

Walton and Weybridge Amateur Operatic Society.
Kiss Me Kate
Director – Sue Sampson. The Playhouse
Musical Director – Brian. D Steel. Walton on Thames
Choreographer – Helen Catherine Buick

Another wonderful Cole Porter musical and well presented and performed by WWAOS. The show was strongly cast and Pippa Winslow gave a star performance in the role of Lilli/Katharine. Costumes were colourful and the choreography very good with all the cast well rehearsed in both the movement and the singing. The dressing room set was particularly effective and I felt that this was the best production I have seen the company stage in the past five years.

Ottershaw Players. Teechers
Director – Clare Groome. Brook Hall Ottershaw

This play was not a 'run of the mill' piece but one which required considerable vision to make it a constantly moving entertainment. The three young people taking part were exceptionally good and played a multitude of characters including teachers, pupils and an unhelpful caretaker. The venue has rather limited facilities so a minimal amount of props and scenery set the school scene. All three actors were on stage throughout, changing the furniture/props to depict different locations and the fast pace never faltered. Clare Groom was making her directorial debut and she did so most convincingly.

Cobham Players. Visiting Hour
Director – Samantha Myers. The Village Hall Cobham

Comprising of six self-contained scenes reflecting the happenings within a NHS Hospital, this Richard Harris play enabled the cast to play many different roles and the result was most entertaining. Samantha and the company captured perfectly the atmosphere of visiting hour in a hospital and one of the most comic scenes was of a quadruple transplant patient who had agreed to a TV interview prior to his operation. The bitchiness and lack of concern of the TV crew, the self-important surgeon, the dedicated nurse and of course the unfortunate patient were all depicted strongly by the accomplished actors. Nan Sadler did an excellent job in procuring suitable properties.

Woking Amateur Operatic Society. The Boyfriend
Director – Samantha Clark. The Rhoda McGaw Theatre
Musical Director – Paul Harris. Woking
Choreography – Gail Brown

The show was elegantly furnished and costumed and the choreography was most attractive 'Sur La Plage' was a delight with a confident and well rehearsed company who maintained the atmosphere of the period whilst following an imaginative routine on the beach. The nicely balanced orchestra were positioned behind the scenery in act one and in the second act performed as the seaside band on stage. I felt that some of the encores could have been cut as there were so many of them. Katie Linaker was splendid in the role of Maisie.

Pyrford Little Theatre. A Chorus of Disapproval
Director – Tony Bushell. The Rhoda McGaw Theatre Woking

The goings on concerning the members of an amateur society is the theme for this Alan Ayckbourn play and it provided a most entertaining evening in the hands of this experienced group of players. The cross section of people involved in such a group and the relationships that evolved were delightfully and most convincingly portrayed. There were some realistic sound effects, the lighting was well plotted/operated and the dialogue was slick. Ken Harper brought out the comedy and gave a strong performance as Daffyd the Director.

Hatton Operatic Society. Calamity Jane
Director – Heather Leggat. The Magna Carta Arts Centre
Musical Director – Howard Chapman. Staines
Choreographer – Lynne James

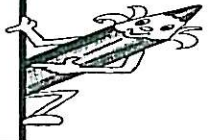
After a beautifully played overture the orchestra continued to play superbly throughout under the firm hand of the musical director. Vocal ability was good and the choreography was most enjoyable. There was plenty of business aside from the main action, the production was colourful and enthusiastic, the gun shots all happened at the right time and the transformation of Calamity's cabin was very entertaining. There were some very good individual performances.

Ottershaw Players. Whose Life Is It Anyway
Director – Peter Moore. The Rhoda McGaw Theatre Woking

This company really enjoy a challenge. The play required an actor to lie in bed without moving anything other than his head, but also able to put across both humour and frustration at the futility of his situation. The set of a hospital ward and offices was super, congratulations to Alan Wakefield and his crew who designed and built it. Claire White-Aldworth organised the medical equipment, loaned by St. Peters Hospital, and the cast were self-assured and convincing in their roles. Unfortunately the audience was small, a great pity considering the quality of the finished product and the hard work it entailed.



STUART ARDEN
District 13
NODA South East Region



Lyndhurst Drama & Musical Society Hansel & Gretel
Director: Jenny Green The Vernon Theatre

The script makes life very difficult for a panto comedy lead, when he has to come on and say "Hi Kids" to an opening-night audience of adults. Labouring under such difficulties, the comedy team played well, particularly in the cooking scene between the dithery dame (Neville Green) and her beau (Laurence Platt). John Gardner really looked and sounded the part as the villainous squire, with his backing of incompetent henchmen. The show looked good throughout with good costumes and a happy, smiling chorus, and a particularly fine gingerbread house.

Burley Players King Humpty Dumpty John West
Burley Village Hall

This was panto firing on all cylinders. The "romantic leads" were taken by four teenagers, leaving the comedy to be played with great panache by the adults: Chris Duell doing the loud seaside landlady of a dame, Sue Trotter and Teresa Barton doing the physical comedy as a pair of incompetent soldiers and Colin Hobbs playing the droll, laid-back king, hen-pecked by the queen (Lindy Capon). The choreography was superb with a well-drilled chorus (including some very small children) singing and dancing, and a brilliant pantomime chase which ought to have been impossible on such a small stage!

Waterside Theatre Company Jack and the Beanstalk
Director/Producer: Arthur Whittaker & Patricia Roberts
Waterside Theatre MD: Derek Godger

This show looked great, with colourful costumes, well-choreographed movement, good lighting effects and imaginative sets, particularly the gauze which allowed the giant's kitchen wall to disappear, revealing the fight behind. However, it is very difficult to get an intimate pantomime rapport going between the audience and the stage in a barn-of-a-building like the Waterside Theatre, particularly when the script expected the audience to sympathise with the

