

WITHAM AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY

Salad Days, by arrangement with Concord Theatricals Ltd..

Director and Choreographer Emma Loring

Assistant to the Director Constance Lawton

Joint Musical Directors David Mitchell, Franky Garland

Assistant Choreographer Heather Davis

Performed at The Public Hall, Witham on Tuesday 22nd October 2024, at 7.30pm

I was warmly welcomed on arrival by Donna Goddard and met the Director and Choreographer, Emma Loring during the interval. This production is the first for Emma as Director although she has been actively involved in the society for over ten years.

The set for this rarely performed musical was minimal but highly effective. Main backdrops were a splendid park scene and a curtain depicting scenes of London. The many scene changes were denoted by a range of props and accessories moved on and off stage. Of particular note were the beauty parlour, the night club and the dress shop with innovative props used to create the scenes. A flying saucer, complete with flashing lights was very effective. Sets and props were created by the society. Congratulations to Stage Manager Ben Sawyer and the backstage crew for their sterling work. Costumes were reminiscent of the 1950s and mostly provided by the society and the costume for the Electrode (Sharon Lindsell) looked spectacular. The three piece band, including Musical Director David Mitchell on keyboard was very supportive to the cast and provided just the right level of backing. It was a pleasure to hear their accomplished interpretation of the music, such an integral part of this production and congratulations to David making his debut as joint Musical Director alongside Franky Garland.

Superb acting, singing and dancing skills were evident in all the cast who appeared to be enjoying their roles and a number played several different small roles. Karla Marie, as Jane and Franky Garland, as Tim, the two graduates who married without either sets of parents aware were faultless in their singing and dancing with good diction and clarity. I particularly enjoyed their duets and Karla's solo, The Time of My Life was perfect and showcased her remarkable voice. Fabian D'Angelo, as Nigel Danvers and Holly Kerwick, as "dumb" blonde Fiona were an unlikely couple initially but really gelled and gave us a stellar performance. Youngest performer Avalon Lawton, as Troppo was brilliant in her actions, expressions and dancing. Stewart Adkins had several roles including the tramp who lent Jane and Tim the magical piano and as the nightclub manager where he impressed with a solo of Cleopatra. There was much humour in the script eg with Joe Geddis, as P C Boot and Trevor Drury as the Police Inspector trying to dance. Maeve Borges's expressions and antics, as Jane's mother Lady Raeburn, whilst she was receiving treatments in the beauty parlour were priceless ! Anita Goold, as Tim's mother Mrs Rosemary Dawes partnered Maeve in a lovely duet We Don't Understand Our Children. There were a number of other small and important parts played by cast members most of whom were also in the ensemble. Ensemble numbers were well choreographed and sung enthusiastically.

This was a thoroughly entertaining and at times hilarious musical. Congratulations to Director Emma Loring for her innovative and imaginative approach which maximised the many talents amongst the cast . Well done to everyone involved in any way. I enjoyed it immensely.

**Hazel Hole MBE
Regional Representative
NODA East
District 11**

NODA owns the intellectual Property Rights to the content of all show reports written by NODA Councillors, Reps and Assistant Reps

© NODA CIO. All rights reserved