

**South West Regional Councillor: Graham Liverton**  
32, Tyrell Mead, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 9PT  
01 395 579 792  
graham.liverton@noda.org.uk

*noda*

Be inspired by amateur theatre

16th July 2018

**REPORT FOR:-**

**“Rent”**

**Production given by Dursley Operatic and Dramatic Society (Theatre in Dursley)**

**Performance: Lister Hall, Dursley Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Reviewed by: Nick Lawrence, Regional Membership Secretary standing in for Regional Representative 14: Dee Way**

*Any observation made by the reviewer can only be based on what he sees at the performance in question. The reviewer may have received information in advance of the performance and it is inevitable that his assessment will be affected by that knowledge.*

*The N.O.D.A. Representative's intention is to give an objective critique of the overall production and in particular the performance viewed. It should be remembered that any review of this nature can only be objective as far as the techniques used during the performance observed. Any criticisms expressed may not have been valid at other performances, and are only made to encourage higher standards in Amateur Theatre.*

*It is hoped that the audience's appreciation of your efforts will have given everyone a lift and encouraged you to greater achievements in the future and that the observations made by the reviewer will prove helpful in improving future productions*

Often people undertaking this iconic show suffer from an overload of self indulgence. There was no sign of that in this sincere approach. Directed with an extremely creative hand the story-telling was a particular feature.

Although most of the audience would recognise the story from the opera “La Boheme”, this modern version set in the heady days of the 1990s features some fairly strong characters. In general the diction was good enabling the audience to keep up. In fact once or twice there were lines I cannot remember hearing before. The open staging, mainly on the floor of the hall, worked extremely well bringing the audience close to the action.

The relationship between the characters was quickly formed with some extremely close bonding. The genuine nature of these relationships was a special feature of this production. Considerable preparation had gone into the use of various dramatic techniques. It was good to see some innovative ideas being employed – one particularly thinks of the table becoming the door among other lovely touches. Roger's constant presence was a nice touch but he did spend a lot of time in the dark (dsl). This was a strain for the audience with the bright light and constant movement of the M.D. behind him. Perhaps a slightly higher screen could have been used. Ensemble work was particularly strong with some genuine characters being created. There were some real lives being lived on the streets outside the apartment.

Overall singing was strong with some extremely sympathetic support from the M.D. & the band. This care perhaps robbed the production of the really raw rock sound but it did produce easy to follow words. Some of the harmonies/melodies suffered from poor intonation which resulted in tuning problems for the raw harmonies, but there were also some good harmonies and there were some impressive duets.

The whole production had a fresh, vibrant feel laced with plenty of realism and enhanced by genuine portrayals from ever cast member. The emotions were brought to the fore at all the appropriate moments. In particular Angel's death was startlingly brutal and many tears were shed. The hard work and dedication put into this production was clear for all to see. A very moving evening.

Nick Lawrence  
25<sup>th</sup> July 2018

---

**National Operatic and Dramatic Association**

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

**Tel** 01733 374 790 **Fax** 01733 237 286 **Email** info@noda.org.uk **Web** www.noda.org.uk

**Twitter** @NODAtweets **Facebook** NationalOperaticDramaticAssociation