



NICK BRANNAM
DIRECTOR | CHOREOGRAPHER

PRODUCTION	<i>Annie</i>
COMPANY	Reading Operatic Society
PUBLISHED BY	Wokingham Today
DATE OF PUBLICATION	1 st October 2018

Reading Operatic Society have spent the last decade producing shows of professional standards and their latest production, *Annie*, is no exception.

Under the leadership of award-winning Director and Choreographer Nick Brannam and Musical Director Josh Robinson, the show sparkled with attention to paid to every detail.

The opening scene in the New York Municipal Orphanage was very strong with a small but very talented cast of orphans, headed up by Ella Newborough as Annie.

Diction was clear throughout and each girl had created her own personality which came across strongly and effectively.

The diminutive Kenton Theatre stage demands much creativity from set design to choreography and these challenges were met with aplomb. Scene changes were slick as action moved constantly from one setting to another throughout.

Very many characters and scenes were noteworthy but special mention must be made of the Hooverville scene where the effects of the Great Depression were effectively portrayed.

The Times Square scene, on the way to the Roxy, positively sparkled as many diverse characters passed by beneath a backdrop of neon lights.

The Radio studio scene had been given a great deal of thought with every character well-developed, from the exasperated station manager to the gum-chewing Boylan Sisters.

The majority of songs were taken slightly under-tempo which was a good decision, allowing lyrics to be clearly heard and appreciated and gave more space for the choreography.

All the principals were very strong with Rob Wilson giving a convincing portrayal of the rich but lonely Oliver Warbucks and Anna McCormack relishing the part of the Mother of the Year, Miss Hannigan.

With the addition of the well-behaved Gabriel as Sandy the dog and the show enthusiastically signed by the charismatic Stacey Stockwell – appreciated by the hearing as well as the hearing-impaired, this is yet another triumph for Reading Operatic Society.

The group's next event is The Dark Fairy's Ball on October 20. It will include a band, a DJ, a three-course meal and a drinks reception. It will take place the Crowne Plaza hotel in Caversham. For more details, log on to www.readingops.co.uk

Judith Creighton