



Picture: John Allen EAA22405_JSA_001

Artistry on a knife-edge

UNDER normal circumstances, seven men careering around on a highly slippery surface chucking axes about would

raise some serious health and safety concerns. But not when it's the ace skaters from the Russian Ice Stars.

Likewise, allowing two excitable pre-teen girls to stay up way past bedtime, fuelled by custard creams, can easily be a recipe for disaster.

But not when they're enthralled by *Snow White on Ice* showing at the Plymouth Pavilions.

The show has arrived in Plymouth for Christmas, the fifth venue in a mammoth 27-stop, seven-month tour of Britain and Ireland.

And its opening night proved the ideal way to keep a young family entertained as top-class Russian and Estonian skaters twirled and leapt in front, and sometimes over the heads, of an entranced full house.

You could only admire the skill and timing displayed as up to a dozen performers cavorted around what seemed like a postage stamp-sized stage without beheading each other.

No wonder choreographer Giuseppe Arna has been chosen to mastermind the Turin Winter Olympics opening ceremony.

My daughters Esme, nine, and Molly, five, sat spellbound through the show, neatly packed into two 60-minute acts.

They loved every thrill-packed minute, particularly the amazing display by Olympic gold medal gymnast-turned-skater Ioulia Barsoukova, who caught a skater Ioulia Barsoukova, who caught a tumbourine above and behind her head – with her leg.

They were also wowed by colourful sets and costumes, and lively music composed by Italian TV theme creator Silvio Amato.

But it was the jaw-dropping stunts and

REVIEW William Telford

SNOW WHITE ON ICE The Russian Ice Stars Plymouth Pavilions

Matinee and evening performances until
December 31
(no performance Christmas Day)

acrobatics that really had them enraptured, as well as the timeless story, closely following the Grimm Brothers' original and as far from the Disney version as Millbay is from St Petersburg.

Everyone knows how her wicked, jealous stepmother and witch (Svetlana Kuprina) plots to kill innocent Snow White (Olga Pershankova), leading to her hiding out in a woodcutters' cottage (no dwarfs in this production).

After the intervention of some comic geese (Ekaterina Botiy-Mintals and Sergiy Smirnov) and an evil crow (Alexei Kozlov), she eventually gets hitched to her prince (Valdis Mintals).

Along the way there are too many spectacular set-pieces to name, but special mention must go to husband-and-wife team Alexander and Ekaterina Belokopitova, who leapt from the ice into a danger-mocking spin from ropes high above the stage.

Beat that, King Kong.

■ Tickets cost £18.50, £16.50, £14.50 or £10 and may be subject to a processing fee. Contact Pavilions Box Office: 01752 229922 or visit www.plymouthpavilions.com.