

Review of Viva's production of Sue Townsend's 'Bazaar and Rummage' in The Brook Soham on the 8th February 2018

You are always assured of good quality when you go to a Viva production and 'Bazaar and Rummage' was no exception. The clever script regularly played on words –the first sign of this in the title. We were not only entertained in the setting of a bazaar and rummage sale, we were also immersed in the bizarre behaviours of an array of anxiety-ridden agoraphobics and their so-called carers who had enough problems of their own.

The acting was excellent and had us thoroughly immersed throughout the play. Characters included Gwenda (played by Mary Barnes) the neurotic control freak, Fliss (Hannah Schunmann) the seemingly sole character on track only to reveal her own deep-seated anxieties in the end, Katrina (Sarah Shorney) a dumb blond obsessed with Barry Manilow, make-up and pretty dresses, Bell-Bell (Anthea Kenna) with her obsessive compulsive disorder cleaning everything in sight, many times, wonderful Margaret (Kirsten Martin) outlandishly swearing, smoking against the rules and telling the harsh truth no matter what the circumstances and the WPC (Vicki Jelleyman) arriving near the end of the play provided another anomaly: a police woman who is afraid and hates people and the world.

The success of the play was not only the wonderful characterization by the cast, but the truthfulness of the anxieties, interaction and back-stabbing of the characters that is easily recognizable in any age.

Yet with all this serious exploration of the human condition the play was also hilarious. We could almost predict the rebellious quips and colourful comments by Margaret who, for example, was told not to swear and immediately and naturally replied with a string of expletives complaining about being restricted.

Director Gail Baker and her team are to be congratulated for such a wonderful, hilarious yet thought-provoking evening's entertainment.

I look forward to their next event: 'Hairspray' from the 7th to the 10th March 2018 at the Brook, Soham contact details: [vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:vivayouth@hotmail.co.uk)

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