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PINOCCHIO

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In an age when children's entertainment so often stifles rather than stimulates the imagination, Stroud-based theatre company TaurusVoice provides an elementary demonstration of how to inspire a child's fantasy with a minimum of resources, proving that it is creativity and not technology that truly counts when it comes to putting on a show.

Their retelling of Carlo Collodi's tale of the naughty wooden puppet who yearns to be a boy begins with a workman in paint-spattered overalls standing on the stage amidst a clutter of tools, trestles, tins, tubs and buckets, as well as a scaffold and several planks of wood. The conceit is that the theatre is closed for redecoration, but when pressed by the audience he and his three colleagues agree to tell the story of Pinocchio with the props they have to hand.

So a mop head does service as a wig, a paint roller turns into a gun, sponges become fish and a roll of wallpaper emerges as Pinocchio's lengthening nose as the young scamp, jauntily played by Eleanor Holliday, enjoys a series of adventures, including encounters with tricksters, transformation into a donkey and getting swallowed by a whale.

Written and directed by Greg Banks, the show allows young children to revel in the irrepressible Pinocchio's mischief while the story's moral framework acts as a safety net for his escapades without spoiling the fun. An enchanting show.

Production information

By:	based on the book by Carlo Collodi, adapted by Greg Banks, who also directs
Composer:	Adrian Brett
Management:	TaurusVoice
Run time:	90 mins
Website:	www.taurusvoice.co.uk