

## “PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW”

**Romeo and Juliet**  
**by Ickburgh School**  
**at The Stratford Circus, 15-Nov-19**  
**appraised by Emma-Louise Howell**

I would like to extend my most sincere congratulations to Ickburgh School for your tremendous production of Romeo and Juliet as part of the 2019 Shakespeare Schools Festival. It was an excellent night of theatre, and I'd like to highlight a few aspects that really stood out.

You gave us such an energetic and enthusiastic performance of Romeo and Juliet. Your use of both live and recorded music had every audience member tapping their feet and singing along. It was a dynamic and engaging piece that brought so much joy to the evening and we had fun because we knew you were having fun, too.

Your use of ensemble was particularly effective and really complimented the main action onstage. As students held up props or repeated important dialogue, it was clear how well everyone worked as a team to create the world of the play and convey the story to us. Every single student was engaged throughout the whole performance and played their part with incredible confidence and conviction making for electric onstage chemistry.

The collaborative spirit you had as a company was outstanding. Performing live theatre is a huge challenge and the way you supported each other on stage is testament to your ability to work as an ensemble.

I should also mention how well you captured individual talents and personalities in your performance. From a rapping Tybalt to comedic swordfighting and a Benny Hill style chase scene, your performance was stamped with unique and creative performances that showcased the best of your students and made the performance really refreshing and enjoyable to watch.

The audible cheers and cries from the audience demonstrated how well you captured both the joy of Romeo and Juliet's love and the tragedy of their deaths which made for really dramatic story-telling. We were totally invested in the love story and the world you created for us.

This was a refreshing and joyful Romeo and Juliet and your performance was as bright and sparkling as your costumes.

Performing Shakespeare's words on a professional stage takes bravery, resilience, and creativity. You should be immensely proud of what you and your teachers have achieved in this Season of Infinite Variety.

I hope to see Ickburgh School in the 2020 Festival!

**Emma-Louise Howell**

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