

## **THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE**

### **NODA Review**

Thoroughly Modern Millie

Date: 23rd February 2019

Society: Witham Operatic Workshop

Director: Claire Carr

Musical Director: Susannah Edom

Choreographer: Claire Carr

I was warmly welcomed by Debbie Rolph, Front of House Manager who explained that WOW is the junior section of Witham Amateur Operatic Society and that all performers in this production ranged in age from 11 years to 18 years with the majority under 16 years.

This was a sparkling and very energetic performance of this well known musical. The production got off to a cracking start with Millie and the company singing and dancing to the title song. Millie, played by Yasmin Sharp (aged 18) was on stage constantly throughout the show and carried this role with great skill and energy. She had some wonderful facial expressions and a powerful voice which suited both the up tempo numbers and the ballads eg 'Jimmy'. Jimmy Smith, played by Ben Collins (aged 17) acted the part very well and delivered his solo 'What Do I Need With Love' with great feeling.

Mrs Meers, played by Lily Downes (aged 19) filled the stage with her dominant presence and extravagant manner. She was suitably evil and scheming and sang 'They Don't Know' with incredible power. Her repartee with the 2 Chinese laundry hands, Ching Ho and Bun Foo, played by Ryan Wuyts (aged 15) and William Hackett (aged 14) was excellent and her expressions captured the essence of the character so well. I believe that the laundry hands may have had to learn some Mandarin so well done. Of course, the audience appreciated the on screen translations !

Miss Dorothy Brown, played by Poppy Fisher (aged 15) came across as a sweet and rather naive girl who fell prey to Mrs Meers evil intent. Trevor Graydon, played by Tom Nicoll (aged 17) was an immensely charming Head of the Sincere Trust Insurance Company and really stunned the audience with his lovely singing voice especially in 'Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life' with Miss Dorothy. Muzzy, played by Hattie Phillips (age 13) and Miss Flannery, played by Mia Nichols (age 14) carried their roles well.

The direction and choreography throughout was superb and many congratulations to Claire Carr for having the vision to make this production so very good. The dancing and tapping throughout was impeccable with no one out of step or time. The large, talented band, with Musical Director Susannah Edom, was accomplished and versatile and provided excellent musical support and volume throughout.

The set and scenery was effective and relatively straightforward and Stage Manager David Hunt, supported by the crew, made the changes seamlessly. There was a large team in support of the production, including lighting, sound, properties, makeup and wigs. I must mention the costuming and wardrobe team as the outfits were stunning and helped to create the 1920s feel.

In summary, this was a first class production by a very talented group played to a very appreciative audience. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and my congratulations to everyone involved.