

## **LOOSERVILLE**

### **NODA Review**

#### **Loserville**

#### **Witham Operatic Workshop**

**Saturday 17th February 2017**

Loserville, a relatively new musical, is the story of Michael Dork discovering how to send the first email, while struggling to function at high school. A story of fun, friendship and love; perfect for WOW to perform.

Chris Tierney as Michael Dork gave a convincing performance as the nervous, geeky hero making history by sending the first email. Chris was a strong lead, giving us a multitude of emotions as he stumbled through his school life, never losing his character. Chris was capably supported by his on-stage friends, Lucas, Francis and Marvin. Lucas played by Harry Tunningley was credible as the teenager battling with his feelings for the new girl Holly, his longing to fit in and wanting to do right by his friends; all the while taking inspiration for his new book! Harry sang beautifully and confidently throughout the show. Isabella Chapman played Holly Manson, the new girl who wants to be the first female astronaut – a true representation of her strong character throughout. Isabella played Holly in a natural way, developing good relationships with all the cast she worked with - James Harris as Francis Weir, and Jake Collis as Marvin Camden who gave strong performances as the two geeky sidekicks, longing to be accepted and to find love. The true underlying story in this musical!

The genuine and intelligent gang of boys was a good contrast against the ‘baddy’ of the show; Eddie Arch, played by Tom Nicoll. Tom delivered a strong performance as the popular boy in school, ably assisted by his girlfriend Leia Dawkins, played by Daisy Greenwood. Eddie’s sidekicks were Huey and Wayne, played by Fraser McLauchlan and Will Hackett; both were great as the not too bright tag alongs. Leia’s friends Elaine and Samantha played by Yasmin Sharp and Amy Seymour were both comfortable on stage. Yasmin gave us a ditzzy and quirky Elaine, whereas Amy was a little more understated in her defiance to be one of the cool kids. Special mention should be given to Ivanka and Marina played by Alice Tunningley and Charlotte Tofts – they both kept the accents throughout, and stayed in character working well together. They gave genuine performances and oozed energy. Some lovely moments where the geeky boys realise they can find girls who like them; culminating in an awkward first kiss moment for Samantha and Marvin.

All the principals gave strong performances, with consistent American accents throughout. The ensemble did a great job; coming on and off stage in a variety of roles during the show. There was lots of acting going on in the background, with ensemble members who had made clear choices about their characters. There were moments where some performers were a little unfocussed and perhaps a little distracted but this was rare, and mostly there was a good standard of performance.

There was good energy in all the company songs, and everyone had mastered the dances to a good standard, although I did occasionally feel that they could have done some more challenging dance routines. Vocally a highlight for me was Sick, it sounded great and gave Isabella, Harry, Daisy and Chris the opportunity to show what they can do. The pop rock score isn’t particularly memorable which has no reflection on the performance of the cast; and I really enjoyed Ticket Outta Loserville. I also really liked Don’t Let Em Bring You Down in Act 1 as it felt genuine and natural.

The scenery was simple and effective, and having the band on stage hidden behind the set was a good idea. The band, under the very capable direction of Thomas Duchan sounded great throughout and the voices were balanced well with the band. A few mic cues were missed or a little late on some occasions but with so many individual lines it's not surprising. The lighting really worked for the piece, with lots of variety to enhance the feel of the scene. The costumes were nice and simple, and clearly defined the characters wearing them; with some particularly spectacular efforts at the science fair.

A talented group of young people who delivered a great performance overall. Well done to everyone involved. Congratulations to Cathy Court and Rhianna Howard for a great show.