of moving parts, and so calloo callay to Catherine and Marie Campbell, Nick Geddes, Charlotte Kelso, Jolanta Kudra, Jamie Moffatt, Andrew Turner, Ruby Washington and the Winter School

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/entertainment/arts/carrollian-fantasy-opera-a-delight-from-start-to-finish/news-story/06638e742f8d095b89e7c57c1da93762>

Ensemble.

It's the very stuff of nonsense but like all great nonsense means so much.

That there are only three performances across two days is a sadness but that there are any performances at all is a grand thing.

Boojum!

State Opera South Australia

Dunstan Playhouse

