



Theatre Review of Goodnight Mr Tom



On Wednesday 16th December year 6 of Offa's Mead Academy were lucky enough to visit The Duke of York's Theatre, in London, and watch Goodnight Mr Tom. David Wood has marvellously turned Michelle Magorian's award winning book to life on stage. This heart-warming story tells the tale of a war-torn Britain through the eyes of an evacuee. After being evacuated to the tranquil Dorset countryside, he thrives under the care of Mr Tom Oakley until... he has to go back home!



Amazingly, it is pretty much the same as the book, just made shorter. The play stars William Beech, a sickly-looking evacuee, as its main character. He is evacuated from London to Dorset and stays with Mr Tom Oakley, an old man who has lost his wife and son. While he stayed he: made new friends, learned to read and write and lives a proper life. However, soon he needs to go back to his ill mother who badly treats him... Thankfully, he is saved by Mr Tom (short for Mr Tom Oakley) and lives with him in the end.



All the people played their parts well, making you feel upset or overjoyed for them, and a range of other emotions as well. They had great vocal quality, being loud enough yet having the right accents as well. Also, they engaged you and made the play intriguing and interesting. Although all the characters were great, my favourite was Zach, played by Sonny Kirby. He was very humorous and stayed in character throughout. However, humans weren't



the only ones in the limelight. Toby Ollie, from the Handspring Puppet Company, made some puppets and trained the puppeteers in Goodnight Mr Tom. There was a bird, a squirrel and of course Sammy, Mr Tom's faithful dog. Elisa DeGrey, who was Sammy's puppeteer, made you forget Sammy was a puppet at all with the lifelike movements and noises she made.



Also, the clothes and scenery were amazing. The clothes were old-fashioned and like they would be in World War 2. The Dorset scenery showed a calm and quiet area with trees and a church in the background. However, London was loud and crowded with huge buildings in the background and not a tree in sight. It was exactly like it was World War 2. The sound effects added to the performance and the music created great atmosphere. On top of that, the lighting dimmed for the London scene, giving it a gloomy look and it was bright and sunny in the Dorset scene. This also created great atmosphere and added to the performance. Also, the characters stood out because of the bright spotlights.



Overall, the play was very successful as the audience were hooked throughout. This show was extremely enjoyable because it was heart-warming and very emotional. Also, it was lifelike and starred amazing actors who played their parts well. I would recommend this phenomenal performance to children studying World War 2, like we were. If I had to rate it, I would give it 10/10!



By Lucy Hollom

