

LEGALLY BLONDE

WITHAM OPERATIC WORKSHOP

LEGALLY BLONDE - The Musical
Director Nikki Mundell-Poole
Musical Director Susannah Edom
Choreographer Louise Lachance
Performed at Witham Public Hall, Witham
February 17th - 22nd 2020

What a lovely welcome to Witham Public Hall. Congratulations to the Front of House team for their warmth and efficiency in making everyone feel welcome. Legally Blonde is a very popular musical and this was reflected in the size and enthusiasm of the audience.

The opening number set the scene for a lively show with a very bright rendering of 'Omigod You Guys'. This first introduction gave us a flavour of the breadth of talent which shone through all the chorus numbers in the production. Everyone showed a high energy level and stayed in character from their first appearance and maintained this throughout the show.

This scene also gave us our first introduction to Elle Woods, played by Hannah Ireland. This role is truly challenging and Hannah really took on the complexities of the part. She demonstrated every nuance of this constantly evolving character and danced and sang with energy. This was an excellent performance.

Tom Nicoll as Warner Huntington III gave the role just the right amount of arrogance. He was always convincing and maintained the character. It was so easy to dislike him!!

In contrast, Fraser McLauchlan's Emmett was instantly likeable. He showed a warmth of character particularly in his dialogue which was so well done.

William Hackett's arrival on the scene as Professor Callaghan was commanding. He instantly established himself in the role. This was a very mature characterisation. Well done.

Paulette Buonufonte was well portrayed by Emily Birt. She showed the right mix of being both browbeaten and feisty. I enjoyed her Irish number. Lily Follett's portrayal of the snobby, pretentious Vivienne Kensington was also well played and Poppy Fisher gave us a very good characterisation of Brooke Wyndham.

I have to mention Ben Rolph's first appearance as Kyle. Just the right amount of swagger.

The company played many roles throughout the piece and were always in character. The Sorority girls and the Greek chorus worked particularly well. There was never a moment when the acting and concentration slipped which enabled a very tight production. I particularly enjoyed the Harvard scene for the excellent music and choreography which demonstrated the quality of the chorus. The strength of the dancing was also evident in 'Bend and Snap' and 'Whipped into Shape'. What an amazing workout!

The whole piece was very well supported musically. The orchestra always enhanced the quality of singing which ensured a good balance of voice and instruments.

The back stage team led by Stage Manager, David Hunt, worked really well. The scenery always enhanced the action. Lighting generally complimented the action but the rather random nature

of the following spot was disconcerting. Sound levels were excellent. Costume and make-up were so appropriate for this show. Well done.

Director Nikki Mundell-Poole must be congratulated for creating a fast paced and very professional production. This was such a joyful celebration of young talent. The response from the audience as they left demonstrated what a successful show this was.