

You are at Snow Day

Snow Day

December 9, 2014

by Andrea Verwys

Workhouse Arts Center

9601 Ox Road

22079 Lorton, VA

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I had no idea what to expect when I went with my three daughters (7mo, 2 & 4) to the new show *Snow Day*, produced by Arts on the Horizon. I knew that Arts on the Horizon is a non-profit theatre company focused on providing theater and programs for children under age 6. But how on earth were my two preschoolers and baby going to be interested in theater!?

We arrived 30 minutes early to the Workhouse Arts Center. Arts on the Horizon does not have performances here on a regular basis but *Snow Day* is being performed here at Theater 3. The Workhouse Arts Center, should be noted, is actually a former DC Jail property with beautiful brick architecture throughout.

Parking was very easy. We parked less than 200 yards from the door and were immediately greeted and the door was held for us. We told the person at the window our reservation information and we were ushered down a long hallway to a sitting area filled with board books appropriate for toddlers! Beyond the book area was a playroom. There were educational toys, puzzles, hats and simple blocks for children to enjoy on the floor while we waited for the theater to open. Tip: Arrive early to take advantage to play!



At showtime, we were asked to go to the next room and children were to sit on the parachute. They could sit with their parents in chairs in the back, sit with parents on the floor or sit alone. Many children had a hard time sitting alone and did better sitting on parents laps.

When we walked in, there was already an actress in the show on the floor pretending she was sleeping while a violinist played live Christmas music. Immediately, all three of my girls (especially the 2 year old) were captivated! "Why was she sleeping? Who is that? Is that a real girl mommy? Etc"

It wasn't more than 5 minutes before the show began. The actresses never spoke. The show was entirely performed with animated music, sound effects and choreography. It was unbelievable how captivated the children were by the facial expressions, story line, props and music YET they were not overly stimulated.

The story is about a little girl and a winter elf who enjoy snow (paper) in many different ways. My 4 year old understood the storyline while my 2 year old and baby enjoyed seeing the faces of the actresses, suspense of the music and props (hot chocolate, stirring a pot, snowballs, and boots). The show lasted just over 30 minutes and I had no problems with my active children enjoying themselves.

The atmosphere is very relaxed. A child cried loudly and no one batted an eye. Children were talking and clapping throughout the show very naturally. I was extremely impressed that Arts on the Horizon truly designed this entire experience for the younger set of children.



The performance I attended was a full house of 70 parents and children. I noticed that most children were between the ages of 2 and 6. There were many grandparents too. After the show, children were encouraged to meet the actresses so bring your camera.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- *Snow Day* will be at the Workhouse Arts Center until Sunday, December 14th. It will then move to the [Atlas Performing Arts Center](#) from December 18 to 22, 2014.
- Tickets are \$8 for children and adults. Children under 12 months are admitted free.
- There is stroller parking. Bring some cash because there is a basket of shaker eggs for purchase on the counter (\$3/each).

Photos by Aram Vartian.

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