

BRANTHAM AMATEUR THEATRICAL SOCIETY

Guys And Dolls, music and lyrics by Frank Loesser, book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows.

Director Pippa Revell

Producer Tina Burns

Musical Director John Hoskyns

Choreographer Frankie Swan

Performed at Brantham Village Hall on Wednesday 15th February 2023

I was warmly welcomed at Front of House by Tina Burns and had the opportunity to speak with Tina and also the Director and Choreographer after the performance. This was a very slick and accomplished production from this society from the very beginning. The sets and props throughout were designed by John Hoskyns, built and painted by a large crew and were really impressive. Much of the action took place in the street or the mission house with the crap scene played down a drain/sewer complete with ladder on stage. Neon lighting and signs illuminated the stage and the sets on casters were moved seamlessly thanks to Stage Manager Katie McConnell and crew.

Ryan Lenney played Sky Masterson, an inveterate gambler and the top crap player and was suitably arrogant and assertive in the role until they met Georgie Spall as the evangelist Miss Sarah Brown, who led the mission. After accepting a challenge to persuade her to accompany them to Havana they then of course fell in love and they reformed and championed the mission. There were two sentimental and emotional duets which were well performed and both also sang solos. Tom Hitchcock, as the lovable con man Nathan Detroit was a strong persuasive character which Tom played very well. He was energetic and resourceful on stage with some wonderful facial contortions. Sian Rees, as Detroit's fiancée Miss Adelaide was very well cast and played this key role with great enthusiasm and skill. She showed tremendous stage presence as a typical show girl who dreamt of marriage. I loved her songs with the Hot Box Girls, "A Bushel and a Peck" and "Take Back Your Mink" and also the lively dance routines. Well done Hot Box Girls! Kellie Morgan, as General Cartwright, was a most formidable character striding around the stage with huge determination. Arjan van Heuveln played the somewhat hapless detective, Lt Brannigan, never quite catching the guys playing the crap game.

The "guys" were all very strong actors, Rob Warne (Nicely-Nicely), Paul Morgan (Harry The Horse), Mark Hinson (Big Julie), James Wetherall (Benny Southstreet), Shay Sharp-ling (Rusty Charlie), Toby Smith (Angie the Ox), Avery Howlett (Leroy Johnson), Alan Jones (Tobacco Joe), and Geoff Hewitson (Specs Malone) all worked so well together with tremendous energy on stage. Well done! So many well known and familiar songs in this musical with "Sit Down You're Rocking The Boat" an obvious favourite. Without exception all the musical numbers were well performed and well rehearsed, aided by a small band under the accomplished musical direction of John Hoskyns. Likewise, the dance routines were varied and slick and well executed thanks to choreographer Frankie Swan. Sound effects and levels were appropriate and lighting was relevant with good effects and coverage on stage. Costumes were attractive and very much in period. In all this was a superb production, bringing out and showcasing the wealth of talent in this small society. Many congratulations to Director Pippa Revell and Producer Tina Burns for their vision in bringing this lavish production to a small stage. The audience loved this and I enjoyed the evening very much. Well done to everyone on and off stage

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