

**My Fair Lady**

**Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner**

**Music by Frederick Loewe**

**Trowbridge Musical Theatre**

**Sunday 3 December 2023**

**Reviewed by Delia Lee, District 10 Representative, South West Region**

*My Fair Lady*, based on Shaw's original stage play *Pygmalion*, is regarded as a classic and is a favourite musical for many. Although it is a lengthy show, it had a good pace throughout with scene changes handled smoothly by the stage crew. The director really brought out the best in the cast and highlighted what a truly wonderful piece of theatre *My Fair Lady* is.

Unfortunately, the set seemed too large for the stage and greatly reduced the acting area for the chorus numbers, which was a shame. Lighting was also very limited with only a small area lit at the centre of the stage and very dark areas at each side, although I understand this is a limitation of The Civic, where the show was performed. However, sound was impeccable with the perfect balance between the singers and the band. I think it was probably the best sound I have experienced in a production in many years, so very well done.

Eliza Doolittle gave a spirited performance with lovely vocals, movement and acting. She really brought the character to life and her transformation from cockney flower girl to well spoken lady was superbly done, with both sides to her character equally well played. A particular highlight was her first encounter with Mrs Higgins at the Ascot Races where she pointed her dialogue brilliantly and to great amusement.

Henry Higgins also gave a confident performance and delivered his extensive dialogue clearly and with a good pace. Lerner and Loewe's music for Higgins is extremely difficult but there was a good balance between performing the songs in a Rex Harrison style and letting us enjoy his fine singing voice.

Colonel Pickering had an easy manner and worked well as a contrast to the energetic Henry Higgins. He acted and sang well and really looked the part.

**National Operatic and Dramatic Association**

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

Tel 01733 374790 Fax 01733 237286 Email [info@noda.org.uk](mailto:info@noda.org.uk) Web [www.noda.org.uk](http://www.noda.org.uk)

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Freddy Eynesford-Hill had a beautiful singing voice and his rendition of '*On the street where you live*' was gorgeous. A hair style more in keeping with the period would have been appreciated though, even if his long hair had just been tucked into his hat. Other than this minor detail, it was another strong performance.

Alfred P Doolittle had a lot of fun with the part, with a good singing voice, performance skills and comic timing. He had a lovely rapport with his two drinking buddies, Jamie and Harry, and the three of them delivered some very entertaining scenes.

Mrs Pearce played the part well and had some great expressions to show her displeasure at the attitude of Henry Higgins towards Eliza.

The choreography was generally excellent and very well executed. There was a good mix of steps and good use was made of the limited space.

The singing from everyone was excellent, with some very well blended harmonies from the chorus. The orchestra played this memorable score beautifully and was well balanced with the cast. There was a good energy throughout and it was obvious that the whole cast were enjoying singing and dancing to these much-loved tunes. I particularly enjoyed the small group of men who sang very well. All in all, a very enjoyable production.

Delia Lee

NB The comments above solely form the view of the representative attending and only reflect the performance seen.