

2011 42nd Street

Director: Diane Collings

Musical Director: Anna Minear

Choreographer: Maureen Pascoe

Costumes: Triple C's Costumes Theatrical Hire

Scenery: Andy Martin Production Support

Venue: The Keay, St Austell

There can't be many people who don't like this show, as it has such a feel-good factor. It needs to be performed with pace and energy, and this was certainly the case with this production.

Instead of the usual voice-over lines at the start, the show opened with the actors coming into the auditorium and playing the lines in front of the stage. This was an interesting way to start, and made good use of the more senior members of the company, whose tap dancing skills were not quite sufficient for the energetic opening number. This is primarily a show for a young cast, so I must congratulate the Director on integrating the senior cast members into as much of the action and dance scenes as possible.

The main set worked well, with the same basic structure being modified for many different scenes, and giving height at the back when required. The set for Dorothy's dressing room was somewhat cumbersome however. It would have been sufficient to have just the chaise and dressing table, and dispense with the back wall and doorway, especially as the wheelchair didn't fit through it. With the aid of lighting, the rest could have been left to the audience's imagination, and would have speeded up the scene change.

Costumes on the whole seemed right for the period; although some of the shorts worn in the rehearsal scenes were too modern. The costumes and head-dresses in the 'Dames' number were superb, as were the finale costumes.

Lighting was good, especially in the party scene where the speed of the lighting changes is important. The 'Shadow Waltz' lighting effect didn't quite work, possibly because of the restricted size of the stage.

Sound reproduction was good, apart from one scene in front of tabs when we couldn't hear the dialogue over the background music. This was due to under-amplification of the actors, rather than the orchestra being too loud. The orchestra were excellent and played a major part in the success of this show.

The principal parts were all played with conviction and believable relationships were created, particularly between Peggy Sawyer and Julian Marsh, who shared several well-paced scenes. The scene in Act 2 between Peggy and Dorothy was very touching. The chorus girls Annie, Phyllis and Lorraine created a lot of energy and helped to drive the pace in the ensemble scenes. American accents were well maintained and diction was good. Musical numbers were well sung. The choreography was not over-complicated and was performed with great energy. The big ensemble numbers e.g. 'Lullaby of Broadway' and the title number were well executed.

We thoroughly enjoyed the production. Thank you for your hospitality.

Kathy West, NODA Rep