Theatre Royal Plymouth

Everyone’s talking about Jamie

Audio described performance

Saturday April 6th  @ 2.30p.m.

Touch Tour @12.30 p.m.

Describer Pauline Raw

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to theTheatre Royal Plymouth for this Sheffield Theatres production   of ***Everyone’s talking about Jamie*** presented by Nica Burns and based on the book by Tom McRae, with music by    singer song writer Dan Gillespie Sells and from an idea by Jonathan Butterell and  choreographed by Sadler’s Wells Associate Artist Kate Prince. The 7 strong  multi-talented  band is led by Danny Belton . and they are all situated behind  the top  level of the opaque  school windows , which mask them out.

 This true story originated in a small former mining village in County Durham. Jamie’s Mum, Margaret accepted he was gay when he announced he was bisexual at the age of 14. He had a secret ambition to be a Drag Queen and dismissed the taunts of his classmates as “stating the obvious.” At 15, Jamie researched how to make a documentary and eventually found a documentary team willing to produce Jamie***;Drag Queen at 16 on July 9th 2011.***. This is still available on the BBC iplayer

Synopsis

 Jamie New is sixteen and he lives on a council estate in Sheffield. Jamie doesn’t quite fit in, and struggles to be accepted for who he is and to wear what he wants, but  supported by his brilliant loving divorced  mum, Margaret  and her close female  friend Ray and by some of his school   friends, Jamie  fights to overcome prejudice and,  to beat the bullies and step out of the darkness, into the spotlight.

This performance will contain haze, flashing lights, strong language, era related terms and adult sexual references, pseudo sexual activity ,  bullying and  racial references and discrimination.

There are 20 scenes with 16 songs spread across the show; 9 of the scenes and 8 songs are within Act  1 which will run for 1 hour 20 minutes. Each scene is dovetailed by the clever use and addition of the appropriate scenery and props moved by the cast and stage crew without detracting from the action.

My name is Pauline, your describer for Act 1 and my colleague Penny, will describe Act 2 and will commence her notes about 8 minutes before the end of the interval.

1 The austere class room of Mayfield School is where the single square wooden desks with attached benches are peopled by a multicultural group  of  Final  Year 11 mixed  teenagers in pale blue jackets  over white shirts and ties and grey trousers or skirts. Two tiers of large blank windows with white roller blinds partly closed, dominate the back wall. Square lights are set into the ceiling and the dark sides walls are edged with white lights which change colour during the scenes. A glazed door surmounted with pale panels is  offset next to the windows on the right.

The class are all facing the rear with the smartly dressed careers teacher Miss Hedge facing us and the class. Jamie is sitting at the back with his distinctive plaited long dyed gleaming blonde hair.

2. Jamie’s House;backyard

The desks are turned and arranged in a split row to become the red  brick wall  of Jamie’s backyard on the council estate. Blonde haired Margaret in wide leg jeans, black t-shirt  and dark haired  Ray   in  a sleeveless red top, black jeggings and over the knee  dark boots   are arranging two bunches of  helium balloons and a banner .

3. Mayfield School Classroom

The desks are rearranged in two groups, one at the front and one at the rear. Pritti is sitting near us.  The desks at the rear are occupied by the Prom Group and Jamie and Pritti,Jamie’s muslim  best  female friend  make up the revision group at the front.

4. Victor’s Secret

Jamie, still in school uniform, bearing his sparkly backpack, ventures into the pink and red lit Drag Queen’s dress shop which is furnitured with large tall posters on the right and left of the rear wall showing   provocatively posed drag queens. Mannequins in front of these, on either side of the circular dress rail, are dressed in evening wear with elaborate wigs.A folding screen is on the left draped with discarded garments. Victor is seated at a fancy metal table on the right hung with monogrammed carrier bags. He is reading a magazine. He is wearing dark jeans, a jumper under a checked shirt and has short gray hair and is wearing glasses. He does not seem surprised to see Jamie.

5.Street corner bench

A bench is on the right and the cloudy sky and rooftops of the houses can be seen behind. Margaret is waiting for Jamie’s Dad, her ex-husband. She is in pale jeans, lemon top under a loose cardigan. Jamie’s Dad is in jeans, t-shirt under a pale brown bomber jacket.

6Jamie’s House

Stairs leading to the first floor are in the rear with the washing machine under them. The decor is predominantly lemon with glimpsed ornamented bookcases in the front room   which are beyond the kitchen. The cheerful lemon kitchen at the front, is fitted with a worktop and a double sink. A kitchen table and two chairs are in front of this, and Margeret has set up her ironing board.  Ray joins her and Jamie dashes downstairs in his school shirt and tie but with the addition of black sequined shorts and red high heeled shoes.

7. Mayfield School corridor with toilet

The open toilet block is on the right. Pale lemon and half tiled with the sink at the back and the single toilet side on to us. It is under a small window. The door to the block is on the left leading to the corridor.

Jamie in school uniform is trying to apply an eyebrow pencil using the mirror on the rear wall. He enlists the help of Pritti.

8. Outside Legs Eleven

A   drag club front from where . 3 drag queens emerge, Laika Virgin, Tray Sophisticay and Sandra Bollock.  Two are well built and dressed in short legged bust padded corset style bodysuits, one white and one flesh coloured. The third is slimmer and in a bra top, midriff corset and tight shorts. All are wearing high heels and   loose floaty house coats and their heads are prepared for their wigs.

9. Legs Eleven .

Three small square dressing tables with illuminated mirrors are facing us and   stools are placed in front of each one. Various scarfs adorn the mirrors. A folding screen is on the left.

Here the drag queens preen, pout and bicker before Jamie in his blue jacket and white tracksuit bottoms nervously joins them.  His Mum and Margaret support him. Loco Chanelle makes a dramatic appearance in an off the shoulder turquoise fitted sequin side split evening gown with a shoulder frill detail, and a  long voluptuous auburn  wig and black peep toe high heels.

Jamie is eventually persuaded to wear the red dress and to don a long blonde wig before he ventures front of stage in the club and that is where we will leave him.

The Cast and characters.

Jamie New , a teenager who yearns  to dress as he wants………………………………IvanoTurco

 Pritti, a Muslim girl who is studious but loyal to Jamie……………………………………Talia Palamathanan

Margaret New, a  hard working middle aged divorcee…………………………………….Rebecca McKinnis.

Ray, Margaret’s long term cheerful  friend,.....................................................................Sejal Keshwala.

Victor/Hugo/Loco Chanelle the owner of the Drag Queen’s shop and a drag Queen……………………………………………………………………………………………Kevin Clifton

Miss Hedge, a well meaning teacher who supports her class…………………………….Sam Bailey

Dean, the school bully…………………………………………………………………………Jordan Ricketts

Jamie’s Dad, a disappointed man who  does not understand his son……………………Akshay St Clair

Laika Virgin, statuesque  drag Queen………………………………………………………..Anthony Gyde

Tray Sophisticay,a  confident drag queen…………………………………………………... David Mc Nair

Sandra Bollock, a  confident drag Queen……………………………………………………Garry Lee

EVERYBODY’S TALKING ABOUT JAMIE. Act 2 AD Programme notes.

Welcome back for Act 2 of this fizzing production of Everybody’s talking about Jamie. Act 2 lasts for 50 minutes. My name is Penny and I will be describing Act 2 for you. As in Act 1 there are flashing lights, strong language, era related terms and adult sexual references, pseudo sexual activity, bullying and racial references and discrimination.

The characters remain unchanged for Act 2 and there are 9 new songs, and a reprise of some we heard earlier.

Act 2 begins with the ringing of the school bell, and the students meeting up in the classroom at school, the morning after Jamie’s social club drag performance. Some of the class were there and they fill in the classmates who weren’t there with what happened – Dean was there, but sits sullenly glued to his phone. After a musical number Jamie walks in wearing his school uniform, but also large white framed sunglasses, a scarf slung over his head and shoulders reminiscent of a 50’s film star. When Miss Hedge makes him remove them, the shocking huge eyelashes and eye makeup from the night before are revealed. Scene 2 is back in Jamie’s house where Margaret is doing housework, and Ray lets herself in. Jamie joins them to show off his red dress, but tweaked by him into an extravaganza of feathers and gold trim topped with a yellow and red fascinator – chunky gold necklace and belt, plus integral Christmas tree lights! Scene 3 Following a complaint, Margaret and Jamie have been summoned to Miss Hedge’s office – Ray goes too as support for Margaret. They sit on two chairs facing Miss Hedge across her desk. On leaving they bump into Dean – was he the source of the complaint?

Scene 4 Jamie and his best friend Pritti are in her tidy bedroom. The room is decorated with wallpaper of the night sky, a map of the world and bookcases. A bedside cabinet with a red shaded light and at the foot of the bed a revolving lit globe on a shoe rack.

Scene 5 Outside his Dad’s house, Jamie bravely knocks on his door, and confronts him to thank him for the presents.

Scene 6 back in his house he challenges Margaret with the truth about the source of the gifts, and with her answers, he storms out of the house. She stitches the red dress. Margaret is desolate, and sings about the love she has for her son. Scene 7 and Jamie lurches into the bus station with a big bottle of cider. Three boys in black hoodies circle him menacingly. Jamie unwisely decides to strut his stuff as Mimi. Hugo comes to his rescue.

Scene 8 and 9 Ray is waiting outside Jamie’s house. They chat before he goes inside to face his Mother who is staring into space in the kitchen. She cleans up his injured eye.

Scene 10 the boys are gathering for the prom in their smart suits, admiring the girls as they arrive in their new dresses. Pritti has a beautiful blue dress with matching hijab and for the first time is wearing a little make up. Fatima has an identical outfit, and when she sees what Pritti is wearing she rushes off to change, returning wearing a silver hijab. Jamie arrives wearing a modest white lacy calf length dress with a small collar and white high heeled shoes. Hugo joins the throng wearing black leather trousers, a T shirt with a skull in silver sequins, under a red and blue sequin jacket. He presents Jamie with a corsage. Margaret and Ray see Jamie arrive – Margaret has decided to ditch the baggy jumpers, and is wearing fitted black jeans, her blonde hair hangs over her shoulders. Miss Hedge tried to get the students into the hall. She is wearing a fitted red knee length dress and matching high heels. For the show stopping finale, the street where Jamie lives is projected onto the screen at the back of the stage, while in front the students are joined by Sandra Bollock wearing silver hotpants, a pink furry waistcoat over a bare chest, thigh high green stockings, and a head dress of brightly coloured baubles. Tray Sophisticay wearing a pink wig and corset and hoop skirt with white knee high socks. Laika Virgin in a white satin body suit, a white full length fluffy cape and a full wig of white curly hair. The students all change into normal clothes and dance as Jamie steals the show wearing pale double denim with fringed sleeves red heels with pom poms on the front – he sings into a silver microphone.