

Fellini-esque finale to strong show

CAROUSEL, CAODS at the Civic Theatre

SENTIMENTAL, hard-hitting and packed with tunes – Carousel is hard to beat for traditional musical theatre.

Ray Jeffery's latest production for CAODS was lovely to look at, well sung and meticulously choreographed, right from the moment the factory girls left their looms for the lure of the fairground.

Billy the barker was Stuart Woolner – “what a handsome fella he was...”

physically just right, with a powerful, true voice.

Not the most subtle interpreter of the role, but a magnetic actor.

His Julie was Claire Carr, whose lovely voice was well used in If I Loved You; her girly duet with Carrie [Christie Booth] was a highlight of the show. Angela Broad made an excellent Nettie, carrying two of the biggest numbers, and Jonathan Davis relished his role as a relaxed, repulsive Jigger. Mr Snow, with his loud suit and louder

laugh, was brilliantly played by Kevin Abrey, and there were cameos from veterans Leo McGiff and Peter Smith.

Men in gumboots, girls with brooms, a Fellini-esque finale all in white: the production was full of nice touches and effective groupings; the death of Billy, beautifully lit, with Nettie and Mrs Mullin [Caroline Escott], just one example.

A good orchestra, and confident choral singing, under MD Adrew Denyer.

MICHAEL GRAY