



The Lightning Thief - Caterham School:

‘A Creative, Adventurous and Truly Bonkers Production’

In the waning days of the winter term, Caterham School unveiled a theatrical spectacle that defied convention and transported the audience into the extraordinary realm of Greek mythology. The Lightning Thief was nothing short of a "bonkers" production, in the words of the director, Miss Guttner.

At the heart of the narrative were the gallant trio of Percy, played by the very talented Max Kersey, whose stage presence as the reluctant hero was tremendously impressive, Annabeth portrayed by triple threat Zoë Terrell, and Grover brought to life with fantastic comic timing by Emily Broughton. Together, they embarked on a quest of epic proportions, striving to avert a cataclysmic war among the capricious Gods. The chemistry among the three leads was fabulous, providing the audience with a relatable and endearing anchor amidst the fantastical plot.

One of the standout performances came from George McAree in the role of Mr D, or Dionysus. McAree masterfully balanced the requisite divine rage with a healthy dose of humour, eliciting laughter from the audience that resonated throughout the auditorium.

The sheer scale of the undertaking was nothing short of impressive. Rarely does one witness a full-sized animatronic Minotaur gracing the stage of a school production. The commitment to such a visually striking element underscored the dedication and ambition of the production team. It was evident that no detail had been spared in bringing this mythical world to life.

Equally noteworthy was the commitment to authenticity evident in the stage combat sequences. Students had actively participated in combat training, as described in the programme interviews and the specially-made weapons, added a tangible and visceral element to the performance. The dedication to these details contributed to the overall immersive experience.

The production's vibrancy extended beyond its characters and storyline; it permeated every aspect of the performance. The colourful palette and dynamic lighting design created a visually stunning backdrop, enhancing the magical ambiance of the play. Inclusivity was a guiding principle, with dance breakouts and full cast numbers weaving seamlessly into the narrative, enriching the overall tapestry of the production.

The resounding success of *The Lightning Thief* lay not only in its visual spectacle but also in the innovative set design and production elements. Dream sequences, cleverly executed through the use of a gauze screen, transported the audience into the characters' subconscious minds, adding depth and nuance to the storytelling.

In a landscape where school productions often play it safe, Caterham School's production, based on Rick Riordan's original novel series, was a refreshing departure. It pushed boundaries, showcased extraordinary talent, and left an indelible mark on the memories of those fortunate enough to witness it. The culmination of creativity, dedication, and an adventurous spirit resulted in a production that will be remembered as a true example of what can be achieved when a school community comes together to embrace the magic of theatre.



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