

DRAFT REPORT FOR THE month EASTERN NEWS
PERFORMANCE OF 30TH APRIL 2003

WITHAM A.O.S. - A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM

More than one believe me, and they didn't even get there! This show started as it meant to go on with a lively and joyful 'Comedy Tonight', with lots of cameos well portrayed throughout the number. Director and Choreographer Elisabeth Ladd and her cast made the most of the opportunities given by this witty, bawdy and thoroughly enjoyable show. Stephen Sondheim is variously viewed as the ultimate musical show master, through to a 'difficult' composer whose melodies don't linger after one leaves the theatre. There can be no doubt, however, about the sheer brilliance of this show, both in its music and its lyrics, both by S.H. The secret in getting it across is, of course, in pace and timing and plenty of talent in both of these areas was on show by the company. The production was full of energy, fun, well sung numbers and a will to take the audience along. There was just a short period in Act I when things seemed to slacken off rather too much and this was due, I believe, to what seemed an overlong parade of Lycus' girls, but the pace soon picked up afterwards. I could fill the page with complimentary comments about everyone on stage, but the editor would not allow that, and in any case a good team effort like this deserves comment in that context. Musical Director David Cawdell kept a good grip on the pit and the stage, though the percussion tended to the over enthusiastic at times, particularly early on. Sound balance between pit and stage was good. Costumes, made for the first time by the company, were very good and I understand will appear elsewhere in the not too distant future!

This was a first class show and, along with the audience, both my wife and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Many congratulations to all concerned.

Other Comments (for the Society only)

1. I was going to say no further comment, but I must just mention my disappointment at seeing a stage hand, in black, come on to remove a seat near to the end of the show. Maybe it was all well hidden beforehand but most of the other prop/furniture moves seemed to have been done by the cast, or crew in costume and it was a shame that this particular one near the end broke the spell.

John Warburton
May 2003