

REPORT FROM NODA

'FOOTLOOSE' BRISTOL MUSICAL YOUTH PRODUCTIONS MARCH 2010

STAGING: The set had been very cleverly designed and all scene changes were slick and unobtrusive. I loved the church with its stained glass window and the multi functioning pews, which turned into locker rooms, booths in the Burger Blast etc. The Moore's kitchen was also effective, though the window on the back flat was out of perspective. The stage was used well at all times with good groupings and movement. One thing to be careful about is backstage noise, particularly during emotional duologues and dramatic scenes, more than once we heard doors slamming and voices off, which was very distracting, both for the audience and the actors.

MUSIC & CHOREOGRAPHY: The musical score was excellent, well played and totally sympathetic to the vocals – a lot of time and effort had obviously gone into this aspect of the show. Highlights for me, were 'I Can't Stand Still', 'Learning To Be Silent' (very moving), 'Hero' 'Heaven Help Me' (superb), 'Let's Hear It For The Boy', 'Can You Find It In Your Heart' and 'Mama Says', all of which were performed brilliantly in their own ways. I was a little disappointed with 'Almost Paradise' (a song that I included on my wedding video!), which sounded a little harsh at times and lacked conviction. Choreography, as usual, was innovative and impressive. Some great routines – 'I Can't Stand Still', 'Hero', 'Heaven Help Me', 'Mama Says' (I loved the use of the tyre stack) and the impressive Finale were all well rehearsed and executed with great energy, acrobatics and conviction. There were some dancers that were out of sync especially in the Finale and, 'Still Rockin' had quite a few problems, but overall the routines were their usual high standard. Excellent use of the roller skates.

LIGHTING & SOUND: The lighting plot was varied and executed well in the main, though I think the follow spot in Act One seemed to have a life of it's own! There was also a bit of a muddle in one of the kitchen scenes, but on the whole, the stage was always well lit and added much to the general production. I liked the car scrap heap projection and the river lighting effect was superb, as was the moon gobo with the silhouettes.

COSTUMES & PROPS: Costumes were excellent – just right for the era with good attention to detail – the Reverend's cardigan, the Burger Blast uniforms, the cowboy outfits etc. Colourful and imaginative. Most of the wigs were very good and believable. Reverend Moore and Vi's make-up and wigs were effective, as was Lulu's and Eleanor's. I loved the sparkle jackets for 'Hero' – a simple and very effective idea for a production number and the 'heroes' were wonderful!

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES:

Ren McCormack: A lively and really energetic performance, with excellent vocals and dialogue. You developed the character well and showed a good understanding of the storyline.

Ethel McCormack: I felt that you had a slight problem with ageing and seemed very young to be Rem's mother, but this was a nice portrayal with lovely vocals.

Reverend Shaw Moore: A compelling performance, which captured the inner turmoil and anguish of this complicated character. You 'aged' without being a caricature and gave a totally convincing portrayal, with assured vocals and good stage presence.

Vi Moore: This was another excellent performance with great understanding of your role and a portrayal full of compassion and charm. Superb vocals and acting ability.

Ariel Moore: Though, as mentioned before, there seemed to be a lack of chemistry between you and Rem, this cannot detract too much from a highly commendable portrayal of a complicated character, with excellent dance and vocal ability.

'FOOTLOOSE' BRISTOL MUSICAL YOUTH PRODUCTIONS MARCH 2010

Lulu Warnicker: A supporting role, which you made the most of to give us a totally believable character.

Coach Dunbar/ Mr Warnicker/Principal. Good stage presence and acting ability.

Eleanor Dunbar: A commendable portrayal with good body language and facial expressions.

Rusty, Charismatic and energetic, you seemed to enjoy this role and really made the most of it. Excellent dance and vocal ability – 'Let's Hear it For The Boy' was superb.

Urleen & Wendy Jo: Lovely characterisation from these two girls and talk about dumb blondes!!! Good understanding of the characters with excellent singing and dancing ability.

Chuck Cranston: Not a nice character, but I think that you enjoyed playing him! Good stage presence and natural movement with an assured depth to your portrayal.

Lyle & Travis: You both gave excellent support to Chuck and worked well together, with commendable vocals and movement.

Betty Blast: You certainly got your teeth into this role! I thought your roller skating was highly commendable, as you obviously weren't over proficient in

that particular area! But you had a go, and the 'push off' was hilarious! A charming portrayal.

Willard Hewitt: A wonderful role that you played to the fullest. Superb characterisation throughout, your performance of the lovable nerd was compelling and highly impressive. We laughed and cried with you. Wonderful dancing and vocals – a captivating portrayal.

Bickle, Garvin, & Jetter: Excellent supporting roles, with good characters and energy in your vocals and dance.

Cowboy Band: Very convincing, you sang well and depicted the country and western genre very well.

Choir: You all certainly looked the part and sang beautifully.

Company: Energy and enthusiasm were the order of the day and you all certainly had that – in bucketloads! There were some that were obviously under-rehearsed (you know who you are!), but even so this was an accomplished and impressive chorus who worked hard and gave us considerable performances, supporting the principles with admirable ability.

Thank you so much for inviting me to my first stage version of 'Footloose', which I thoroughly enjoyed. My congratulations to all those involved with this compelling production.

Sharon Wood
NODA Regional Representative
District 13