# Norwich Theatre Royal’s Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe praises Aslan puppet’s breathtaking realism



The hit West End production of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe" is currently enchanting audiences at Norwich Theatre Royal, inviting them through the wardrobe into the magical realm of Narnia. Directed by Michael Fentiman, this stage adaptation remains faithful to C.S. Lewis's timeless story, following the Pevensie children—Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy—as they journey from wartime Britain to the fantastical world of Narnia.

The production opens emotionally with an evocative depiction of London during the Second World War, where the children are evacuated to Aberdeen. The chorus's rendition of Vera Lynn's "We'll Meet Again" sets a poignant atmosphere, grounding the fantasy in historical reality. Jesse Dunbar, Joanna Adaran, Bunmi Osadolor, and Kudzai Mangombe convincingly embody the Pevensie siblings, navigating the narrative's blend of peril and discovery with authenticity that keeps audiences fully immersed.

A striking feature of the show is its skillful balance between the gravity of the wartime setting and lighter, more whimsical moments. Ed Thorpe and Anya De Villiers bring warmth and humour to their roles as Mr and Mrs Beaver, while Kraig Thornber's portrayal of The Professor adds a charming touch to the production. This dynamic ensures the show appeals to viewers of all ages, making it an accessible and engaging experience for families.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect is the use of animal puppetry, which elevates the production’s visual storytelling. The character of Aslan—a pivotal figure in Lewis’s narrative—is brought to life through a combination of a large, intricately designed puppet operated by three actors and the presence of actor Stanton Wright. The seamless coordination between the puppet and Wright, from majestic movements to subtle tail flicks, creates a breathtaking spectacle that exceeded expectations and captivated the audience.

The production, celebrating the 75th anniversary of Lewis's novel, runs at Norwich Theatre Royal until July 12, with tickets ranging from £15 to £52. Recognising the importance of accessibility, the theatre offers audio-described, touch tour, and captioned performances, ensuring that a wide range of audiences can experience the magic of Narnia.

While the Norwich staging has received widespread praise for its faithful adaptation and visual effects, feedback from other venues shows some variance. A notable London production at the Gillian Lynne Theatre drew acclaim for its set design, lighting, and sound, with critics highlighting the spellbinding spectacle and puppetry. On the other hand, some audience reviews from other tour locations have mentioned occasional low-budget elements in props and costumes, which may affect the overall magical experience for some.

Nonetheless, the Norwich production stands out for its emotional depth, professional handling of a brief technical disruption, and its captivating puppetry, particularly the portrayal of Aslan which many describe as the highlight of the show. It remains a must-see for anyone eager to rediscover the magic of Narnia in a live theatrical setting.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://norwichtheatre.org/whats-on/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss)
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* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://norwichtheatre.org/whats-on/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[4]](https://www.allthatdazzles.co.uk/post/review-the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe-gillian-lynne-theatre), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2022/jul/29/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe-review-gillian-lynne-theatre-london), [[6]](https://www.birmingham-theatre.co.uk/reviews/customer-reviews/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss), [[6]](https://www.birmingham-theatre.co.uk/reviews/customer-reviews/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/25299847.lion-witch-wardrobe-review-theatre-royal/?ref=rss> - A review of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' at Norwich Theatre Royal, highlighting the production's faithful adaptation of C.S. Lewis's classic, the emotional opening scene set during the Second World War, and the impressive use of animal puppetry, particularly the portrayal of Aslan. The show runs until July 12, 2025.
3. <https://norwichtheatre.org/whats-on/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe/> - Information about 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' at Norwich Theatre Royal, including performance dates from July 8 to July 12, 2025, ticket prices ranging from £15 to £52, and access performances such as audio-described, touch tour, and captioned shows. The production celebrates the 75th anniversary of C.S. Lewis's novel.
4. <https://www.allthatdazzles.co.uk/post/review-the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe-gillian-lynne-theatre> - A review of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' at the Gillian Lynne Theatre, praising the set design, sound and lighting effects, and the portrayal of Aslan through puppetry and a human actor. The production is noted for its captivating visuals and engaging storytelling.
5. <https://www.voicemag.uk/review/15280/review-lion-witch-wardrobe-uk-tour-theatre-music> - A review of the UK tour of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe', highlighting the adaptation's success in bringing the beloved story to life with unique flourishes, a multi-instrument live band, and breathtaking sets. The production is described as unmissable and likely to be the evening of the year.
6. <https://www.birmingham-theatre.co.uk/reviews/customer-reviews/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe> - Customer reviews for 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' at Birmingham Theatre, with an overall rating of 2.6/5. Positive reviews praise the scenery and acting, while some negative reviews mention low-budget props and costumes, and a lack of magic compared to the book.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2022/jul/29/the-lion-the-witch-and-the-wardrobe-review-gillian-lynne-theatre-london> - A review of 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' at the Gillian Lynne Theatre, describing the production as exhilarating with spellbinding spectacle, wartime drama, and perfect puppetry. The adaptation is noted for its captivating visuals and engaging storytelling.