

Farnworth Performing Arts - Little Shop Of Horrors

Little Shop Of Horrors performed by Farnworth Performing Arts with only 16 in the cast after a break of 3 years came out fighting.

Mr Muchnik's Flower Shop is the setting and with use of the curtains and downstage for the outside walk way scenes, the stage crew negotiated well the moveable bits of set and props - Natalie Toole is stage manager with crew Georgia Brooks, Bex Corless Lucy Fish as well as some of the cast.

Lighting and Sound on the whole were good but I did find sometimes there were dark spots in the plant scenes for the other characters and it was hard to see faces. Some great atmosphere was created at times with the use of some clever lighting. Ashley Foster operated Lighting and Sound was by the Albert Halls.

I must say it was so good to see hair looking slick and in keeping with the pieces as I often find some people have the right style then pull dangly bits down to hang over the face. Well done Hair and Make-up Danuta Thompson, Jackie Kenyon and Helen Dickinson. Nothing looked amiss with Costume, which is excellent. All the characters looked convincing - Wardrobe by Lisa Cosbie-Ross and Vivien Nicholls.

The orchestra led by David Wilson were wonderful and I was on the side where the percussion section was - fabulous sound! David took them through the score with ease.

The chorus of winos on skid row who came into the audience at the beginning of the show were Aileen Toole, Lisa Cosbie-Ross, Bryan Mycroft, Malcolm Wigman and Hugh McGinn who also took on the roles of the various customers in the florist.

The Ronnettes who act like a Greek chorus commenting on the action and are all-seeing: here the director Catherine Bland decided to have 5 girls - Jenny Hubbard, Rachel Jacquest, Carolin Bukovec, Stefanie Bukovec and Faith Barlow. This actually helped with the scenes with the framing of the girls watching the action sometimes involved or on the periphery and also using levels. They probably had the most movement to do as it's not a dancey show, but movement was tight and came across well and supportive of the piece as with the other cast members too. Choreography by Sue Crosby.

Catherine Bland was very economical with the set changes, and this helped the piece to flow as we did not have to watch massive scene changes - well thought out and executed. When the first act finished with an array of body parts in the plant's mouth this looked very gruesome and effective.

Andrew Lee, who was the Voice of Audrey II was not seen until the bow, had to convey the conniving man-eating evil plant with a microphone and this he did with aplomb. A truly soulful voice helped by Bryan Mycroft and Lucy Fish as Puppeteers.

Ivor Farley as Mr Mushnik looked the part and *Mushnik and Son* was one of my favourite numbers - well done (great chemistry too with the character of Seymour)!

Tom Townsend multi-played Orin Scrivello, Bernstein, Mrs Luce, and Skip Snip. So! it must be really hard to sing with a large plastic mask on your face and convey you are dying while laughing - hats off to Tom for that! I actually think you could have pushed the evilness a bit more when with Audrey (I wanted to hate you more)! Amongst Tom's other roles was Mrs. Luce - a triumph, well done!

Sophie Lord as Audrey was a delight, as an audience member I really felt I went on the journey with her through her ill-fated character - she had great chemistry with Seymour.

Where did you find Myles Ryan?! From the moment he walked on stage as Seymour to his sad demise he embodied the character: not for a minute did he let slip - a truly magnificent performance and one I shall remember for a while.

A great show Farnworth Performing Arts have put on and the hard work is evident. My congratulations to cast, crew and committee and all the hard work that's gone on in the background.

Thank you from my guest and I

Liz Hume-Dawson

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