

BROS Theatre Company

I'M ON A SEE-SAW • NOVEMBER 2007 • COWARD STUDIO THEATRE, HAMPTON HILL PLAYHOUSE

I'm on a See-Saw, presented as a studio production at the Hampton Hill Playhouse by BROS Theatre Co, chronicled the highs and lows in the career of English songwriter, Vivian Ellis. Devised and directed by Gavin Morgan and narrated by John Pyle, this revue celebrated some of the best loved songs from Ellis' musicals, ranging from Mr. Cinders in the 1930s through to The Water Gypsies in 1955. The innate delicacy, simplicity and humour of the music were ably demonstrated by all twelve members of the cast, enhanced by small-scale but effective choreography from Melanie Edwards.

This was basically an ensemble piece of some 27 songs, duets and choruses and it is somewhat invidious to single out individual performers. However, Terry Saunders as occasional singer and actor, but always as the unassuming and rock-solid accompanist on piano and keyboard, was a star, providing the musical glue which held the whole show together. Comedy was provided by Robbin Pierce with Me and My Dog and sentiment by Edz Barrett, Barbara Thomas and members of the company in the numbers from The Water Gypsies .

Bless the Bride, first produced in 1947, contains some of Ellis' most memorable songs. This is My Lovely Day, sung by Kerry Sampson and the Company, was a fitting climax to a nostalgic and lovely evening - a treat for those who delight in the quieter charms of English musical comedy.

Pam Frazer