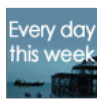


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The Magic Flute, Pavilion Theatre, Brighton May 23

12:22pm Monday 25th May 2009
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By Rosie Clarke »

Glyndebourne Education were determined to demystify Mozart's opera, cheerfully introducing the five performers.

Enthusiastic musical director Dominic Harlan leapt off his piano stool with Tigger-like energy to teach the audience a song about magic and music.

The cast got into character by donning stunning costumes on top of their simple white clothes. Innocent princess Pamina wore a turquoise shift trailing flowers, while Papageno had an elaborately feathered cape and headdress.

"Ooh, what's he got in there?" enquired one excited child as he emerged clutching a birdcage.

Unassuming Scottish flautist Stephen Clark made an innocent everyman as protagonist Tamino.

The stagecraft was effective: Pamina's captivity was demonstrated by entangling her arms in strips of fabric while she gave expressive, anguished looks; and whirling red ribbons created the impression of fire.

When coloratura soprano Ann de Renais, intimidating in a spangled black velvet cloak, launched into the Queen of the Night's challenging aria, the children listened with a flutter of curiosity, rather than laughing or disengaging.

At the end, the performers invited questions from the audience, describing the challenge of opera as, "like weightlifting for singers" and explaining that this impressive production was created in only six days of rehearsals.

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EDITOR'S CHOICE



Will you be voting today?

Elections will take place today involving every adult in Brighton and Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex. The outcomes will have an impact on every resident's life but analysts have predicted a new wave of political apathy prompted by the MPs expenses scandal will keep voters away. ANDY CHILES explains why you should cast the doubts aside and vote today.



Mummy Loves Disco!

It's coming up again soon! That monthly rave where adults can let their hair down, have a drink, chat to like minded individuals, showcase new clothes and dance moves and - best of all - feel like they are part of the real world again. Only one stipulation - you have to take a toddler to gain entry!

What a way to finish

And now, the end is near.....



Invisible flyers draw in the crowds

A comedy show has been drawing in the crowds thanks to some invisible flyers.

The light at the end of the tunnel

We're finally there, the last long weekend of the Brighton Festival and Fringe.

Buried war secrets unearthed in garden

A man digging in his back garden stumbled across a Second World War bomb shelter.

Albion need dress rehearsal

Albion boss Russell Slade admits he is eager to line up a final test for his new-look side.



Can't stop the signal

From fairly priced bras to stopping Starbucks on St James's Street - is there anything Facebook can't accomplish? Sarah Lewis

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