

REVIEW Jack and The Beanstalk at the Brunton

All the elements were in place for The Brunton panto which award-winning writer John Binnie penned especially for popular East Lothian theatre.

Binnie is hands-on and directed what is billed as a family friendly panto with a twist on the traditional tale of Jack and the Beanstalk.

Musical director Tommie Travers, lighting designer Laura Hawkins and East Lothian Council's dance artist Stephanie McAulay were also on board for this in-house production.

Robin Mitchell is costume designer with costume making by students studying for their BA (Hons) Costume Design and Construction at Queen Margaret University.

What's more, experienced dame Graham Crammond, a familiar face at the Brunton, was Mither Mandy Moo Moo.

His comic timing was a feature and enthusiastic Eilidh Weir played Jill with Ross Donnachie an energetic but not just so convincing Jack.

Ewan Petrie, cast as Prince Designer Labels, smoothly delivered his musical material and Wendy Seager showed her versatility as the Giant's wife and in a variety of other guises.

Young performers from East Lothian join the small cast providing them with a platform to showcase their talent.



Ross Donnachie as Jack with Wendy Seager

The audience participated with gusto, even standing and running on the spot during one scene at the behest of the performers.

There were the expected local references about local towns and villages and Binnie has attempted to sew in quips about social media and political references. There is even a line about a new Prime Minister in the New Year.

TV hits like Bake Off and X Factor were introduced along with a succession of chart hits from artists including ABBA and The Proclaimers.

There were also the inevitable shout outs and community singing and this version of Jack and the Beanstalk, which runs until Saturday 5 January 2019.

Pantomime, however, is more than just audience reaction and energy. Successful shows include something for everyone, children and adults and disappointingly the performance I

witnessed was a little frayed at the edges and needed sharpening. I am sure it will improve as the run continues.

Jack and The Beanstalk: The Brunton: Until Saturday, 5 January