

BWT Review

SPAMALOT, Witham
Amateur Operatic Society,
Witham Public Hall.

Unlike his fellow Pythons, who wrote in pairs, Eric Idle mostly wrote on his own, and it was his inspiration to come up with this first Python-based musical, "lovingly ripped off", as the tagline says, from the film Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Idle produced both the book and the song lyrics of Spamalot and it is easy to see why it has been garlanded with awards. WAOS deserve to be similarly honoured after extracting every ounce of fun from the wonderfully witty and wacky script.

David Slater is his usual ebullient self in the lead role, and he is surrounded by excellent performances all round, notably from society newcomers Kris and Craig Tyler as Lancelot and Galahad, together with Michael Mundell-Poole as Sir Robin and Trevor Marks as Patsy:

Edward Groombridge nearly steals the show as the lovelorn Prince Herbert, but it is Constance Lawton who deserves the highest praise for her outstanding performance as Guinevere. She combines a beautiful singing voice with clever vocal gymnastics and pinpoint comic delivery; notably in the clever songs about songs and jokes about jokes. The in-jokes are part of the fun - there are knowing references to dead parrots and lumberjacks, not to mention a hard Brexit, Olly Murs and Priti Patel - and fun is what it most definitely is.

Ron Fosker