

## **Shrek The Musical Review**

*By Lucy Daly and Róisín Percy*

Since the establishment of Our Lady's Secondary School forty years ago, the school musical has always been one of the highlights of the school year. To say this musical had it all would be an understatement, with an exceptional cast of over 200 students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> year, upbeat and high energy dance routines, vibrant and colourful costumes and beautiful singing that left the audience in awe every night.

The story begins with the lively opening number "Big, Bright Beautiful World" introducing us to Shrek and his life of solitude in the swamp. Jennifer Cormack (Mama Ogre), Joe Johnston (Papa Ogre) and Thomas Franks (Young Shrek) introduced us to Shrek's world. We were very fortunate that Stephen Tuohy returned to the school to play the part of Shrek. He gave an outstanding performance as the titular character, showcasing his excellent voice in the opening song "Big Bright Beautiful World", as well as his other solo numbers "Build a Wall" and "When Words Fail". His performance as Shrek proved to us that ogres do indeed have layers.

Laurie Mullen gave us an endearing performance as Princess Fiona, balancing the Princess's humour and emotional depth perfectly. Her singing voice was incredible in a role that requires such vocal strength. She did a fantastic job leading the chorus number "Morning Person". Her vocal abilities shone brightly in the beautiful song "I Know It's Today" which perfectly encapsulates Fiona's isolation. Laurie's voice blended perfectly with the talented vocals of Lauren Sheedy (Young Fiona) and Anna Hlaholyk (Teen Fiona) in this number. Laurie and Stephen's excellent partnership was showcased in the hilarious number 'I Think I Got You Beat'.

Julie Grey was hilarious in her part as Donkey. With her high energy levels and excellent comic timing, Julie certainly kept the audience in stitches night after night. She made the part her own, giving us an excellent rendition "Don't Let Me Go", as well as performing the number "Make a Move" alongside Orfhlaith Bergin, Tom Landy and Ruby Stapleton Higgins who portrayed the Three Blind Mice in this entertaining number. Stephen and Julie were a fantastic dynamic duo in this show. Together, they showcased their comic timing in the number

“Travel Song” as well as their amazing vocal abilities in the number “Who I’d Be” alongside Princess Fiona.

Andrew Quinlan played the comical antagonist Lord Farquaad. This role involved strong acting, singing ability and had heavy physical demands requiring him to be on his knees the whole show and Andrew certainly ticked all the boxes in his first lead role. He superbly led the numbers “What’s Up Duloc” and “Ballad of Lord Farquaad” alongside two enthusiastic, energetic chorus group numbers. His hilarious performance and interaction with the audience was second to none.

To say Sarah Bourke wowed everybody with her singing voice would be an understatement. She had the audience in awe of her singing voice in her powerful song “Forever”. It’s hard to believe that this is her first time performing a song onstage in front of an audience. The Art Department, led by Mr Fin O’Hara and his talented crew of art students, certainly outdid themselves this year with the creation of the Dragon, which set the dramatic tone for this scene perfectly.

Pinocchio, played by Ollie Morris, led the band of Fairytale misfits in the number ‘Story of My Life’. He fully committed to this role, nailing the Pinocchio voice even whilst singing. The band of Fairytale Creatures, including recognisable names like the Three Bears, Three Little Pigs, Peter Pan, Elf, Fairy Godmother, Sugar Plum Fairy, White Rabbit, Ugly Duckling, Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee. The strength of these characters in their respective roles was unbelievable, with everyone giving it their all in the show-stopper dance numbers. ‘Freak Flag’ was by far one of the showstoppers of the show, with Gingy (Lucy Daly) leading the number with excellent flair. Lucy’s role was portrayed by the use of a gingerbread man puppet, which she conveyed brilliantly.

There were strong performances all around from Kim McLoughney Farametz, George Hartigan Hogan, Amy Conroy, Eve Fogarty, Charlie Hennessy, Aaron Breen and Lucy Smith. The talented performances by all in this show have made it one to remember for years to come.

While the set for the show every year always impresses, this year’s sets reached new heights. Mr Fin O’Hara with the help of his team of talented art students and Mr Ronan Kinane, channelled their creativity in their respective fields of art and construction. The standard of the set design in this show, from

the creation to the dragon, the backdrops in the form of books and the many props in the show were outstanding. Huge thanks must go to them all for their hard work, dedication and commitment to the show year on year. Thanks to Ms Ruth Butler and Mr Ronan Kinane who expertly managed all the props backstage, alongside their TY stage crew. Huge thanks must go to Ms Avril Kinnerk and Ms Lorna Maher who made sure every single person looked their absolute best on stage in their costumes. Thanks also to our TY and LCA students who worked their magic on the students with the amazing on-stage makeup looks.

None of this would have been possible without the dedicated planning and co-ordination of Ms Anne Marie Johnston. Her work behind the scenes to make it all happen is astounding, and a huge thanks must go to her. Congratulations on another fantastic musical.

We are so fortunate every year to work with Therese Maher (Director/Choreographer) and Mary Rose McNally (Musical Director) and witness their talents in action. Mary Rose's dedication to having everyone sound their best on stage is commendable. Mary Rose, along with her orchestra, provided the lively and catchy music that made this musical so special and memorable. Every single year, Therese works tirelessly on choreographing her outstanding dance numbers, organising costumes for people to wear and ensuring that every single student had the confidence and belief in themselves to give their best performance on-stage. A huge thanks to them both for their hard work and dedication.

It is hard to put into words how impressive the cast and crew of 'Shrek the Musical' were. From the leads to the chorus, to the stage crew and the ushers, everyone involved gave it their all to make this show the fantastic production it was. Congratulations to all. Take a bow, you deserve all those standing ovations you received.