

## Horrible Christmas Review

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2014, I went to the Old Rep Theatre in Birmingham to see Horrible Christmas- a show my arts inspiration was in (Earl Hughes). The show was stunning- they included great features for a children's comedy such as: interacting with the audience, having a funny storyline, using amusing costumes, props and playing funny sound effects. The actors were: Earl Hughes (Sydney Clause), Erika Poole (Shirley Homes), Tom Gilles (Watson Williams), Jim Low (Rudolph) and various other actors such as Mimi Edwards and Tom Jude. The basic storyline is that there was a boy named Watson Williams- it is Christmas day but all his presents were stolen by Sydney Clause! Watson then teams up with Shirley Homes to race through time to get his presents back. On the way, they meet Charles Dickens, the Puritans, Charles II and even Henry VIII and Catherine Howard!

My favourite part was when Tom Jude (as Charles II) performed a rap; it was the only typical Horrible Histories comedy. It was very funny (especially for kids) and it also had relevance to the modern day by Charles II being interpreted as a gangster with having bling on his costume and the use of slang words. I also liked the audience interaction by using features like 'BOO!' directed to Sydney Clause (the bad guy), getting the audience to pretend to be a ghost and typical pantomime phrases like 'he's behind you' and 'oh, no he didn't'. My favourite actor was Jim Low, he had the perfect facial expressions throughout the performance and he had amazing characteristics for Rudolph (a Reindeer!) They included music, drama, visual art, design, lighting, fashion, costume and even a bit of dance (that was used for audience participation). Also, the lighting and smoke effect was very effective- they used it when moving scenery to and from the stage. This was a great idea; it diverted our eyes from the backstage people moving around the stage.

However, they could have made the play more Horrible Histories style. Many of the audience came to watch Horrible Christmas because they liked the Horrible Histories show; therefore, the show could have had some more of the classic Horrible Histories features (such as funny adverts, interesting historical facts and loads of gruesome parts!)

I would defiantly recommend it, because it is a phenomenal children's performance that is perfect to take kids to- it is a true comedy and has a great storyline. I would rate it 9/10



Me holding up the programme I got signed outside the theatre.