

## ANYTHING GOES

CAODS at the Civic Theatre

27.09.08

It really was Cole, singing through the surface noise to open this hugely enjoyable revival. Then the curtain rose to reveal Patrick Tucker's ship-board band, and we were off on a transatlantic trip through unlikely meetings, paper-thin disguises and a crazy plot involving a silly-ass, an ex-evangelist and Public Enemy Number 13.

The classic numbers are the great joy of the show, of course, and each of them was put over with style and polish, from the big tap crescendo that ends Act 1 to the tiny, intimate Goodbye Little Dream from Karen Kelleher's Hope.

No weak links in this huge company, with lovely character work from Alex Gwyther and Kevin Abrey. Reno, the brassy nightclub singer, was the excellent Kirstie Wooldridge [available for weddings and corporate events], and the hapless Moonface saw David Pridige in a very funny performance. His little Bedlam scene with Billy was superbly done.

John Goodfellow's juvenile lead had just the right insouciance for the role, and he had commanding presence and a lovely singing voice, too. I must also mention Peter Smith's masterly captain, and Laura Bradley's sassy Erma.

Precise ensemble work from Reno's angels and the Sailor Quartet, gorgeous period dresses, and endlessly inventive choreography, in the memorable Blow, Gabriel, Blow, for example.

Cole Porter's Anything Goes was directed by Jeremy Tustin, with top-deck musical direction from Patrick Tucker.