

## REVIEWS AND PREVIEW

# Fresh look at old favourite

RAY Jeffery has again come up with a fresh look to an old favourite with the CAODS production of *Gigi*.

Opening with an evocative Parisian set and over 40 on stage, the evening promised much. And they delivered.

The evergreen Peter Smith played the wordy-weary roué Honoré. His voice gets added expression with the passing of the years, and his timing – both comic and musical – has never been employed with greater facility.

Christie Booth was *Gigi*, and she took full advantage of her youthful exuberance

## **Gigi - Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society, Civic Theatre**

in this production full of set pieces. Her transformation from gawky schoolgirl to elegant lady was a joy to behold.

Nick Court was rock steady as Gaston, the family-friend-with-a-reputation who eventually realises *Gigi's* charms.

With the depth of talent CAODS can draw on, there were many excellent performances, and the chorus numbers – an especial favourite of mine in this production – were rich and tuneful. The dance numbers, too, were intricate and disciplined – even the inevitable Can Can had an

unaccustomed air of spirited elegance about it.

Andrew Denyer commanded a fine performance from a small but perfectly-formed orchestra, and the costumes were utterly authentic in style and character.

I was particularly taken with the very slick and highly-organised almost seamless scene changes too.

It is tough bringing something new to tunes that have been done to death, but every number here – and there are many – felt as if they were being performed for the first time.

**Jim Hutchon**