

13th December 2018

It's time for the Paulies - the awards that don't really exist - but do!

The year has, once again, flown by and it's time to applaud the best of amateur theatre in the area.

Yes, it's The Paulies - the awards that have no physical entity, but in which I celebrate what I consider to be the best that I have seen this year.

BEST PLAY

As You Like It - Dedham Players; Be My Baby- Headgate Theatre Productions; Blood Brothers. (Mad Hatter); Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense. (Chameleon's Web); Marjorie Prime- Headgate Theatre Productions.

BEST DIRECTOR OF A PLAY

Jenny Burke for As You Like It; Malcolm Kimmance for Marjorie Prime; Will Mugford for Blood Brothers; James Potter for Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense; Steve Wooldridge for Be My Baby.

BEST MUSICAL

Lucky Stiff (Gallery Players); My Fair Lady (Platform); Our House (Mad Hatter)

BEST DIRECTOR OF A MUSICAL

Wade Ablitt for Our House; Kerry King for My Fair Lady; Jon Tavener for Lucky Stiff

BEST ACTOR

Les Chisnall for The Ladykillers; Paul Reed for Jeeves and Wooster; Joseph Sales for Jeeves and Wooster; Harry Totham for Blood Brothers; Jack Naylor for Blood Brothers

BEST ACTRESS

Kel Ashton for Be My Baby; Sara Green for Marjorie Prime; Suzanne Harknett for Bazaar and Rummage. (Headgate Productions); Eleanor Kent- Dyson for As You Like It; Freya Scott for Blood Brothers

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Aaron Bowater for The Ladykillers; Matthew Hankin for The Ladykillers; Peregrine Mauturin-Baird for Jeeves and Wooster and The Ladykillers; Connor McBurney for An Ideal Husband. (Chameleon's Web); Rob Sadler for As You Like It

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Helen Bridge for Bazaar and Rummage; Meg Cranfield for Blood Brothers; Ivy Dillon for As You Like It; Lilly Matthews for An Ideal Husband; April Rand for Be My Baby

BEST MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMANCE

Kel Ashton for Our House; Tom Beattie for Our House; Stephanie Brown for Lucky Stiff; Kerry Gullen for My Fair Lady; Dave King for My Fair Lady; Paul Stone for Lucky Stiff.

... And the winners to be announced next week!

19th December 2018

It's another bumper year for local theatre so here are the Winners of the Paulies 2018

By Paul T Davies

And here they are - the awards that don't actually exist in their physical award as such, but do with my continuing appreciation and admiration of all those who work their socks to produce theatre on the local community scene. So a final round of applause for my picks of the year on our amateur scene! Take a bow...

BEST PLAY

Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense. (Chameleon's Web)

Maybe it was because the news was so grim that I was drawn to comedy this year, and our local groups staged many a hilarious delight. Ingenious and perfectly acted by cast and crew, this production still makes me chuckle even now.

BEST DIRECTOR OF A PLAY

James Potter for Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense

Comedy is extremely hard to get right, if a punch line or gag is mistimed, the laugh is lost forever. All credit to James Potter, who kept a tight hold on proceedings whilst allowing the cast to play and have fun.

BEST MUSICAL

Our House (Mad Hatter)

Mad Hatter rarely put a foot wrong, and here was one of their best productions, performed by a wildly talented young cast and featuring the music of Madness, who could ask for more.

BEST DIRECTOR OF A MUSICAL

Wade Ablitt for Our House

Not just clarity in direction, but also in choreography, an excellent achievement.

BEST ACTOR

Les Chisnall for The Ladykillers

In a year of superlative comedy performances, his turn as Professor Marcus in this classic comedy was pitch perfect. As we say in academic circles, "it cracked me up!"

BEST ACTRESS

Kel Ashton for Be My Baby

This was a tremendous year for female roles. The converse of comedy, this excellent play and subject matter was dealt with perfectly, and Kel Ashton hit the exact right note of sadness and survival.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Peregrine Mauturin-Baird for Jeeves and Wooster and The Ladykillers

A highly contested category, but this young actor is a gift to comedy. I've also seen him play Romeo for Mercury's Young Theatre Company at St Martin's Church, so would be good to see him in a more dramatic role next year. A very fine actor indeed.

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Lilly Matthews for An Ideal Husband. (Chameleon's Web)

An assured, poised, confident performance from someone I hadn't seen on the local circuit before, and an actress who, I think, has a bright future.

BEST MUSICAL THEATRE PERFORMANCE

Tom Beattie for Our House

Another outstanding young performer with a bright future, catch him in *The Vortex* at the Headgate next year with *Paper Lantern*.

My SPECIAL AWARD

This year goes to the set designers and builders who create the most wonderful sets that capture the environment of each show perfectly, among them Stephen Peeling and Phil Ager. But every team has performed miracles, and the true winners, of course, are everyone who has taken part in theatre this year! It's the backbone of the profession and community, and here's to an equally exciting 2019.