

Hello, Dolly! • January 2002 • Richmond Theatre

REVIEW

Last week at Richmond Theatre, local amateur operatic company BROS, presented a truly stylish production of the musical Hello, Dolly! ! admirably directed by John Hebden.

Of course the title song is the one everyone can belt out at the drop of the proverbial hat, but the show is liberally peppered with fun tunes and good lyrics including numbers like 'It Takes a Woman', 'Elegance' and 'It Only Takes a Moment'.

However, for me, the highlight of the show was the number 'Waiters Gallop'. Singing and dancing all through the performance was good - but the male dancing chorus was particularly strong and in this number, dressed in nifty red weskits, they were simply fantastic.

As always with a BROS production the sets and costumes looked wonderful and the use of colour was particularly good. In one scene everyone was dressed in elegant black and white - later on for the number 'Put On Your Sunday Clothes' the theme was hot colours like orange and red and yellow. Stunning.

When I interviewed Melanie Edwards, choreographer and deputy stage manager, a few weeks ago, she was deep into rehearsals and described the complexities of organising a large company, often all on stage at the same time. For this production there was an ensemble of twenty-eight persons, fourteen boys and fourteen girls in the chorus - with a goodly number of principals on top. She also told me that a number of members of BROS have had some dancing training - and this expertise really does stand their shows in very good stead.

The plot concerns the marital aspirations of Horace Vandergelder (Bob Salter) and the ploys his 'fixer' Dolly Levi (Lizzie Brignall) uses to set him up.

The young love interest in the piece were played by Lisa Rose and Andy Yeates - but this really was an ensemble production and as such Dolly worked well and was enthusiastically applauded at all the appropriate moments.

Helen Taylor
Richmond & Twickenham Times
