



NICK BRANNAM
DIRECTOR | CHOREOGRAPHER

PRODUCTION	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>
COMPANY	BAOS Limelight
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LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS: Book and Lyrics by Howard Ashman and music by Alan Menkin and is based on the film (starring Steve Martin and Rick Moranis) that has an improbable story of unrequited love, an abusive relationship, an unstable, deranged dentist and a carnivorous plant! Its set in a flower shop in financial difficulty on Skid Row and shop clerk, Seymour, cultivates a new plant that will, he hopes, attract custom to the shop and bring him favour with Audrey, the object of his affection. It's wacky and raucous and contains toe tapping songs, imaginatively choreographed dances and some fabulously outrageous costumes and props.

The sets were impressive and included side towers and moveable central panels as the action moved from the shop to Skid Row (suitably seedy), to the dental clinic. The various stages of Audrey II (the plant) deserve special mention. It was expertly manipulated via puppetry by Ryan Stephens and as it grew Limelighters carefully and intricately operated the tendrils. The fabulous costumes were first class, colourful and fitted well. There was good attention to detail in ensuring each character was appropriately dressed. A lot of thought had gone into the use of costume and hair to emphasise the personalities of the characters such as The Shabop Girls, Seymour's geeky ensemble, the dentist's coat etc. The lighting was well controlled and effective. The cast sounded terrific from start to finish. The singing was excellent with the voices blending well with the live music under the direction of Simon Eastwood. Sarah Merritt was unseen but tremendous, her soulful vocals providing the voice of the plant.

Little Shop of Horrors was an ambitious venture to undertake but BAOS Limelight rose to the challenge with Nick Brannam (as Director and Choreographer) expertly drilling the entire (and young) ensemble. The energy levels never dropped and the entire cast performed with great spirit and enthusiasm. Ryan Gaul as Orin (the loathsome and abusive dentist) was outrageous and got his just desserts. Aurum Elertas was outstanding in his portrayal of Mr Mushnik. A highlight for me was Jazz Clarkson's gorgeous delivery of "Somewhere that's green" which held the audience spellbound. Alex Williams had charisma, great stage presence and wonderful character technique as Seymour faced ethical, physical and emotional problems. The evening was pure escapist fun from the moment Audrey II entered the stage as a small houseplant till it ended the evening filling the stage. It was full of big talent, bold music and massive props. This was another BAOS Limelight production that left us all with smiles on our faces.

Chris Horton District 14 Regional Representative