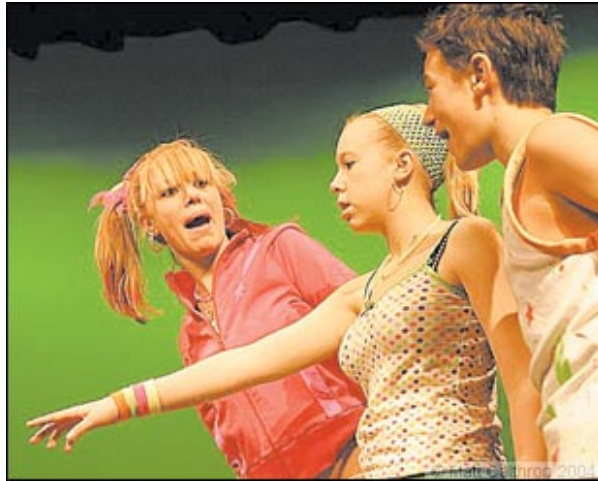


Audience blessing for priestly tale

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk

26 May 2005



Jodi, Max and Beth

FROM the moment Kerpow! jumped on to the stage at the Abbey Theatre in St Albans in their funky fluorescent colours, the six band members performed with energy, verve and an impressive self-assurance - considering the youngest member is a mere 12-years-old.

Now on their fourth show, Kerpow! can boast a faithful fan base who know the words and the actions to several of their songs, not forgetting the all-important Kerpow! punch-in -the-air greeting.

Director Jill Priest has aimed this show at the primary school pupil and they certainly seem to love it. Parents, beware - some of the songs are dangerously catchy and you'll be humming them yourself before you know it. From the "It's make-believe" about night-time fears of witches and snakes, to "the Rainbow Rap" where each member has a colour to sing about, these songs seem to hit just the right spot with this audience.

For each new show, Jill Priest mixes in new songs and dance routines with the old favourites. This time we saw Jodi and Elroy strutting their stuff in a balletic routine that allowed Jodi to show just how high she can kick her long legs. Another new entry allowed each band member to sing about what they wanted to be when they grew up, with appropriate actions. The movements were carefully choreographed so that as one person swung their arm wide, the next person was ducking for the floor, and so on, all along the line -up. The older generation, particularly, appreciated the precision timing involved with this one.

There's plenty of audience participation, a chance to get up on stage and even, this time, a pantomime baddie. Pow, the band's cuddly rabbit, is now a fully-paid-up member replacing Rachel who left after two shows due to the pressure of other commitments. Despite the audience's loudest remonstrances, a sinister man in a flowing black coat succeeds in stealing Pow away. Even though this caused consternation among the younger members of the audience, Pow did reappear safely after the interval and stole the limelight with a heartfelt solo.

Jill Priest has devised a winning line-up. I'm sure there are plenty of local households eagerly awaiting Kerpow!'s next gig on June 19.

Maria Burke

Pow adds wow factor

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
05 May 2005

FOLLOWING his successful debut in last month's Kerpow! show, Pow the rabbit has been officially made the group's seventh member.

Pow - Kerpow!'s soft toy mascot stepped in when a member of the group was forced to drop out of the April show because of her GCSE workload.

Now director Jill Priest has decided that instead of bringing in someone new to join the group, she could just promote the rabbit.

Said Jill: "To cast someone new at this stage in the season would mean them having to learn an awful lot of songs and dances in a very short space of time.

"The group works perfectly well as a line-up of six and as Pow was such a big hit with the young audience when he sang in the last show, I have decided to include him on a permanent basis."

Jill added: "We've even written a song specially for him in the next show!"

Kerpow! is a pop group which puts on a series of monthly high-energy shows aimed at primary-aged children at the Abbey Theatre in St Albans.

The next chance to catch them - and Pow's solo - is at 2pm on Sunday, May 15. Tickets cost £4 each and can be booked through the box office on 01727 857861. Further details are available at www.kerpow.org.uk



The girls from Kerpow! at the Abbey theatre

Power play

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
21 April 2005

POW the rabbit proved to be the unexpected star of the show at Kerpow!'s show for children on Sunday.

The seven-strong Kerpow! group was reduced to six when one of their number, Rachel James, had to drop out at the last minute.

So the company, who perform monthly musical shows aimed at pre-school and primary-aged children, called upon their understudy and mascot - a soft toy rabbit named Pow - to stand in for their fellow band member.

Most of their repertoire of catchy songs was unaffected by the missing voice but one new song, The Rainbow Rap, was very much designed with seven singers in mind.

Undeterred the group sang through the song based on the seven colours of the rainbow with Pow taking the final verse - violet - with a wonderfully-squeaky voice, cleverly and hurriedly recorded by the show's songwriters, Jill Priest and Adam Dickens.

Pow's unexpected burst into song delighted the young audience, to such an extent that he was asked for his autograph along with the rest of the group after the show.

Kerpow! make their next appearance at the Abbey Theatre in Westminster Lodge, St Albans, at 2pm on Sunday, May 15.

Tickets are £4 each from the box office on 01727 857861. Further information is available on www.kerpow.org.uk



Pow the rabbit

Back and packing a punch

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
07 April 2005

KERPOW! - the Company of Ten's answer to Hi-5, The Wiggles, S-Club 7 and Busted, all rolled into one, are back at the Abbey Theatre this month.

After a break for Easter, the all-singing, all-dancing teenage group return with a new show which builds on their existing repertoire of songs by adding three new numbers.

More than 40 minutes of original music is packed into the hour-long performance which starts at 2pm next Sunday, April 17. It is aimed at pre-schoolers and primary-age children.

Tickets are £4, available from the Abbey Theatre box office on 01727 857861. More information is available by visiting www.kerpow.org.uk



Kerpow! in action at the Abbey Theatre

The Kerpow factor

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
17 February 2005

KERPOW! - There's another chance to see the sell-out launch show of a new "pop group" for kids at the Abbey Theatre at the end of the month.

The all-singing, all-dancing group will be bringing their unique mix of original catchy songs and sketches to the theatre on Sunday, February 27.

The first show went down a storm with local youngsters and there are already healthy advance sales for the February show.

KERPOW!'s director Jill Priest described the response to the Company of Ten's new venture into children's theatre as "fantastic". She added: "The young audience was so eager to join in and since the show, children around St Albans have been singing the songs, giving the KERPOW! greeting and arguing about their favourite band members."

In fact there have been so many requests for the music that the group is launching its own website www.kerpow.org.uk where it is planned to offer the lyrics and backing tracks along with information about the group and its aims.

A full CD of the songs from the season of shows will be available later this year.

The second show in the series of monthly Sunday afternoon matinees takes place at the Abbey Theatre in Westminster Lodge at 2pm.

Tickets are £4 and are available from the Abbey Theatre box office on 01727 857861.



Kerpow!

Kerpow! wows youngsters

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
27 January 2005

I was unsure what to expect from the Abbey Theatre's latest venture, Kerpow! Aimed at a young audience of three to eight-year-olds, it is new territory for the theatre. The mixture of original songs, dances and sketches performed by a group of seven youngsters was devised by director, choreographer and co-writer Jill Priest in a bid to bring a different audience to the theatre.

The atmosphere of excitement and anticipation was immediately evident as I entered the foyer. The show, which the group have been rehearsing since October, was sold out - and I can see why. The talented youngsters - Max Simons-Dukes, Rachel James, Bethany Shepherd, Elroy Elvie, Jodie Holley, Joseph Giacone and Emma Barry - demonstrated seemingly unstoppable energy and enthusiasm throughout their performance, even when the occasional slip-up was made. From the opening number - a catchy song called Kerpow! - right through to the end, the young audience seemed captivated by the show and could be heard discussing which group member was their favourite and asking them for autographs in the foyer afterwards. Fame already!

Jill Priest's vision for the group is ambitious but I believe achievable. She hopes to build up a relationship between the audience and the group so that children will return again and again familiar with the songs and dances. Not only a great way to bring new faces to the Abbey Theatre, but also a great way to tear children away from their TV screens and Playstations, and back into the theatres.

Kerpow! will be appearing next at the Abbey Theatre on February 27 at 2pm, and tickets cost £4. Group bookings can be made - buy 10 tickets and get one free - and if it's your birthday you will even get invited on stage for the birthday rap!

Rosie Strudwick



Kerpow! at the Abbey Theatre

Seven offer song and dance

EDITORIAL - herts.advertiser@archant.co.uk
13 January 2005

A NEW show for young children is being launched by the Company of Ten in St Albans on Sunday week, January 23.

KERPOW! are a pop group of seven talented teenagers drawn from stage schools around the county who perform an exciting and innovative mix of original songs, dances and sketches - with a good helping of audience participation.

Aimed at pre-school and primary-aged children, the hour-long show is fun, educational and modern.

KERPOW! will perform a Sunday matinee once a month so that youngsters going along to the Abbey Theatre at Westminster Lodge to see them in action will soon pick up the songs and be able to join in with the group.

Tickets for the first show, which starts at 2pm, are available at a special introductory rate of £2 each from the Abbey Theatre box office on 01727 857861.



KERPOW! comes to the Abbey Theatre