

Review: Mother Goose at the King's Theatre (****)

☒ The first rule of panto is 'never try to examine the internal logic of panto'. Best to just sit back in the plush new seats at the [King's Theatre](#) and let puns, pyrotechnics, tiny Templars and terrible rhymes wash over you (why can bad guys never rhyme?).

"Well, you try writing goose puns!" co-writer and Dame [Allan Stewart](#) laughs early on in proceedings after audience groans at ornithological gems about Goose Willis and the eggs-factor. This sets the tone for the rest of the evening.

This year's festive production is Mother Goose, written by Stewart with Director Paul Elliott, and it's an absolutely perfect example of traditional pantomime. The jokes come thick and fast, with visual gags and local references aplenty; the song and dance routines are lively and colourful, and include a fabulous (albeit slightly bewildering) rendition of [Gangnam Style](#); and the baddie is very bad (and not a little camp).

The supporting cast is great, with [Katy Heavens](#) playing Fairy McSquirrel-Smythe as a sort of glammed up version of Julie Walters in [Dinnerladies](#), and fantastic vocals from [James Hume](#) as leading man Torben.

But as always, what really makes this production is the interaction between Allan Stewart (Mother Goose), Andy Gray (Elvis McSporran), [Grant Stott](#) (Demon Vanity) – and [David Haydn](#) (Squire McFerret/The Gooseland Judge). It's clear they're having as much fun as the audience as they bounce off one another, forgetting lines and ad-libbing merrily, and their giggles are infectious.

There is also some wonderful staging, with a hypnotic water

curtain that answers questions and wonderful costumes by Maggie Kennedy and crew. The LED display is blinding though, so watch your eyes on that one!

That is a minor complaint, though – this show is fun for all the family and definitely worth a visit. In fact, if you want incomprehensible rap songs about low budget evil deeds across the Lothians and Fife, moral lessons about vanity and kindness, or tips on how to move like Jagger, we'd go as far as to say this is the *only* place for you this Christmas.

Mother Goose runs at the King's Theatre until January 20 – dates and times vary so please [check the website for details](#).