

TOP HAT – TUESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2018

Review by Theatre Life

From the very start when the orchestra began you had a feeling this was going to be a really enjoyable evening of theatre.

This great piece of Musical Comedy is the perfect vehicle for amateur societies offering lots of musical numbers, some exciting dance opportunities and some wonderful characters to portray and CAODS relished it and certainly delivered a superb production.

However, it also brings challenges with a male triple threat lead required, a full tapping chorus and some serious set and costume changes.

Mitchell Lathbury as male lead Jerry Travers was definitely the needed triple threat and had a great singing voice and some twinkle toes to tap his way through the show and he was perfectly partnered with Katie Doran as Dale Tremont. Katie looked stunning and had a strong stage presence throughout. Their dance numbers together had all the Fred and Ginger signature moves and were delivered with great finesse.

David Slater was in his element as Horace Hardwick, staying in character throughout and delivering some great comedy moments – a fine performance from him in this role.

However, it was Simon Bristoe as Alberto Beddini who stole the show with his comedic walk, his crazy Italian accent and his larger than life characterisation. There was only one downside that in his number ‘Latins Know How’ the accent was so strong it was very difficult to hear what he was singing. Other audience members around us were whispering to each other asking what he was saying but they were still laughing constantly at his antics. Simon is an exceptional performer, and this was no exception.

Robyn Gowers as Horace’s wife Madge only appears in Act 2 but we certainly knew she was there. Robyn was strong and sassy and also delivered some great comic moments.

The choreography throughout the show was some of the best I have seen from an amateur society recently and huge commendation to Sally Warrington the Director and Choreographer for this. As an opening night there were some issues – the initial set changes were very slow, but this is understandable given the huge and cumbersome set, I am sure this will improve throughout the week and there were some obvious sound issues with microphones but by contrast, the costumes looked great and added lots of glamour and glitz to the production.

This was a production I strongly recommend anyone to see and huge congratulations to all the cast and those involved.