

LONDON PLAYS

During our weekend in London we went to see *Fram*, a new play by Tony Harrison, which was showing at the National Theatre, as well as George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, which will be at the Old Vic until August. Here is what we thought:

on FRAM

The National Theatre was very interesting and impressive. What I liked about *Fram* were the stage sets. The window of Westminster Abbey, Nansen's huge ship and all the other props were carefully chosen and designed. And then, Fridjof Nansen was a very special person, who travelled to the North Pole and survived by killing wild animals. Later he became a humanitarian; he wanted to help the people starving during the Russian Famine.

Christine

I had never seen such an impressive stage. It was not the size that took away my breath, but the bunch of special effects they were able to produce. The technicians used hundreds of spotlights and other light effects. Again and again the stage was changed completely within a few minutes or seconds. I was sitting there speechless more than once.

Isabelle R

I really loved the great variety in this play. Suspense guided the audience throughout the evening. I felt a lot of different emotions.

Morena

I preferred the sets in *Fram* to the ones they used in *Pygmalion*. I was especially impressed by the boat which appeared at the centre of the stage covered in ice and snow. The audience could actually feel the cold.

Nancy

on PYGMALION

When I saw the theatre, I was looking forward to entering. Its architecture was so different! Then I was amazed by the style inside. The ceiling was beautiful and there were many painted details. Our seats were in the front row, which I didn't like at first because I thought we wouldn't be able to see the stage and the actors well enough. But this wasn't the case.

Katarina

The production at the Old Vic was fun; there was a lot of theatrical know-how and interesting themes. The actors managed to turn the different parts into real 'characters', which is always tricky.

Esther

I enjoyed seeing the actors connect with their characters. They all had a unique style of acting. I liked Henry Higgins, the arrogant Professor of Phonetics, and Eliza Doolittle, the flower-girl, best. Yet all the other actors were very convincing, too.

Kelly

One of the best scenes was the conversation between Mrs Higgins and her son. Even though Mr Higgins is an educated man and even a scholar, he reacts like a small child in front of his mother. I loved the way the mother treated him; she showed so much authority, which is very rare nowadays. I also liked the very end of the play, where Higgins and Eliza talk about their feelings for each other.

Bhanna

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Unfortunately Professor Higgins, the man who never really grew up, exaggerated sometimes. Mr Pickering was a much calmer figure; he was more gentleman-like. His accent and his way of speaking showed you that he was an upper-class man.

When we read the play in class, I imagined Eliza's father as a little fat man. At the Old Vic they added long, white hair, which really suited the character.

Isabelle A

There are a lot of details which add to the show. At the very beginning it is raining and the mother and daughter are waiting for a cab outside a church. All the bystanders and the smoke are giving the play a realistic touch; you feel as if it were a dark, rainy day. This allows the audience to get involved right from the start.

Sylvia