**YOUNG HATS**

**DISNEY’S MULAN JR. - 23rd March 2019**

This was a completely unknown show to me and to my delight it was a really lovely piece with these talented youngsters from Young HATS giving all they had to bring it very much to life. The show contains some really good songs which they put over well. Joanna Stevens, and Rachel & Charlotte Coleman did wonders with the choreography – so many bodies on a relatively small stage!

The show opened in the Fa Family Temple in Ancient China with the five ancestors played beautifully by Lydia Hook, Lizzie Pemberton, Rhianna Cox, Ruby Watson and Kate Watson and all costumed in just the right way, together with the whole company in the song “Written in Stone.” The ancestors guided us right through the piece, often accompanied by Musha, the misfit dragon who used to have his place in the temple – a really lovely character played with gusto by Henry Stevens.

Sophie Albertella gave an excellent performance as Mulan. Having wrecked her betrothal ceremony and bringing dishonour upon her family, she decides to go and fight the Huns in place of her elderly father, where she meets Captain Shang, well performed by Edward Stevens and the Emperor played with style by Charlotte Bevan.

The other members of the Family Fa were all well portrayed –Billy Moon as Fa Zhou, Lyla Moger as Fa Li and Lucy Pemberton as Grandmother Fa, together with the Matchmaker played by Maisie Hutchings.

There were many other characters, all beautifully portrayed but unfortunately there isn’t room to mention everyone by name but all of you, plus the chorus of Fathers, Mothers, Sons, Daughters, Dressmakers, Hairdressers, Groomers, Soldiers and Avalanche Fire Ensemble all added so much to this lovely little show.

The scenery was absolutely ideal – quite simple in its way but it took us right into the realms of Ancient China so well done to all involved in this very important aspect of any show. Well done also to Sue Stewart, Wardrobe Mistress and her team for the lovely costumes and many thanks as well to those responsible for hair and makeup – in all these areas everyone looked just right.

The programme as always was an interesting read with the lovely colour photos of all the cast.

Glad to hear that the numbers in Young HATS are definitely being kept up – it’s so good to know that there are youngsters coming up all the time who can eventually go on to adult shows which means that musical theatre will be there for the future.

Thanks once again to Director Joanna Stevens, Asst. Director/MD Linda Thompson and Producer Chris Thompson and the whole production team for bringing another excellent Youth Production to Herstmonceux.

Brenda Gower Regional NODA Representative