

The Last Continent is (so far) the only one of Sir Terry Pratchett's stories that has been set on the last continent that was formed on the DiscWorld- Ecks Ecks Ecks Ecks. Its important to realise that this is not a story about Australia, it's just vaguely Australian.

To any visitor to Australia however, the similarities and inherent humour of the culture shine through, giving us so much that can be appreciated, both as visitors and Australians, resulting in one of the most funny of Pratchett stories. Sometimes it takes the eye of an outsider, especially when it's the eye of someone who has a brain that tends towards the satirical, to point out exactly how funny everyday life can be, and the book, The Last Continent, encompasses all, which makes it rather hard for an playwright adapting the story to fit into approximately two hours. Pamela Munt, who took on this challenge as both adapter and director, succeeded magnificently. In fact, I would say that her adaptation managed to actually enhance the plot line, whilst keeping all of the humorous ploys that we all love so much from the book. She did this by utilising the Footnote, as does Pratchett himself, but as a character, so we can be kept up to speed with the twists and turns and depth of this wonderful story.

From the very beginning of Act one, where we were treated to Sir Terry's recorded tones to set the scene, to the final dancing cast bows, the audience proved itself worthy of the intelligence of the plot, and the excellence and enthusiasm of the actors. Unseen Theatre has a reputation for this enthusiasm, and it always is apparent in the enjoyment of the cast and audience at each play performed.

With a minimal set, few props, and some inventive costumes, we were taken on a journey by some of the faculty of Unseen University in Ankh Morprok, to track down Rincewind the wizard (wizzard, in his own spelling) through the vast, ancient but brand new continent of Ecks Ecks Ecks Ecks, to an evolving island, complete with its own God, (lightening throwing Samm Blackmore) , ending up in the big city of Buggerup. The wizards, led by Archchancellor Ridcully- played in a very Cleesian manner by Paul Messenger, were a lovely comedic and haughty group of academics, hampered by the very proper and determined to be "lady-laik" Mrs Whitlow, perfectly portrayed by the very experienced performer, Beverley Koch, in her first Unseen production.

Chris Irving as Rincewind was the lynchpin that the play revolved around, and managed to convince us of his cowardliness, cunning and survival instinct in a beautifully gawky manner, that somehow managed to be endearing at the same time.

Paul Messenger played the other two main characters of Ricultly and the Kangaroo God, with some great kangaroo body language, as well as moonlighting momentarily as a sheep and a bully.

DEATH sat amongst us, giving the audience extra laughs, played by Hugh O'Connor, who also was the only on-the-ball but intrinsically nerdy Ponder Stibbons, and a laconic crocodile bar tender.

David Dyte showed off his legs as Mad, with a costume nod to Mel Gibson, and really came into his own as the Dean.

Senior wrangler, Harold Roberts, also had the roles of Clancy, the shearer, and a trooper, injected an almost leadership quality to all roles, showing a good stage presence.

A very important character to the plot is the Librarian, who, as all Pratchett fans know, has the form of an orangutan. Michelle Whichello bravely and brilliantly took (ook!) this on with the looseness of orangutan body language mainly speaking for her.

The newest actor to Unseen is Molly Dyte, who swaggered appropriately as an ocker shearer, rushed around as a trooper, and showcased her inner nerd as the Oz Ponder Stibbons.

All in all, this is a really good adaptation that will have fans applauding and will make new fans for both Pratchett and Unseen. No Worries!

<http://www.unseen.com.au/>

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Tags

The Last Continent, Sir Terry Pratchett, Discworld, Unseen Theatre Company, The Bakehouse Theatre, Pamela Munt, Hugh O'Connor, Harold Roberts, Michelle Whichello, David Dyte, Paul Messenger, Chris Irving, Samm Blackmore, Beverley Koch, Molly Dyte

