

Review: Dirty Dancing – The Classic Story On Stage ****



Last weekend Channel Five showed a remake of the popular film *Dirty Dancing*. The original, made in 1987 and starring Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey, has become an iconic feel-good flick. However, going by reaction on social media, the updated film version made earlier this year falls somewhat short of the original classic.

Such negative views would not have been welcomed by the production team of *Dirty Dancing The Classic Story on Stage* which began its six-day run at the Edinburgh Playhouse on Monday evening. Directed by Federico Bellone and choreographed by Gillian Bruce, the show attracted a sizeable if not quite sold-out audience to the Playhouse. However, those who did go on the opening night would not have been disappointed.

The stage sets were not the most spectacular ever seen but the dancing skills, professionalism and sheer passion shown by the cast could not be faulted. The stage show has kept true to the film version with Johnny Castle, played with style and class by Lewis Griffiths, displaying sublime dancing skills and a physique that induced wolf whistles from some in the audience.

The part of Frances 'Baby' Houseman was played by Katie Eccles and she was equally impressive with her character torn between her love for Johnny and loyalty towards her misguided father, played superbly by Julian Harries.

Full of passion and romance, heart-pounding music and sensationally sexy dancing, this record-breaking all new concept of the show was a delight. The show features hit songs such as 'Hungry Eyes', 'Hey! Baby' and 'Do You Love Me?'

My only criticism was that I felt the first half seemed slightly rushed and the second half a bit too long! But this should take nothing away from what was a very enjoyable show.

The whole cast performed the dance routines excellently and this added to the atmosphere. The show ended with the trademark song and dance routine '*I've Had The Time of My Life*' which brought a deserved standing ovation from the audience. Those who loved the film – the original film that is – will love this stage show.

Monday hadn't been the best of days for this reporter but the feel-good factor was restored, in part at least, by this excellent performance. There's so much bad news in the world at present it's worth going to see *Dirty Dancing* on stage – it won't fail to lift your spirits!

Edinburgh Reporter Rating: ****

Dirty Dancing, The Classic Story on Stage is on at The Edinburgh Playhouse until Saturday 17th June 2017. Tickets [here](#).