

Salisbury International Arts Festival

As You Like It at Wardour Castle

The picturesque backdrop of Wardour Castle was most appropriate to host 'As you like it' as performed by Shakespeare's Globe's touring theatre. The beautiful scenery aided the performance by becoming alive, surrounding the audience with a dramatic sunset.

Even though I hadn't seen the play before it was easily comprehensible and one of Shakespeare's more light-hearted pieces. The performance was enhanced by joyous song and dance, as the actors would involve themselves within the audience. It was amazing to realise how much of a difference music makes in a performance such as this one. The characters, doubling up as musicians and singers, were able to tell one of Shakespeare's complex tales in a more interesting and accessible way, especially to younger viewers, but without endangering the integrity of the original play. The transitions between scenes were made surprisingly smoothly, considering the outdoor location, making it a flawless performance in a rustic setting. Likewise it was clever how they interacted between one another on different levels, from opposite ends of the audience, or from the balcony over the stage. Around, the entire audience seemed captured by the actors, even the children in their sleeping bags as they huddled against the cold.

Laura Simpkins