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Weekend



The cowboys show off their dancing in *The Real American Folk Song*

Classic songs mixed
with laughter in show

Review

Crazy for You by Guiseley Amateur Operatic Society at Guiseley Theatre

THE tune-packed *Crazy for You* is a romantic love musical based on the book by Ken Ludwig, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, and music by George Gershwin.

It is being performed this week by Guiseley Amateur Operatic Society (GAOS). If the name Gershwin is not enough to put the proverbial on seats then this great production by GAOS will be the clincher. It is full of life right from the start and has all the glamour and glitz you could possibly hope for from an American showbiz phenomenon. Sent by his wealthy mother to deliver a bank winding up order and close the run-down Gaiety Theatre, Bobby Child falls for the theatre manager's daughter, Polly Baker. From thereon, this magnificently sumptuous musical reveals a romantic story that is a must for musical lovers.

The excellent direction of Jamesine Cundell-Walker and the superb choreography of Ted Oxley-Kirk complement each other brilliantly in this production. Considering the small stage that Guiseley Theatre has, they have done an absolutely terrific job with some of the dancing numbers to make it look like a big Broadway production.

Harriet Chaplin proves that she is a very talented performer as she tackles the role of theatre owner's daughter Polly. Her version of *Someone to Watch Over Me* was excellent. She is gorgeous in stunning costumes and her powerful voice suits her songs. Playing the part of Bobby Child, the hero who helps save the theatre, is Matt Gardener and he is tailor made for the part, being an excellent all-round entertainer. I thought he worked very well



David Kirk (right) and Matt Gardner playing Bobby and Bella

with Harriet, particularly in the numbers, *Embraceable You* and *Could You Use Me*, whilst his solo in *They Can't Take That Away From Me* was superb.

The casting of Shirley Broadbent, as Patricia Fordor, is quite brilliant. She is a natural comic star and works very well in partnership with Gary Holmes who plays her husband Eugene. And talking of comedy, John Waite in the role of Moose, one of the cowboys, had me in fits of laughter with his comic antics.

One of the highlights of the second half is the scene where Irene (Fiona Lane), Bobby's frustrated fiancée, has had enough of him rejecting her and instead she seduces hotel owner Lank Hawkins (George Phillips) in the number *Naughty Baby*. She delivers this sexy number superbly with much amusement provided by the cowboys sneaking on in the background to watch. Throughout the show Fiona's sassy New York accent cuts through her dialogue and here she looks the perfect seductress in her sexy split dress and stockings.

I must also mention the acting and singing talent of David Kirk as Bela Zangler, the owner of the Zangler Theatre in New York. He

plays a superb role as the dramatic theatre owner.

Without doubt the highlights of the show were in the chorus numbers where some terrific young singers and dancers joined Matt and Harriet. *I've got rhythm*, and *Nice work if you can get it* were two of the more well-known numbers, but I was also highly impressed with the number *Slap that bass* featuring the whole company and thought that the choreography in these numbers was outstanding.

As usual, Catherine Sweet, the musical director achieved the best out of both her singers and orchestra, never allowing the orchestra to overpower the principals and chorus. Gershwin's music, whilst very catchy, is not easy to perform and Catherine has done a terrific job in this respect.

This is a superb musical and one that I am sure the residents of Aireborough and the surrounding area will thoroughly enjoy during its run this week. I believe there are limited tickets left for performances at the end of the week - ring the box office on 0113 250 6434 or 07502 349 325 to check on availability.

Runs until Saturday.

by John Burland