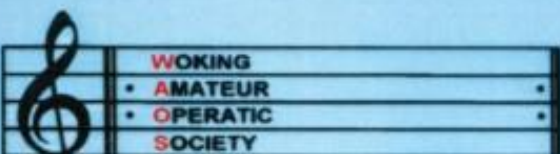


★ WAOS Presents ★

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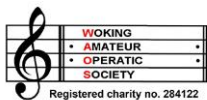
3rd - 7th May 2011



Registered charity no. 284122



Affiliated to the
National Operatic and
Dramatic Association



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'THE PAJAMA GAME' – MAY 2011
WOKING AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY

I hadn't seen this musical before but having considered directing it myself, I was looking forward to seeing how this story based on management versus the union in the 1950s works in the very different world of 2011.

There were plenty of positive aspects in the production, it was well done, but pace is essential and difficult to maintain as the story is so disjointed. It appears to hold promise but just doesn't deliver. Fortunately the musical score is great.

Patrick Coad as Hines set the scene competently for what was to follow, and the second scene was excellent with very good and well-rehearsed choreography in Racing With The Clock. The old sewing machines on rollers and the different moves for the various groups added to the feel of a bustling factory floor.

In the role of Sid Sorokin, Anthony Batchelor did well, especially in A New Town Is A Blue Town when there is no help from the accompaniment and that particular song is not very tuneful. His following numbers were well known and he sang them strongly, very much looking the part in his smart suit.

Claire Dudmish was very good as Babe Williams. Both her acting and singing were sound, and the contrasting sides of her character, the girl falling in love and then having to fight that same man in her position as leader of the grievance committee, was nicely pointed. Her accent was good.

Playing Gladys, Jennifer Lawrence also gave a good performance as the Presidents secretary and her costume singled her out as a cut above the factory girls.

Her Is and the dance routine were good.

Singing that number with Gladys, Brett Walker made an excellent Prez with an eye for the ladies and his performance was full of energy.

Brian Higgs was suitably cast as the boss Mr. Hasler, and Gillian Freeman did a splendid job as Mabel. Comedy suits her and I'll Never Be Jealous Again, sung with Hines, was put over most entertainingly by both actors.

Hines and Gladys had fun with the dream in I'll Never be Jealous Again too.

The scene in the park was full of interest and the knife throwing worked well.

As the girl willing to partake in the demonstration, Samantha Moylan-Heydt was really good. She obviously enjoys comedy and the part of Mae was perfect for her. She was saucy and funny.

There was a nice little moment at the end of the park scene with a few bars of This Is My Once A Year Day.

The quick disguise with a beard worked well for Roger Thomas as Pop, and he made something of the little cameo role which was simply set in the 60s kitchen.

Gennine Menzies and Amanda Carey-McDermott as the other two members of the grievance committee, Brenda and Poopsie, played their roles confidently and convincingly.

The entr'acte was long and enjoyable. It was a pleasure to watch Christopher Peters' enthusiasm and apparent ease with which he led the orchestra. He controlled them superbly and although I was sitting on the same side of the theatre as the orchestra for the first act, at no time was the music overpowering.

Samantha-Jane Clark used her large cast and the space on the stage to maximum benefit and the choreography was imaginative.

Lorraine Landon is listed as choreographer along with Samantha so congratulations to both ladies. Everyone involved appeared secure and capable of the set routines, and the dancing came across as well rehearsed and polished.



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Some of the songs had longish dance sections, which probably could have been cut a little, but they were enjoyable.

The striking green and black costumes added to the super rendition of Steam Heat and Think Of The Time was also excellently performed, as was Hernandos Hideaway. The colour co-ordinated scenes were most attractive, and the finale with the whole cast wearing blue/pink pajamas was splendid.

Costumes were extremely good and I understand mostly made by the wardrobe team. From the matching tabards for the factory workers to their Sunday best outfits, all were in period. Babe's blue dress was perhaps a little dressy but that's just a small point and maybe she had saved up to buy it for such an occasion?

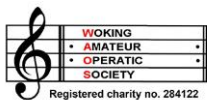
Back-stage crew had a great deal of scene changing to cope with and they did it reasonably well.

Lighting and sound were good and the back-cloth for the park plus the set for the factory were effective.

Martine Young and Beth Flitton did a great job with the props and hair and make-up were good.

My impression of The Pajama Game is that it contains wonderful songs within a plot that is totally forgettable, even during the show. Never-the-less WAOS produced good entertainment for their audience and had obviously worked hard to do so.

Your programme cover is attractive and the contents interesting to read. To be able to enter it in the programme competition it must display the NODA Crest and Affiliated to NODA as well as the write up, which were unfortunately also omitted in your excellent programme for The Hired Man.



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Thank you for inviting me and for your hospitality on the evening. It was good to meet Samantha and Christopher again and I shall look forward to your production of The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas in November.

E. Gloria Smith

N.O.D.A. Regional Representative District 12