

Three into One

Performed in November 1986

FADS quartet was awful - enchantingly

THEY flapped on stage like a gaggle of carrion crows, hot foot from a funeral.

Four of them, each in grotesque fashion of the early twenties, made worse by being deep mourning black: Mesdames Starkie (Brenda Keith-Walker), Parker (Sandra Holland), Booth (Mary Woodyer) and Murgatroyd (Hazel Riddle).

They were - AWFUL! Fascinating, enchantingly awful. They arrived at a West Riding council house for The Funeral Tea (a one-act play by Pat Wilson).

This was a strange little play, harking back to the transition period when (presumably) cremation was becoming the in thing.

Presiding over the time-honoured ritual tea was a rather refined lady caterer (Eileen Drew), a perfect foil. Inevitably suspicion focussed on the tea-caddy.

As a long-time FADS freak I felt they'd turned a corner with Three into One. Certainly there was a refreshing pacing out, less of the occasional nervous twitter, much more aplomb.

Faringdon Community Dramatic Society's triptych of one-act plays continued with a complete change of scene in Albert, (by Richard Harris).

This was a cleverly worked little cameo

paying a surprise visit to his seester (he also spoke no English) and an Englishman - well, broad Brummie actually - played by a scouser Dave Headey - hold a delightfully spaced out conversazione, each pursuing his or her own line of thought and action, sometimes to coincide brie fly, but all to inevitable to end in utter hilarious confusion.

The solemnly eager-to-please Finnish Karin was Sandy Webber, who was a match for a daunting duo.

Finally, Gosforth's Fete as scripted by the magic Alan Ayckbourn. This was FADS at its wickedly funny best. I sometimes think Ayckbourn was born for FADS ... or maybe t' other way around!

The scene was a tea tent. In charge was the irrepressible Mike Durham (as Gosforth) whose unpredictable ad libs must strike terror into fellow FADS but joyous anticipation into his audience.

He fiddled with the elec trics while Milly (Carolyn Taylor) wittered on, confessing he'd made her pregnant - at which precise moment he got the loud speaker working. In blundered the Scout Master (Alan Taylor), the vicar (David Cossins) and .the local councillor Mrs Pearce (Brenda Keith-Walker). Before long the audience was practically under its seats.

taking place in a sitting-room in suburbia. An au pair from Finlaaand, speaking no English, and outrageously Italian David Cossins

Deirdre Hamley produced the Funeral Tea; Alan Taylor, Albert, and Dave Headey, Gosforths Fete.

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