

The background of the cover features a blue curtain with a central opening, through which a solid blue rectangle is visible. Two white diagonal lines cross each other in the lower half of the image. The word 'noda' is written in a white, cursive script at the top, with a thin white line passing through it.

noda

Be inspired by amateur theatre

NODA SCOTLAND

Magazine

National Operatic and Dramatic Association
Registered Charity no: 1171216. Registered Company no: 241572.
Patrons: The Lord Lloyd Webber & Connie Fisher.



Since our last magazine Robbie and I have been delighted to attend a wide range of productions across the country. It has been particularly pleasing to visit several clubs for the first time and to receive such a warm welcome. The quality of productions has been excellent and it was clear from those on stage and in the audience just how welcome the return of live theatre has been.

As you continue to plan future productions don't forget to list your show on the NODA website as far in advance as you have made plans. If you need help to do this, simply drop me an email with all the details – stuart.dick@noda.org.uk

Over the last few months, the NODA Scotland Committee has been finalising plans for this year's NODA Scotland Conference which will once again be returning to Peebles Hydro (28-30 October). The weekend will feature a wide range of workshops covering singing, movement, drama, make-up and it's good to talk. In addition, a Youth Forum will take place over 3 sessions for those tasked with running youth groups/sections and will cover child protection and safeguarding, the licensing of children in theatre and an open forum as well as a practical session covering singing, movement and drama. Full details about the weekend including how to book are included elsewhere in the Magazine as well as being available to download from the NODA website - <https://www.noda.org.uk/regions/scotland/noda-scotland-conference-2022>

The NODA Programme & Poster Competition always attracts a good number of entries from members in Scotland. The 2021-22 competition closed on 30 June and any further entries should be sent to your Regional Rep as soon as possible. For those compiling programmes the rules and marking criteria were updated last year with a number of important changes. Full details, including the up to date about NODA information and logo, are available to download from the website - <https://www.noda.org.uk/programme-and-poster-competition>

NODA Theatre Summer School is now only a few weeks away now and whilst some courses are full there are still a number of spaces available. Full details including how to book can be found on the NODA website - <https://www.noda.org.uk/events/noda-theatre-summer-school-2022/summerschool>

The NODA Presidential Gala and AGM weekend is taking place in Plymouth this year (7-9 October). Full details can be found on the NODA website - <https://www.noda.org.uk/noda-presidential-gala-2022>

The NODA Scotland Committee is busy working on a number of exciting training courses to take place around the country in Spring 2023. Full details will be announced at the AGM on Sunday 30 October in The Ballroom at Peebles Hydro starting at 11am prompt.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if there is anything I or your Regional Rep can help you with – we are here to help.

Stuart McCue-Dick, NODA Scotland Councillor

NODA SCOTLAND MAGAZINE

NODA Scotland Magazine is published in March, July and November. The March edition includes reviews on shows which had performances in November, December, January and February; the July edition covers shows performed in March, April, May and June; and reviews of shows performed in July, August, September and October appear in the November edition.

Generally, reviews are written by the Regional Representatives whose names appear later on this page. Where the review has not been written by the appropriate Regional Representative, the author's name is given.

Advertisements are invited from societies and theatrical rights holders, traders and suppliers.

Advertising rates

- The rate for a show advertisement is £25 per edition.
- The rate for advertisements by theatrical rights holders, traders and suppliers is £50 for three successive editions.

Please send advertising material to the Editor.

All copy for the November edition of the *NODA Scotland Magazine* should be with the Editor not later than **Monday 31 October 2022**. Earlier receipt of material will be welcome.

NODA TODAY

NODA Today is a UK-wide magazine with three editions per year: Spring, Summer and Autumn.

The content of the magazine comprises features about societies, individuals, shows, NODA corporate activities and any outstanding achievements or activities in the region. NODA Head Office has asked that Regional Editors provide no more than 1,200 words collectively for all of the region's content. All jpeg pictures sent for inclusion should be at least 150dpi, with the ideal being 300dpi. Articles for the Autumn edition are welcomed from societies and individual members and should be submitted by e-mail to the NODA Scotland Editor by **Saturday 24 September 2022**. Earlier receipt of material will be welcome.

NODA SCOTLAND COMMITTEE

Generic e-mail address: firstname.secondname@noda.org.uk

Councillor
District No 1 (Glasgow Area)
District No 2 (Dundee & Perthshire)
District No 3 (Central Scotland)
District No 4 (Renfrewshire, Ayrshire & Bute)
District No 5 (Lanarkshire)
District No 6 (Edinburgh Area)
District No 7 (Fife) & Membership Secretary
District No 8 (Borders Area)
District No 9 (Grampian & Highland)
District No 10 (Angus & Kincardine) & Awards Secretary
District No 11 (South West Scotland) & Treasurer
Youth Adviser
Web Manager
Editor

Stuart McCue-Dick
Liz Daniels
Donna Bell
Elizabeth Donald
Craig Inglis
David Black
Dorothy Johnstone
Mike Pendlowski
Deborah Lyons
Douglas Clark
Gordon Smith
Stewart Cameron
Neil Hartley
Vacancy (covered by Councillor)
Alan C Jones

Note to Secretaries:

Please send a copy of the *NODA Scotland Magazine* to all members of your society to ensure that everyone is up to date.

NODA SCOTLAND CONFERENCE

28 - 30 October 2022
Peebles Hydro

AGM

Workshops - singing, movement, drama, make-up, it's good to talk
and Youth Forum

Gala Dinner with guest speaker, dancing and midnight cabaret

Programme and Poster Competition

Theatrical Suppliers and Rights Holder Stands

Late night sing-a-long



Booking now open. For full details: www.noda.org.uk/regions/scotland

NODA SCOTLAND CONFERENCE 28 - 30 OCTOBER 2022

PEEBLES HYDRO

Notice of Annual General Meetings:

The Annual General Meetings of NODA Scotland Region and noda Scotland will be held within the Ballroom of the Peebles Hydro, Innerleithen Road, Peebles, EH45 8LX, on Sunday 30 October 2022 at 11.00 (prompt). This will be followed by the presentation of trophies to the winners of the Programme and Poster Competition.

** Notice of any competent business for consideration at either of the meetings should be in the hands of David Black, 5 Baltersan Gardens, Quarter, Hamilton, ML3 7QW by Sunday 9 October 2022.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 28 OCTOBER

14.00 to 16.00	Youth Forum 1 - Liz Daniels The Bannockburn Room
15.00	Check in Opens
18.45	Drinks reception with canapes for all Delegates and Guests. You are invited to meet the President, Nick Lawrence in The Ballroom
19.30	Dinner in The Dining Room
21.00	Dancing in The Ballroom
	Disco in The Regency Room
00.00	Sing-a-long in The Ballroom

SATURDAY 29 OCTOBER

08.00 to 10.00	Breakfast in The Dining Room
10.00 to 12.00	Singing Class 1 - Billy Muir The Edinburgh Suite Movement Class 1 - Greg Robertson The Ballroom Drama Class 1 - Calum Campbell The Sun Lounge Make-up 1 - Raymond Uphill-Wood The Manor Room Youth Forum 2 - Donna Bell & Hugh Johnstone. The Regency Room
10.30 to 12.00	It's Good To Talk - Dorothy Johnstone & David Black The Bannockburn Room
12.30 to 14.00	Lunch in The Dining Room
14.30 to 16.30	Singing Class 2 - Billy Muir The Edinburgh Suite Movement Class 2 - Greg Robertson The Ballroom Drama Class 2 - Calum Campbell The Regency Room Make-up 2 - Raymond Uphill-Wood The Manor Room Youth Forum 3 - Maureen Berry The Bannockburn Room
19.00	Gala Dinner in The Dining Room All Guests must be seated by 18.50 Evening or Highland Dress should be worn Strictly no denims or casual attire Dancing in The Ballroom
00.00	Midnight Cabaret in The Ballroom followed by Sing-a-long in Not The Cocktail Bar

SUNDAY 30 OCTOBER

08.00 to 10.00	Breakfast in The Dining Room
11.00	Annual General Meeting of NODA Scotland followed by noda Scotland
12.00	Presentation of Awards for the Programme and Poster Competition
12.30 to 14.30	Lunch in The Dining Room
	The Conference Closes 'Safe Journey Home'

CONFERENCE CHARGES

Conference Fee – £25.00 per person

The conference fee is payable by anyone booking any package other than the Gala Dinner, Ball and Cabaret ticket or attending any part of the weekend apart from the AGM.

Weekend Package includes:

Two nights accommodation in the Hydro or Park Hotels inclusive of all meals from dinner on Friday to lunch on Sunday. This is inclusive of the Gala Dinner, Service Charges and VAT. No Reductions.

Rates per Person payable to Hotel on departure:

Single Room.....	£ 298.50
Double/Twin Room.....	£ 287.50 (2 sharing)
Triple Room.....	£ 271.00 (3 sharing)
Multiple Room.....	£ 247.50 (4+ sharing)

Gala Dinner, Ball & Cabaret Ticket..... £62.50 per person
(for NON residents of the Hydro or Park Hotels)

Gala Dinner & Ball Overnight Package

(Including: Gala Dinner, Ball, Cabaret, Bed & Breakfast)

Single Room.....	£ 130.00
Double/Twin Room.....	£ 124.00

Extra Nights

Dinner, Bed and Breakfast £ 70.00 per person

Non-residents

Friday Dinner.....	£28.00
Saturday Lunch.....	£ 19.00
Sunday Lunch.....	£29.00

WORKSHOP DETAILS

YOUTH FORUM

A brand-new series of workshops for 2022 designed specifically for those running youth theatre groups or sections. Over 3 interactive sessions we will cover the following:

Session 1 – child licensing in the theatre and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Session 2 – a practical session covering singing, movement and drama to give leaders ideas to take back to their groups.

Session 3 – child protection and safeguarding including policies and procedures with an opportunity to ask questions or seek advice on specific issues.

SINGING CLASS 1

Billy will start the day with a full vocal warm-up. You will then learn an energetic and vocally challenging musical theatre ensemble number. This is a great musical workshop if you are confident singing in groups but want to challenge yourself with the repertoire you are singing. There will also be an opportunity (if you wish) to attend the 'Movement Class 2' to then learn an amazing routine to the music you have been working on in the morning so that by the end of the day you really will have explored the singing and movement aspects of musical theatre.

SINGING CLASS 2

The afternoon class will start with a short but effective vocal warm-up. The main focus of this class will be harmony singing using a selection of songs from your favourite musical theatre shows and movies. The material you learn will all be brand new, arranged by Billy especially for this weekend - you are in for a real treat! This class will be an intense vocal workout focussing on different styles and techniques that will be transferable into your own performances within your own societies/clubs.

MOVEMENT CLASS 1

Come along and learn some movement to one of the West Ends most popular shows! This class is perfect for all levels and abilities! You are guaranteed a good morning workout to shake off a night of partying!

MOVEMENT CLASS 2

For the first time this year our morning singing workshop and afternoon movement class will be linked. Come along in the morning to sing a full company number from one of the world's most popular shows, then head over to the afternoon dance class to learn the movement. These classes are ideal for people that like a challenge! You can attend one or both of the workshops, we guarantee you will have a wicked time!

DRAMA CLASS 1 - ACCENTS IN PRACTICE

Using inspiration from musicals such as Blood Brothers, Billy Elliot and Come from Away we will explore the world of accents. You will be provided with a toolkit of resources to mould your voice to suit any part.

DRAMA CLASS 2 - STAGE COMBAT

Punch, kick and wrestle your way through this exciting workshop safely and without getting hurt! Learn the art of stage combat through cleverly choreographed fight techniques. Resulting in the creation of a short piece sure to convince anyone you've knocked lumps out of each other! Remember anyone can take part in a fight scene regardless of ability. Wear comfy clothing!

MAKE-UP CLASS 1

In this class Raymond will cover the basics of stage make-up for both men and women as well as looking at ageing and facial hair/wigs. This workshop will give participants a tool kit of techniques they can take back to their own clubs for use in future productions.

MAKE-UP CLASS 2

Oh yes he will. In this class Raymond will look at make-up specifically for panto including the most demanding of all the panto dame as well as the panto baddie. This workshop will give participants a tool kit of techniques they can take back to their own clubs for use in future productions.

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

A chance to meet with representatives of clubs from all over Scotland to share ideas and seek solutions to problems. You will also be updated on initiatives being taken by NODA to help support amateur theatre and those tasked with running member clubs.

NODA SCOTLAND CONFERENCE

28 - 30 OCTOBER 2022 PEEBLES HYDRO

Booking Form



Booking Contact

Name..... Address.....
 Post Code.....
 Tel. No Home Mobile.....
 Email Address.....
 Society..... District.....
 Conference Fee No.....@£25.00 = £.....
 Gala Dinner No.....@£62.50 = £.....

The conference fee is payable by anyone booking any package other than the Gala Dinner, Ball and Cabaret ticket or attending any part of the weekend apart from the AGM
 The gala dinner ticket is for those attending that part of the weekend on a non-residential basis only

PAYMENT DETAILS

Payment of the conference fees and gala dinner tickets should be made at the time of booking.
 All other charges are settled direct with the hotel on checkout.

Cheques – please make cheques payable to NODA Scotland

Bank Transfer (no transaction charges) – email stuart.dick@noda.org.uk for bank details and payment reference

Online (transaction charges apply) – www.ticketsource.co.uk/nodascotland Password NODA2022

Please remember to return all paperwork to Stuart McCue-Dick (address below) to guarantee your booking

Weekend Dining (NOT Gala Dinner)

Please indicate if you have any specific requests for table allocation for the weekend. If none you will be seated with others from your district

Gala Dinner

Please indicate if you have any specific requests for table allocation for the weekend. If none you will be seated with others from your district

Return Address

All completed paperwork and payment (if paying by cheque) should be returned by 30 September to:
Stuart McCue-Dick, NODA Scotland Conference 2022, 5 Glenhead Drive, Motherwell, ML1 2DS

Booking Details

	First Name	Surname	Individual Member (Y/N)	Room Type	Package Type	Meals	Sharing With	Additional Nights (Dates)	Conference Fee (£25.00)	Gala Dinner Only (£62.50)	MORNING WORKSHOPS					AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS			WEEKEND WORKSHOPS				
											Music 1	Movement 1	Drama 1	Make-up 1	It's Good To Talk	Music 2	Movement 2	Drama 2	Make-up 2	Youth Forum 1	Youth Forum 2	Youth Forum 3	
1																							
2																							
3																							
4																							
5																							
6																							
7																							
8																							
9																							
10																							
11																							
12																							

Room Type: S - single; D - double; T - twin; TR - triple; M - multi (max 5) **Package Type:** W - Weekend, F - Friday Dinner Bed and Breakfast, G - Saturday Gala Dinner overnight.
Meals (Not on Weekend Package): FD - Friday Dinner, SAL - Saturday lunch, SUL - Sunday Lunch

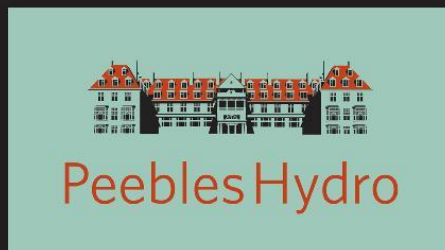
Dietary Requirements

First Name	Surname	Dietary Requirement	First Name	Surname	Dietary Requirement

Cancellation Policy: Cancel by 31 August: Conference fee - £25. **Cancel by 30 September:** Conference fee plus £25. **Cancel after 1 October:** Conference fee plus £50.
Cancel week before Conference: Conference fee plus £100.

Signature..... Date.....

With thanks to our sponsors:



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Be inspired by amateur theatre

Booking now open. For full details: www.noda.org.uk/regions/scotland

SUMMER SCHOOL

"I regard theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another what it is to be human." Oscar Wilde

SUMMER SCHOOL 2022 DATES

The 2022 School will take place from Saturday 30th July - Saturday 6th August 2022 at Yarnfield Park, Stone, Staffordshire.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

NODA Theatre Summer School provides residential training to NODA members aged 18 and over using professional theatre practitioners. With competitive course fees and purpose built residential facilities you are guaranteed a fun packed week of top quality training, optional evening activities and plenty of time for socialising.

- A full week of professional training from the best in the business.
- Quality professional training with real, lasting benefits to performers, directors and technicians alike.
- Fully residential experience in a purpose-built training centre.
- An opportunity to meet and socialise with like-minded people who are 'passionate about theatre'.



BOOKING

Booking for NODA Theatre Summer School 2022 is open. To secure your place you will need to pay a deposit of £100. Full fees for 2022 will be £670.



LONG SERVICE AWARDS

How long have you been in amateur theatre?

Did you know you can purchase long service awards from NODA to celebrate your dedication?

From 10 years all the way up to 70 years, we have pins, badges and medals that you can wear with pride.

Check out our long service awards on the NODA website.

**Further details from the NODA Scotland Awards Secretary:
Gordon Smith (Regional Representative, District No 10).**



A poster for NODA Long Service Awards. The background is a dark blue gradient with a light blue glow on the right side. At the top, the word "noda" is written in a white cursive font, followed by "Long Service Awards" in a white sans-serif font. Below this, the text "Visit noda.org.uk/awards to apply today" is displayed in white. The awards are arranged in a grid of 20 items, each shown in a circular frame with its name below it. The items include: 10 Year Badge (circular, green and silver), 15 Year Badge (circular, red and silver), 20 Year Badge (circular, silver with a crest), 25 Year Badge (square, blue and silver), 30 Year Badge (triangular, yellow and silver), 35 Year Badge (circular, red and silver), 40 Year Badge (circular, purple and silver), 45 Year Badge (triangular, silver), 50 Year Badge (circular, gold), 60 Year Badge (square, gold), 25 Year Medal (rectangular, silver with a blue ribbon), Silver Bar (rectangular, silver), 50 Year Medal (rectangular, silver with a red ribbon), Gold Bar (rectangular, gold), Diamond Bar (rectangular, gold), 55 Year Pin (circular, gold), 60 Year Pin (square, gold), 65 Year Pin (circular, gold), 70 Year Pin (circular, gold), Individual Member (circular, gold), Society Life Member (circular, gold), Youth Award (circular, silver with a crest), and Commendation Award (circular, gold with a crest).

noda
Long Service Awards

Visit noda.org.uk/awards to apply today

10 Year Badge	15 Year Badge	20 Year Badge	25 Year Badge	30 Year Badge
35 Year Badge	40 Year Badge	45 Year Badge	50 Year Badge	60 Year Badge
25 Year Medal	Silver Bar	50 Year Medal	Gold Bar	Diamond Bar
55 Year Pin	60 Year Pin	65 Year Pin	70 Year Pin	
Individual Member	Society Life Member	Youth Award	Commendation Award	

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

As restrictions eased and clubs got back to meeting again award applications slowly gained pace. As you would expect the take up of awards got back to more or less normal levels in recent months with a lot of clubs playing catch up on awards held over from last year. Please remember that the lockdown years still count towards your service. The total for the year so far is 279 including 96 youth awards.

Just a little reminder that the awards process is now online which has made life easier for all concerned. For applicants the online forms are much easier to complete especially if you have a number of awards to apply for. You just log-in to your membership account and navigate to the awards page. Payment is made directly to Head Office which also makes things easier and speeds up the whole process so I would encourage members to use the online system wherever possible. If you have any queries regarding awards please don't hesitate to contact me.

Gordon Smith, NODA Scotland Awards Secretary

60 Year Diamond Bar

Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society

Margaret Dagleish
Harry Gibson
Elizabeth Wright

55 Year Pin

Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
Bohemians Lyric Opera Company Edinburgh
Broughty Ferry Amateur Operatic Society
Falkirk Operatic Society
OPUS Group

Daisy Muir
Russell Lawrie
Hazel Grieve
Elizabeth Woodford
Sydney Thomson

50 Year Medal

Elgin Musical Theatre
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Tayport Amateur Dramatic and Musical Society

Glenda Anderson
Christine McCormack
Nina Thorpe
Annette Jack

50 Year Gold Bar

Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Perth Amateur Operatic Society

Avril Gibson
Aileen Henderson
May Nardone
Lesley Smith
Pamela Anne Ross

45 year Silver Bar

Elgin Musical Theatre
Falkirk Operatic Society
Falkirk Operatic Society
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Musical Theatre
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society

Helen McKellar
Tom Keeble
Lorna Wallace
George Nardone
Sally Haldane
Judith Kerr
Jillian Govan
Margaret Carmichael
Pauline Thomson

45 Year Badge

Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
EROS Musical Society
EROS Musical Society

Brodie Smith
Eileen Monie
Aileen Pearson

40 year Silver Bar

Elgin Musical Theatre
Elgin Musical Theatre
Falkirk Operatic Society
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Larbert Musical Theatre
Minerva Club Glasgow
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society

Davina Fyfe Smith
Ken Smith
Elizabeth Donald
Paul Nardone
Fiona Brodie
Michael McFarlane
Derek Easton
Marion Ritchie
Alastair McCall

40 Year Badge

Falkirk Bohemians Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth

Janice Gray
Christine Kyle

35 year Silver Bar

Carluke Amateur Operatic Society
Carluke Amateur Operatic Society
Cupar Amateur Musical Society
Dundee Scout Gang Show
Falkirk Operatic Society
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
OPUS Group
OPUS Group
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society

Yvonne Balfour
Eileen Clifford
Ruth Anderson
Paul Thomson
Sheena Keeble
Wendy MacFarlane
Ian Brown
Deirdre McFarlane
Colin Beggs
Alexander Black Connell
Stuart McCue-Dick

35 Year Badge

Alyth Musical Society
Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
Downfield Musical Society
Downfield Musical Society

Sarah Beck
Shona Gardner
Gillian Brown
Gavin White

30 year Silver Bar

Carluke Amateur Operatic Society
Carnoustie Musical Society
Carnoustie Musical Society
Carnoustie Musical Society

Heather Coulthard
Karen Fleming
Linsey McDonald
Elaine Scott

30 year Silver Bar

Carnoustie Musical Society	Kevin Smith
Dundee Scout Gang Show	Stuart Sellars
Falkirk Operatic Society	Marianne Marshall
Falkirk Operatic Society	Carol Sutherland
Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association	Agnes Anne Butler
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club	Alexandra Black
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Billy Naismith
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Julie Naismith
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Iain Rowbotham
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society	Susan Kerhohan
Perth Amateur Operatic Society	Susan Kirkham

30 Year Badge

Ayr Amateur Opera Company	Lynsey Kerr
Downfield Musical Society	Carol Michalak
Elgin Musical Theatre	Ian Alexander Dick
EROS Musical Society	Jane Sinclair
Glasgow Light Opera Club	Karen Brown
Perth Amateur Operatic Society	Jane Taylor

25 Year Long Service Medal

Airdrie & Coatbridge Amateur Operatic Society	Joe Bradshaw
Airdrie & Coatbridge Amateur Operatic Society	Arthur Smith
Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Teresa Warden
Carluke Amateur Operatic Society	Laura Murray Darroch
Carnoustie Musical Society	Lynsey Faulkner
Carnoustie Musical Society	Alistair Laing
Carnoustie Musical Society	Claire Smith
Cupar Amateur Musical Society	Neil Jarrett
Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association	Anne Masson
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club	Valerie Bowie
Johnstone Phoenix Theatre Group	Ross Adam
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	June Paterson
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Jillian Peggie
Opus Theatre Club	Alison Gillies

25 Year Badge

Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society	Debbie Alexandra
Downfield Musical Society	Lisa Tosh
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Colin Dougall

20 Year Badge

Airdrie & Coatbridge Amateur Operatic Society	Lesley Anne Smith
Alyth Musical Society	Isabel McCurdy

20 Year Badge

Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Heidi Addison
Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Caroline Fenwick
Carluke Amateur Operatic Society	Gerry Jamieson
Carluke Amateur Operatic Society	Claire Wheatley
Carnoustie Musical Society	Laura Cameron
Dundee Scout Gang Show	Lee Corr
Dundee Scout Gang Show	Christopher Jenkins
Dundee Scout Gang Show	Stacey McPherson
Edinburgh Music Theatre Company Ltd.	Ian McKenna
Elgin Musical Theatre	Campbell Harris
EROS Musical Society	Nanette Campbell
EROS Musical Society	Lorna Cunningham
Falkirk Bohemians Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society	Karen Chambers
Falkirk Bohemians Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society	Amy Grieve
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Ruth Baillie
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Kirsten Grieve
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Ross McDougall
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Tam McLean
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Shirley Taylor
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Paul Graham
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Megan McGeachie
Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society	Ian Thomson
Larbert Musical Theatre	Claire Coyne
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society	Gillian Gray
Paisley Musical & Operatic Society	Lorna Williams
Perth Amateur Operatic Society	Anna Jellye

15 Year Badge

Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society	Paul Connor
Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society	Rachel Nee
Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society	Steve Pimentil
Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Helen Crossan
Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Lorraine Gordon
Brechin Amateur Operatic Society	Laura Guthrie
Callander Amateur Operatic Society	Antonietta Gentles
Cupar Amateur Musical Society	Eilidh McBay
Cupar Amateur Musical Society	Hilary Simpson
Downfield Musical Society	Jem Clark
Downfield Musical Society	Stuart Young
Edinburgh Music Theatre Company Ltd.	Chloe Anderson
Edinburgh Music Theatre Company Ltd.	Jessica Gioia
Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association	Lorna Young
Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club	Margot Aitken
Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth	Lorraine Kyle

15 Year Badge

Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
 Larbert Musical Theatre
 Larbert Musical Theatre
 Lochgelly & District A.M.A.
 Lochgelly & District A.M.A.
 Minerva Club Glasgow
 Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
 Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
 Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
 Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
 Perth Amateur Operatic Society
 Showcase Musical Productions

Sarah McLaughlin
 Hannah Muir
 Myra Ralston
 David Zochowski
 Tony Livingston
 Michael Coyne
 Karyn Russell
 Aileen Allan
 Laura Campbell
 Pauline Michell
 Russell Martin
 Joanna McMillan
 Catherine Park
 Jillian Stewart
 Neil Hartley
 Ross McTaggart

10 Year Badge

Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
 Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
 Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
 Anstruther & District Amateur Musical Society
 Ayr Amateur Opera Company
 Ayr Amateur Opera Company
 Brechin Amateur Operatic Society
 Brechin Amateur Operatic Society
 Callander Amateur Operatic Society
 Downfield Musical Society
 Falkirk Bohemians Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society
 Falkirk Operatic Society
 Falkirk Operatic Society
 Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Harlequin Eastwood Theatre For Youth
 Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
 Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
 Kirkcaldy Amateur Operatic Society
 Larbert Musical Theatre
 Larbert Musical Theatre
 Larbert Musical Theatre

Arlene Anderson
 Billy Donaldson
 Catriona Nee
 Callum Stott
 Greg Philp
 Kerri-Ann Richardson
 Kirsty Dunoon
 Millar Young
 Charlotte MacFarlane Wood
 Karen Young
 Louise Harland
 Lynsey MacMillan-McColl
 Catriona Turk
 Robert McCue-Dick
 Elizabeth Gibson
 Catriona Law
 Joanna McMillan
 Jamie McQueen
 Rebecca Tobias
 Ronan Corkey
 Laura Jenkins
 Alison Precup
 Jennifer Brisbane
 Christopher Duncan
 Christine Jenkins

10 Year Badge

Larbert Musical Theatre
Perth Amateur Operatic Society
Perth Amateur Operatic Society
Perth Amateur Operatic Society

Fiona Rosser
Holly Cammidge
Nicola Hay
Bekki Mackenzie

Certificate of Recognition

Kelty Musical Association

Laura McNair

Youth Award

[illegible]

Cody Rushford
Eilidh Donald
Lizabet Eggleton-Hunter
Rowan Eggleton-Hunter
Kaya Hunter
Courtney Laidlaw
Lucy Laidlaw
Karissa Lovegrove
Stephanie Scotland
Cairo Smith
Lorelei Thompson

Youth Certificate

[illegible]

Alyssa Allan
Lochlan Black
Karis Black
Duncan Brown
Orla Cannon
Finlay Currie
Daisy Devlin
Ross Duff
Charlie Evans
Chloe Gallacher
Orla Hynes
Natalie Johnstone
Abi Kelly
Nieve Lennon
Carter Lumsden
Sophie MacDonald
Lily Maguire
Lua Malvessi
Alexander Marjoribanks
Isabella McBride
Grace McBride
Lily McGuire

Youth Certificate

[illegible]

Tamar-Grace Morrison
Oli Peattie-Hume
Jessica Riddoch
Chloe Robertson
Lois Smilie
Lois Smillie
Eva Spacey
Eve Spacey
Alessandro Sportelli
Zoe Stewart
Katie Walsh
Yana Weir
Phoebe Williams
Phoebe Williams
Lucy Wilson
Eilidh Arthur
Macy Davidson
Alyssia Dewar
Molly Fingland
Lara Hain
Caitlin Lee
Georgia Lockwood
Erin Manger
Isla McIntosh
Kirsten Noble
Lucy Shanks
Summer Spence
Anna Stewart
Valerie Wyzgowski
Charlotte Dalby
Cally Adams
April Barclay
Sophia Barr
Euan Campbell
Katie Clayton
Jessica Corr
Carlotta Davies
Iona Galbraith
Isla Gordon
Morven Gray
Libby Hardie
Mererid Hopwood
Katy Knox
Niamh Lyons

Youth Certificate

[illegible]

Jessica Marshall
Orla Mayling
Sienna McCartney
Caitlin McCusker
Amelia McDonagh
Niamh McDonald
Rebecca Miller
Jamie Monteith
Freya Nicoll
Maisie Pandian
Isla Paton
Erin Pottinger
Alice Redding
Lucy Ross
Dayna Roy-Sweeney
Abi Short
Charlotte Sweeney
Jack Wallace
Abigail Whyte

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Cecilian Society - University of Glasgow: Cry Baby

Director: Gustav Seltsam; Musical Director: Harrison Owens; Choreographers: Abbey Pickavance, Claire Matthews

As far back as I can remember, the Cecilian Society bring enthusiasm, energy and talent to the stage in all their productions, and Cry-Baby was no exception. A new show for me, the story was brought to the stage through song and dance. A feel-good show with plenty for cast to be involved in brings us the story of Allison, played by Lauren O'Hare, stuck in her boring life with a future that has been pre-determined for her by her Grandmother, and Wade "Cry-Baby" Walker, played by Cameron Kilgour, a rowdy Drape, and how no matter what, their love will win! As soon as the society could get back to rehearsing, they did, and forged ahead with planning and designing their show. Like most societies they were challenged with the ongoing difficulties faced by the pandemic. However, this did not stop them pursuing the love of their hobby of bringing musical theatre back to the stage. I attended an early rehearsal before Christmas and the energy displayed at that time left me knowing that whatever the challenges faced, the society would work hard to achieve their goal of performing Cry-Baby. The result culminated in a show that was extremely well performed, with excellent vocal talent along with strong direction and choreography, not forgetting the excellent principal and chorus singing, bringing a high quality production to full capacity audiences. The Cecilian Society take ownership of all aspects of a production from set design and build to wardrobe and props, and it's amazing what they can achieve. With a fairly last minute change of venue, through no fault of their own, they managed to work wonders in a space that was limited. All principal performers were strong vocally and the ensemble brought strong harmonies that were well blended, and overall there was excellent balance with the band. The society made good use of the venue with lighting and sound, and the technical and backstage team ensured the production ran smoothly. Front of house can't be forgotten and were there to welcome audiences into the theatre, for some the first time in over 2 years. In summary, the work undertaken by all in the society brought a great performance to the stage. Well done!

Pantheon Club: Evita

Director: Graeme Shield; Musical Director: Gordon Currie; Choreographer: Chris J S Wilson

Oh, what a show! It is with great pleasure that I write this review following an extremely enjoyable evening at The Pantheon's production of Evita - a show brought to the stage through rich storytelling from a very talented cast of principals and ensemble. While written in the 1970s, this sung through show still brings an audience the story of power, celebrity status and acting. The show was brought to life through the eyes of the Director, Musical Director and Choreographer, and we witnessed excellent acting, vocal ability and extremely stylised dance. The choreography was sharp, precise and outstanding. Eva - Marina Kerman, Perón - Brian Toward and Che - Martin Agnew demonstrated very strong vocal and acting ability and talent, and showed their true understanding of the roles. Ashton Montgomery-Norris played a convincing Magaldi, with strong vocals and stage presence. I particularly liked the opportunity Pantheon took in casting three mistresses, and this worked well. The children were excellent when I saw the show on Thursday evening, and as in most shows there was a second set of children, and I know that their performances were equally as good. With a well thought out open set, the technical aspects of the show worked well, and the projections and lighting were excellent and of high quality. The costumes, wigs and style were second to none and this was consistent throughout the entire performance from each principal to each member of the ensemble. The amount of work and effort that was put into this production was apparent. Well done!

Runway Theatre Company: Calendar Girls

Director: Robert Fyfe; Musical Director: David R. Dunlop; Choreographer: Greg Robertson

When Calendar Girls was announced as Runway's next production, there was excitement, energy and enthusiasm as they set about on their journey to produce the Scottish Amateur Premiere of the show in Eastwood Park Theatre. As we know, getting back to the theatre has been received well by all involved, and at Runway this was no exception. Most of us know the amazing background to Calendar Girls. With the creation of the musical by Gary Barlow and Tim Firth, the impact it has had on local communities, charities and theatre audiences has been at the least, powerful. The extremely strong cast in this production of Calendar Girls left no emotion untapped. The brave women who took to the stage to tell the story brought tears and laughter in equal measure. Supported by a strong line up of principals, each one of them portrayed their own story to full theatre audiences all week. I don't want to single out any particular performer in this review. However, I do have to mention the brave, courageous and endearing performances given by the six strong, individual women who very tastefully and discretely bared all for the WI calendar! Cast well in the roles, each one told their story through outstanding acting and vocal ability. With a supporting cast of principals who individually and collectively brought their talents to the stage audiences left the theatre fully immersed in the emotional journey known as Calendar Girls! As we know, shows like this do not just happen. Proshire Scotland commissioned a new set by John Holding who also designed the lighting. A rolling hill photograph screen-printed backdrop; a textured dry-stone dyke creating a hill elevation which was used to its advantage; four trucks and a plethora of camouflaging props set the backdrop for the show. Robert Fyfe, Director, along with Choreographer Greg Robertson, and David Dunlop, Musical Director created a production that worked extremely well, and one of which they should be proud. An excellent balanced

DISTRICT No 1 (Glasgow Area)

band and sound was evident, and the work of the stage crew under the leadership of Edward Gunn, Stage Manager, ensured the smooth running of the show from a technical aspect. Front of house was well organised, and full of buzz. The sale of calendars in support of The Beatson Charity, featuring all the brave females in the cast, proved to be successful. I'm sure as we open our calendars each month in 2023, we will look back with fond memories of Calendar Girls The Musical brought to us by Runway Theatre. Well done!

Runway Theatre Company: That's Entertainment

Director: Robert Fyfe

Twelve performers, a stage manager, sound, lighting and a few props, and off we went on a fabulous journey celebrating songs from the silver screen. The last Runway production I attended was their Christmas Concert in December 2019, and it was a delight to be back being thoroughly entertained by this very talented company. Each and every singer brought storytelling through their great vocal talents, from That's Entertainment to Moulin Rouge, and The Greatest Showman and Hello, Dolly! to High Society. Tributes to Doris Day and Judy Garland displayed a wide range of vocal ability, and it was great to hear and remember the theme tunes from James Bond movies. With a contribution of reflective dance smattered throughout the concert, it all made for a fantastic evening. Of course, we never get away from an evening at a Runway concert without a few jokes from Robert and Ken thrown in for good measure, and as Robert quite rightly said we've missed 2 years of panto! A simple backdrop, some additional decoration and props, and with Runway's own silver screens, the production ran very smoothly and brought well needed entertainment to the audience. The sweets given out at the interval was a nice touch, and as always Runway took the opportunity to raise money for their chosen charity – Glasgow Children's Hospital Charity. Well done once again to Runway for their celebration of songs from the silver screen, and I'm sure everyone left with a spring in their step, taking away their own memories from the range of songs brought to them. Thank you!

DISTRICT No 2 (Dundee & Perthshire)

Alyth Musical Society: Hello, Dolly!

Director: Ewan Campbell; Musical Director: Billy Muir; Choreographer: Jenni Main

Well..... Hello, Dolly! This trip to see Alyth Musical Society certainly did NOT disappoint. This production had all the elements required to deliver this classic matchmaking tale. The audience were treated to consistent accents, great characterisations and first class vocals from both the principal and ensemble casts. Claire Mallinson was born to play the role of Dolly Levi - impressive in both her delivery of dialogue and song. Her rendition of 'Before The Parade Passes By' was performed to perfection supported by the ensemble in fine voice. The staging and choreography for this number made the audience feel like they were part of the parade – if only I'd had a flag! Never dropping character, she showed us both the comedic and loving side of Dolly. She had great rapport with all her fellow cast members particularly Horace Vandergelder who was cleverly portrayed by Andrew Beckett. One particular highlight during the show was his performance of 'It Takes a Woman' and 'Finale Ultimo' when Dolly finally gets her catch. Cornelius Hackl and Barnaby Tucker were played by Darren Gracey and Drew Knox who worked and interacted so well together as this iconic comedy duo. With Drew's fantastic comic timing and Darren's velvety vocals we were treated to many special moments throughout the production. The role of millineress Irene Molloy was impeccably performed by Elaine Murray. Her emotional performance of 'Ribbons Down My Back' was one of the most memorable numbers of the evening. Malloy's side-kick Minnie Fay played by Steph Mackie was genius. Her characterisation was flawless and consistent giving us a captivating comical performance. Ambrose Kemper played by Gerrard Cameron and Ermengarde played by Karon West also gave notable performances. The whole production was supported by a small but perfectly formed ensemble enhanced by an effective set, lavish wigs and costumes, sympathetic direction by Ewan Campbell, clever choreography by Jenni Main and a fantastic 9-piece live orchestra under the direction of MD Billy Muir. I truly loved it from start to finish. Thanks for the invite. Congratulations to all!

Due to technical difficulties at the time in uploading the following review on to the NODA website, it did not appear in the March edition of the NODA Scotland Magazine.

Downfield Musical Society: Cinderella

Director: Graeme Neil Smith; Musical Director: Richard Waghorn; Choreographer: Abbey Adams

From my viewpoint as part of stage crew in the Whitehall wings, this year's pantomime offering from Downfield Musical Society, *Cinderella*, written and directed by Graeme Smith offered everything a great pantomime should: musically strong and the right amount of cheesy humour and highly amusing confrontations. From the opening number *The Story's Starting Now*, a catchy and excellent new piece of work by Richard Waghorn the audience were lured into the beautifully costumed, expertly lit scenes and simple effective sets for this spectacular journey, much needed after two years away.

Alongside Cinderella, skilfully played by a captivating and vocally strong Rebecca Waghorn, all the firm favourites were in attendance, bringing the magic to life was Marlowe Simpson in the role of Fairy Godmother Gertie; Lord Maximillian Maladorius played by a downtrodden Jacob Dudgeon, Lynn MacFarlane, reigning supreme as the wicked Lady Mildred Maladorius, was eloquently spiteful and mean. The two Dames in the form of the Ugly Sisters, Stuart Young (Dimestos) and Marcus Wylie (Harpic) were born to play this dreadful duo, looking wholly comfortable in ostentatious dresses and colourful wigs and jointly providing much amusement and energy to this much loved tale. The Mum and 'Daughters' musical number was certainly one of the many highlights of the nights. A breath of fresh air was Ross Lesslie, full of enterprise and enthusiasm for the role of the audience's best friend Buttons. Sydney Mulligan, strong and capable as Prince Charming, ably supported by Karen Young as Dandini. Then there was the comedy duo, Witt and Halfwitt, hilariously characterized by Nathan Forsyth and Gavin White. These two made a great pairing. King Harold (Jack Horne), Queen Henrietta (Shannon Middleton) and an enthusiastic Brandy (Sam Graham) accompanied by the lively ensemble playing assorted Friends, Footmen, Guards, Courtiers, Forest Animals, Father Time and the naughty ghost all provided just the right balance of experience and sparkle to the Whitehall stage. Special mention must go to the youngest members of the DMS cast who I was fortunate enough to have witnessed all the split teams. You were all stars. A thoroughly enjoyable week. Well done to all cast and crew! Thank you for making me so welcome.

Downfield Musical Society: Shrek The Musical

Director: Gillian Brown; Musical Director: Richard Waghorn; Choreographer: Rebecca Waghorn

Last night I ventured into the Swamp. a big bright beautiful world filled with a host of delicious characters, too many to mention individually but this clever script allows every person their own chance to shine. During the production we experience so many of the well-known fairy tale characters, the challenge of blending all these together was wonderfully choreographed and directed throughout, Pinocchio, White Rabbit, Three Little Pigs, Wicked Witch, Three blind mice and Pied Piper and his Rat Tappers to name but a few. This show had an enthusiastic and energetic ensemble and needed strong leads, and you certainly had them in abundance. I was smitten by Shrek admirably brought to life by Scott McRuvie who was born to play this loveable ogre multi-talented and consistent throughout in an outstanding emotional portrayal with attention to accent, character and superb vocals. We were treated to a very energetic Donkey characterised by Raymond Wood whose movements reactions and facial expressions in a superb costume were a joy to watch on stage and well Matthew Millar as Lord Farquaad was nothing short of hilarious, stealing the show, giving a truly outstanding performance and all the more incredible how he embellished the character and accent flawlessly while tackling the clever choreography on his knees. All paired together with a straight talking, feisty Claire Wallis as Princess Fiona who gave it all in character and beautiful vocals and was a pleasure to watch. Mention must also be given to Teen Fiona Erin Paterson and Gracie Simpson as Young Fiona for what was a truly superb 'I Know It's Today' The appearance of the love struck Pink Dragon was wonderfully staged, though slightly let down in my opinion by my ability to see the operators which was only masked by the magical vocals of Laura Ferrie. 'This is How a Dream Comes True' was so powerful. This show is filled with a range of musical numbers, all delivered well by this vocally enthusiastic cast. I particularly liked 'The Story of My Life', 'The Travel Song', 'Morning Person' and 'What's Up Duloc'. An excellent set, expertly managed by the back stage team, and the vibrant costumes and colourful headdresses from Utopia Costumes sparkled to perfection under a creative lighting plot by PC Lighting and provided all the magic needed to transform this Disney show into a Big Bright Beautiful Musical World! Congratulations to all involved.

Dundee Scout Gang Show: Dundee Scout Gang Show 2022

Director: Stacey McPherson; Musical Director: Richard Waghorn; Choreographers: Aimee Brown, Karla Geekie

Two years ago just as Dundee Scout Gang Show were ready to stand in the spotlights on the Whitehall stage they were stopped in their tracks by a certain pandemic. They have certainly come back with a bang and there is no stopping them now. From the minute the curtain went up the Dundee Gang were on top form displaying great enthusiasm and an abundance of energy with their spectacular opening section. The entertainment from that point was non-stop, journeying through a wide range of musical genres and styles with various comedy sketches added in for good measure. All the performances were delivered with great confidence and vivacity - supported by a fantastic live band and colourful lighting. A real audience treat was a fantastic section by the youngest members of the gang 'The Beavers' who definitely had the 'cute factor' delivering a selection of their favourite party songs! I certainly didn't expect myself to be on my feet doing the 'A-ga doo' ever again! A poignant moment from the production was the 'Heroes in Covid' section. After two years of all our lives being affected by covid - this section was an uplifting tribute celebrating the heroes who have worked throughout the pandemic. The whole programme from start to finish was clever and captivating. Favourites for me were Superheroes, Celtic Connections, The Cinema and the hilarious Eh'm Miserable. However it was all well choreographed and directed, ending of course with the traditional finale where we found ourselves swinging 'Down the Wide Open Road' and 'Riding Along on the Crest of a Wave'. These truly are the times we dream about! The Dundee Scout Gang Show are honoured this year to be represented by six of its very own members in the 90th anniversary performance marking a special milestone in Gang Show history which takes place in London. The six members of the Dundee Gang will join representatives from another 39 Gang Shows from across the UK and I wish them the best of

luck. The world was colourful, bright and entertaining at The Whitehall Theatre, all credit to the Dundee Scout Gang Show cast, production team and all involved both on and off stage. You should all be very proud of yourselves.

Monifieth Amateur Dramatics: A Very Scottish Play

Directors: John Hunter, Wilma Low

I received a lovely welcome at my visit to Monifieth Theatre for MAD's performance of A Very Scottish Play, a comedy/farce written by John Waterhouse about a couple trying to get away from the stressful life of the city, only to find their problems much worse there. The couple Terry and Angela Fusspost were convincingly played by Matt Hodson and Lorraine Kidd whose portrayals covered all the bases of an anxiety driven and exasperated duo, furthermore, stressed by their English B&B host Sid Didler played by Ewan Smith, assuming the character both in accent and execution in a seemingly effortless delivery. The peace of the getaway is shattered by the arrival of a bizarre undercover mystic Valerie Goodthighs played by Claire Streets who does nothing to instil peace and calm to the couple's retreat. A black hooded ghost and the entrance of the flamboyant film director Gerald Grubenstein, a stereotypically shallow, loud American captured well by Steven Armstrong and his "actress" companion Fenella Roberts played by Nicky Stewart, further complicates the couple's hopes of tranquillity. A well written script with buckets of humour delivered by a small but perfectly cast company at Monifieth Theatre. I enjoyed the cleverly arranged and populated static set, however the closing of the curtains between scenes did stifle the natural flow of the story. On a separate note, it was refreshing to see the company's youth taking the reins of the sound and lighting desk and executing a marvellous job. Congratulations to all involved.

Perth Amateur Operatic Society: The Wedding Singer

Director: Katrina Grieve; Musical Directors: Angus Reid, Cerys Reading; Choreographer: Brooke Robertson

Perth Amateur Operatic Society have waited over two years to bring this upbeat musical comedy 'The Wedding Singer' based on the Adam Sandler movie to the stage and it was certainly obvious to the audience that they were buzzing and ready to be back to kick off their 75th year anniversary. It's an old-fashioned story set in the eighties when singer songwriter Robbie Hart's wedding plans go down the drain and he is jilted at the altar by fiancée Linda putting his music career in jeopardy by become the worst wedding singer imaginable. After meeting waitress Julia, he comes to the realisation he could love again, and things begin to look brighter – unfortunately she is engaged to the arrogant and shallow wall street broker Glen. As with all such tales through an array of characters and vibrant musical numbers things all work out in the end. There were some lovely principal performances. Mark Murphy, as Robbie Hart, was a very loveable character, good vocals and some memorable comic moments supported by his fellow band members, Sammy played by Dylan Sclater and George - a Boy George lookalike played by Scott Jewell. Nicola Hay took on the role of psycho Linda with conviction and Holly the love interest of Sammy was enthusiastically played by Emma Blackburn giving a sassy performance. The comedy performance of the night must go to Rosie the hip granny of Robbie perfectly portrayed by Gillian Martin. Unfortunately, the night of my visit Bekki Mackenzie who was down to be playing the role of Julie had to be understudied due to illness. Katrina Grieve (Director) stepped in and what she achieved was no easy task. With what appeared like hardly a glance to what was the script in her hand she delivered the dialogue and vocals to portray Julia with seamless effort. Her fellow cast members adapted admirably. The staging was simple and appropriate whilst the technical side was well managed with interesting lighting design and effects. The costumes captured the style of the 80s along with the retro hairstyles. The ensemble rose to the challenge of creating the different settings asked by this fast moving musical. A great night out to Perth Theatre and congratulations to all involved. Stuart McCue Dick (NODA Scotland Councillor) was fortunate, on the Saturday evening, to see Bekki back in the role of Julie when she gave a most convincing and touching performance as she gradually fell for Robbie. You would never know she had been unwell earlier in the week.

Tayport Amateur Dramatic and Musical Society: Blitz The Musical

Director & Choreographer: Stuart Whyte; Musical Director: Peter Robinson

The atmosphere, costumes and set all conjured up 1940s London for the audience at the Bonar Hall. The opening scene was beautifully set and directed; set in a crowded underground station the residents of the Petticoat Lane area came to shelter from the air raids. The scene - a very deliberate chaos, with everyone playing specific parts and the story unfolding around two households, - the Jewish Blitzsteins and the Cockney Lockes who run adjacent market stalls in Petticoat Lane but do not get on with each other. Lynne Binnie as Mrs. Blitztein and Alfred Locke played by Alexander Kennedy were well cast and both gave strong performances, Lynne Binnie, pivotal to the show effortlessly delivered both the fiercely protective and caring sides of Blitztein. Her musical delivery of "So Tell Me, Jack" was a favourite moment in the show. Alexander Kennedy as Locke captured the cockney spirit, never dropping his accent and delivering some great facial expression especially towards his nemesis ... their back & forth battle of words carried on convincingly throughout the show. Their children on the other hand fall in love! Craig Nicoll as Georgie Locke showed a great natural stage presence as the brave soldier who returns injured, in love with Carol Blitzstein; sensitively well-acted by Eilidh Robertson. Their

musical numbers were confidently sung. They were ably supported by Matthew Bird as Harry Blitzstein, the lovable playboy who goes AWOL and turns to crime. Playing one of his girlfriends was Rennie Adam who with a natural lively stage presence portrayed the saucy character Elsie down to the ground, with a strong singing voice her musical numbers "Leave It To The Ladies" performed with the female cast and her friend Peg Murphy played by Claire Rioch and "Down The Lane" with the ensemble were well delivered and sung. Playing the part of Alfred's friend was Derek Murray as Ernie Nearmiss, a great character performance full of warmth and at times extremely funny, The youngsters were integral to this production and provided some lovely scenes and musical numbers, "We're Going To The Country" sung with their mothers and delivered with lots of attitude, and "Mums and Dads" was certainly a hit with the audience. The formidable principal line up was ably supported by the excellent remaining large cast with notable congratulations to Gwen Teppett, Susan Robertson, Ross Herbert, Carys Morgan, Gregor Paterson, Rio Rennie and Ruth McKay who ensured that this was a very effective production. The big musical ensemble numbers were well sung "Who's That Geezer Hitler", "Duty Calls", and "Down The Lane" being catchy and tuneful. "The Day After Tomorrow" was very poignant with the authentic radio. The overall effect was highly memorable and very impressive. The production led by Stuart Whyte was very well planned, with good organisation of scenes, cast and props. It also showed great attention to detail in the props, costume, and hairstyles, which created the impression of the wartime period. The lighting effects such as the sweeping searchlights were excellent, with very believable sound effects. It was a powerful story with many parallels with the world we live in today, an uplifting, nostalgic, humorous, and moving score by Lionel Bart delivered by well-cast principal actors ably supported by solid performances from the smaller supporting roles and general company. Congratulations to all involved with *Blitz*

Due to technical difficulties at the time in uploading the following review on to the NODA website, it did not appear in the March edition of the NODA Scotland Magazine.

Tayport Amateur Dramatic and Musical Society: Nativity! The Musical

Directors & Choreographers: Lynne Binne, Stuart Whyte; Musical Director: Don Grieve

This was my first-time seeing Nativity the Musical, and my first outing as NODA District 2 Representative. The story tells of three childhood friends who leave drama school but not quite fulfilling their dreams. Jennifer goes to Hollywood to make movies and the two young men, both failed actors, have become primary teachers at rival schools. The musical follows the Coventry based schools Oakmoor and St Bernadette's as they stage their annual Nativities competing for the best theatre review from a renowned critic. At St Bernadette's, teacher Mr Maddens and his assistant, Mr Poppy mount their own inspired musical version of the nativity with the students, mistakenly promising them that it will be adapted into a Hollywood movie, whilst Oakmoor go for a rock version of the story of Herod! These three characters were captured well. Craig Rose portrayed a warm and loveable teacher as Mr Maddens and kept the audience on side with strong vocals, a particular highlight being *Wrapped in a Rainbow*. Alexander Kennedy as Gordon Shakespeare was theatrical and convincing, his dramatic rock number *Herod! The Rock Opera* supported by five Oakmoor Prep Girls was slightly frightening and strangely alluring. Rennie Adams depicted a gentle and charming Jennifer. All three gave good performances and formed believable relationships. This Nativity is not possible however without Mr Poppy the new high-spirited, childlike and cheerful classroom assistant played brilliantly by Billy Naismith. Billy's juvenile, fun and joyful characterisation meant he had the audience in the palm of his hands from his entrance as the Narrator. His opening song *Very First Day at School* and scene with the children was excellent and very entertaining. St Bernadette's head teacher Mrs Bevan and critic Patrick Burns were excellently played by Gwen Teppett and Stuart Whyte alongside creditable performances from the small but perfectly formed adult cast. Stealing the show however were the fantastic cast of children portraying the pupils of Oakmoor School and St Bernadette's Primary. Each of them strong individual characters, who brought their own talents to the fore. There were some great facial expressions and confident performances. I was very impressed. The staging is transformed from a small colourful classroom in Coventry to the glamour of Hollywood and then ultimately Coventry Cathedral. The scene changes were slick - credit to stage managers Dave Nicoll, David Gardener and team. The six piece 'rock' band under the direction of Musical Director Don Grieve produced a good sound accompaniment to this upbeat score. I did feel however they occasionally overpowered the vocalists – more than likely just a teething problem on opening night. This production had a happy, warm feeling about it. Well done to the production team and all involved for a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Nativity! The musical definitely brought Christmas cheer to the Blyth Hall.

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Tayside Opera: Tayside Opera Winter Concert

Musical Director: Richard Johnston; Accompanist: Robert Duncan

This was my first visit to a Tayside Opera performance as NODA Rep and I thoroughly enjoyed the evening! The concert was filled with a varied repertoire of material. With music ranging from Strauss to Anderson & Ulvaeus this concert really

did cater for everyone. The company singing skilfully conducted by musical director Richard Johnston was to a very high standard with great enunciation, an excellent blend, tone and balance throughout. Soloists throughout the evening not only sang their pieces with great ease and control but they also took us on a journey acting song to really make us feel what the 'character' was trying to portray. My particular favourite of the evening has to be Anna Rajah's emotional and effortless performance of Puccini's 'O Mio Babbino Caro'. Bravo. However, 'Tollite Hostias' and a Selection from The Merry Widow performed by the Company and the delightful confident vocals of Moira Docherty and Alex Hayes along with 'Til There Was You' performed by Sonya Boyd were notably captivating. Another highlight of the evening was the piano solo arrangement of the Gershwin classic 'I Got Rhythm' performed expertly by accompanist Robert Duncan. Robert's accompaniments for the various vocal numbers throughout the evening were perfectly balanced and never overpowering. Thank you to everyone involved for a truly wonderfully put together first class concert - which was a perfect addition to the festive season. Congratulations to all. Tayside Opera will be performing Die Fledermaus in 2022.

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Thomson-Leng Musical Society: The Sleeping Beauty

Director: Donna Bell; Musical Director: Billy Muir; Choreographer: Donna Reilly

Hooray! At last, after months of total nothingness, a rollicking, frolicking, pantomime performed, in a real live theatre! What a joy, and the perfect recipe for a cold December night! In the dame role, and leading the comedy mayhem, was the experienced Tom Richmond as zany Queen Dotty, turning in an energetic, boisterous, and exuberant performance. At one point, he turned up looking like Dame Edna Everage, (!) and he was at his joke-cracking best when playing on a very, very, small baby grand piano! Nick Browne, resplendent in a kilt and, looking like a refugee from Disney's "Brave", was the harassed hubby, King Norbert. Oozing much star quality was Louise Middleton as the evil fairy, Carabosse, making a dazzling appearance in a magnificent black-sequined ensemble. She was definitely evil personified and would have scared any child on a dark night! Terri Milne was our Princess Aurora, and brought much charm and charisma to her role – (although this part has always "puzzled" me because, being the main-named role in this panto, spends much of her "time" offstage, during the show's playing time!) As her handsome Prince Orlando, Emily Easton was a complete natural in this royal role and was a tall, imposing figure with a striking appearance. Billie (Karla Geekie), was the Palace's lively odd-job person and showed she was a most up-to-date factotum with access to a modern mobile phone and Alexa! Representing the "Good" side was Kirsty Beaumont as Fairy Peaceful, doing a grand job in the process with her magic. Then there were the two cats – both looking humanoid, and could talk! Here good work came from Eve McKaig as Kitty, the Palace cat and, as nasty Spindleshanks, Connie Uribe showed her prowess. There were fairies, ghosts, ghouls, zombies, rats and mice, all nicely performed by company members, and we must not forget the excellent stage lighting, and the wonderful ensemble singing. To sum up - there is only one thing to say – it was a Beauty-ful evening out!

Roger D. Buist

Thomson-Leng Musical Society: The Wedding Singer

Director: Donna Bell; Musical Director: Billy Muir; Choreographer: Donna Reilly

I do admit to having heard of this show but, alas, that's all I know about it! So, I was going to see a new show as far as I was concerned. Set in the Swinging Eighties (not a favourite musical era for me!) but, hey, I bopped (I think that is the word!) along as the show unfolded! The story tells of a wedding singer who falls in love with a waitress and the many "difficulties" that befall this twosome before they are finally united. Recipe for this show is...Ingredients, take a certain number of couples, stir, mix well; result, happy ending - all with different partners! The two main leads were ideally cast and both exuded total confidence in both their acting and singing abilities. Connor Wilson made an impressive Robbie (he of the show's title) and, boy, did he pitch himself into his role with flair and energetic energy! Rachel Hogg was his waitress girlfriend Julia, shy, naïve, but desperately wanting to get married! Again, this was a performance with a natural understanding of the role. (And their first kiss...what a bobby dazzler!) Now, maid Julia was supposedly engaged to Glen, (still following me?), but Craig Rose (pardon the pun) rose up to the occasion and showed his mean, nasty side and that his true love was Wall Street money, which he proved when he burst out in his "All About The Green" song number! Because he cheated his lover with hundreds of women, he got his come-uppance in the end! (Serves him right!) And, as for Rachel Weir, for the sake of her art (!) she turned herself into a very raunchy, sexy lady indeed as she attempts to renew her romance with the Singer she ditched at the altar! In another love story theme, band member, Sammy (Paul J. Creegan), and the Maid's cousin, and best friend, Holly, (Terri Milne) turned in assured performances after their romance, too, had a rocky time! There are many amusing moments in this show – and this one was a cracker – MD Billy Muir appeared on stage (yes, he did both!) as one of the Singer's band members – the androgynous, George, in an amazing Boy George take-off, complete with dreadlocks, in manner and appearance! And who could forget the inimitable Jude Vandecasteele as the no-nonsense Grandma Rosie – grasping this role with both her hands in an over-the-top performance which delighted everyone! Her "Grandma's Note" song number "shocked" everyone into total laughter! This

show is nothing without the ensemble and the company brilliantly did all that was required of them, I admired their many character changes, well-choreographed numbers including stage scene changes and impressive vocals which made for a very slick running show. Finally, the proof is in the pudding, and the Maid and the Singer finally got their wedding – and I was delighted to get an invitation to witness the entire ceremony!

Roger D. Buist

DISTRICT No 3 (Central Scotland)

THE SHOW MUST GO ON, DOLLY!

Like many companies Falkirk Operatic Society was devastated to have to cancel *Hello, Dolly!* a month before it was due to perform in April 2020.

The Committee tried hard to keep the company going, like many groups, with singing on zoom etc. However, the technical difficulties of singing to a machine at home and trying to keep in tune without hearing others etc. proved too unwieldy and the effort withered. Quizzes and chats were all tried but it was hard to keep in touch with everyone. So come last autumn, when the Committee called a meeting to see if the company wanted to go ahead with *Hello, Dolly!* for April 2022, it did not know quite what to expect. Would folk come back? Would there be enough men to do the waiter's gallop? Would the principals still be available? Would folk want to return to the theatre?

In the event these concerns were all groundless. The meeting voted unanimously to continue with *Hello, Dolly!* Only one of the principals was unavailable. Fifteen men came along. Wow! A few of our ladies chorus had other commitments but the show could go on.

Then the rollercoaster of the journey to curtain up began. Our usual rehearsal hall was unavailable but the offer of other premises solved the problem. To ensure everyone's safety, new rules were in place concerning testing before rehearsals, hand gels, cleaning chairs, not sharing music, social distancing and so on. The worst was singing with masks on. As all singers will agree especially sopranos, this was not easy. Trying to take a big breath to hold a line or reach a high note gave you a mouthful of cloth and reduced volume. It was hard to gauge how this was all going to sound. The interesting thing was that in terms of remembering what had been rehearsed previously, the singing came back easily. The MD was delighted with the sound and that he was not going to have to start from scratch. It was not the same with movement however. With fewer women, places had to be changed and with Covid related absences, the chorus was continually working with spaces and found it difficult to remember steps and places. The producer seemed very placid about it all, but she must have been very frustrated at the number of times things had to be gone over and over and over.

Scenery, costumes and sound were all contacted and ready to go, though the new transport costs for the scenery gave the Treasurer some more grey hairs. Then Covid reared its head again and continued to bedevil rehearsals from the turn of the year right up to the show. The lady who was Mrs Malloy had Covid and was so debilitated she had to withdraw. Thankfully she was replaced by one who had been in the original auditions. One of our waiters had a change in job circumstances and regretfully had to withdraw. Luckily another young man came along to replace him so that the whole choreography of the gallop did not need to be changed. Then the virus took a firmer grip in March and one by one and sometimes three, folk were ill including the MD. Two of our male principals fell ill, then a third. The Committee privately wondered if this show was ever going to go on. This time if it had to be cancelled, there was not the cushion of insurance. Fingers were crossed and deep breaths were taken.

The rehearsals limped along until April. The chorus numbers and The Waiters' Gallop had not yet rehearsed with everyone there and indeed the waiters went on stage in the opening two nights with one short. The waiters were so good no one noticed. Then the week before the show the Producer tested positive and worst calamity of all, the society's President who was the leading lady fell ill with Covid. Even worse her husband suffered a heart attack on the Tuesday and she could not visit him.

A few dark days followed. Would the show have to be cancelled again? Would there be the nightmare of returning ticket money again? A contingency plan was put in place. One of the ladies was prepared to sing Dolly. Costumes were contacted for another set of Dolly costumes. Would they be needed? In the end, no. On the day of the dress rehearsal Dolly's husband was allowed home from hospital and as she was now negative, insisted she go along and do the show she had worked so hard to get going. Sighs of relief all round.

Falkirk OS had a brilliant show week. The buzz on stage, the relief and the pleasure in performing at last, was fantastic. The audiences were great and so appreciative and supportive. They had no knowledge of the difficulties the company had undergone. If the Committee had known the hurdles it would have to overcome it would not have set out on this

venture. Other companies have trodden a similar path and not been so fortunate in the end. Here's to amateur theatre everywhere and to their hard-working committees without whom life in local communities would be greatly diminished.





Callander Amateur Operatic Society: The Sound of Music

Director: Iain Fraser; Musical Director: Linda Cantley

Two years on from that awful week when the society had to stop the show only three days before the opening night, CAOS was at last able to perform this well known and loved musical. With some cast changes and with the same group of children, slightly older than normal but no less effective for that, the whole cast gave a show to enjoy and remember. The nuns' harmonious and unaccompanied singing set the tone for the whole, a calm disciplined abbey but with a free spirited novice in Maria. In this leading role Naomi Scott was effortlessly good as madcap, tamer of children and wife. 'The Hills are Alive' did come alive under her singing and each subsequent number was sung with heart. She was totally natural and believable as a young girl engaging the youngsters in her care and in falling in love with the children's father, but assertive in rejecting the father's whistle. In his first principal role as Captain von Trapp, Aiden O' Carroll was suitably distinguished and distant at first but steely in his resolve not to give in to bullies. He accompanied the family's singing well and sang 'Edelweiss' truly and movingly. The children – Fiona Cantlay as Liesl, Stewart Watson Friedrich, Lucy Underwood as Louisa, Katherine Lee as Brigitta, Rory Scott as Kurt, Alixe Anderson as Marta and Amelie Morley as Gretl – all gave polished performances transforming from the drilled automatons of first acquaintance to personalities of their own like the shy Kurt, outspoken Brigitta and engaging Gretl. Fiona Cantlay as the eldest, Liesl, gave us a growing teenager and protector of her siblings. She struck all the right notes in her relationship with the young postman Rolf played by Colin Young. For me, his demeanour and delivery of dialogue was spikier than I remembered and showed the characteristics of the Nazi he was becoming. It was a shock therefore when he did not betray the family as they hid in the garden. Their duet was charming and indeed the singing and harmonies of all the children in 'So Long, Farewell' and in all their numbers was delightful. The Sisters Berthe, Margaretta, and Sophia sang and bickered wonderfully. However in the role of Mother Abbess Angela Dickinson came into her own. With her calm good sense, her unruffled demeanour she was a role model in leadership. Her singing of 'Climb Every Mountain' moved us all, powerful and emotional, with every note counting especially that soaring and beautifully held last note. The supporting principals all brought their own interpretations of their roles: Brian McKay as Max made clear the dangerous tightrope he was walking; Jenne McLure gave us a charming Baroness Elsa who choose a safer life; Mhairi Stewart as the Housekeeper showed, often comically, where her allegiances lay while Franz did his about turn with the same aplomb as his job as Butler. The minor principals, the Eberfelds, the postulants and the fiercesome Nazi, all maintained the tone. This was a well produced show. The cast were comfortable in their roles. The stage is smallish but the use of cloths for the abbey and for the Van Trapp home gave a sense of space and of wealth. The stairs gave an added dimension. All gave room for the actors to perform. The singing was beautiful and the musicians melodious and supportive to the singers. Overall this was an extremely enjoyable show that in our current war torn world also gave us pause for thought of the cost to individuals and families giving up their homes for freedom. Well done to all involved.

CG Theatre: The Wiz

Directors: Miss Procek, Miss Morton; Musical Director: Mrs Peat;

Choreographers: Miss Barclay, Mrs Galloway, Mrs Hill, Mrs Wilmot, Mr Ritchie, Miss Park

What an inspiring evening this was, watching all these youngsters finally playing their parts in *The Wiz*. The enthusiasm and earnestness of the cast was there for all to see and after all their hard work over the year, they achieved success. Andie Carruthers gave us a matter of fact Dorothy never missing a word and fully focussed on her singing. Her three companions along the way were super, from the comic timing of The Scarecrow played by Gracie Proudlock, to the confidence of The Tin Man played by Enrik Caravatchi and to the likeability of The Lion played by Aaron Ingles. They took us on a journey of hope to The Emerald City and sussed out the fraudulent Wiz played by Courtney Bryce. As the colourfully dressed good 'fairy' Addaperle, Hayleigh Gilland delighted with her comedic remarks and timing and Ellie Haldane whipped up hostility as the evil Evillene who wanted Dorothy's shoes. Her side kick Lord High Underling Nikki Forrester also Glinda, the Gatekeeper Jack McAllister, the Monkey and Uncle Henry Ian Anderson, The Mouse Squad John Gibson and Aaron Bloomfield, and Aunt Em Amy Kennedy, all supported and played their roles well. The Ensemble, with Munchkins in wonderfully coloured wigs and Citizens of Oz in green spectacles contributed effectively to events and they all moved and sang with confidence. Special mention must go to the lad in yellow who led the chorus and the audience in 'Ease on Down The Road'. The singing was joyous and tailored to the youngsters' strengths. Each scene moved effortlessly into the next. The set was created and painted by the pupils themselves led by Miss Carr and Miss Mackie and great effort had gone into making the atmospheric and colourful backdrops. For all involved this was a highly successful and entertaining evening and a credit to the staff who made it happen. Congratulations to all.

Children's Theatre Bo'ness Society: From Lockdown to Limelight

Director: Jamie O'Rourke; Musical Director: Tracy Gilland; Choreographer: Jade Farrell

From the eerie atmosphere created by an unlit stage and black costumes conveying the darkness of Covid times through to a light and colourful second half, the children take the audience on a journey of hope. Taking the structure of a pantomime with a good fairy, a demon, a panto dame and her likeable son, the children create a scenario of lockdown

with occupations of reading, gardening, painting and cooking interspersed with political and topical jokes and references. With poignant songs like 'When Will my Life Begin' and ones of light and hope like 'You will be Found' in costumes all in symbolic white, we are all lifted up. The cast singing was strong and clear, bursting with energy and their movements were assured and lively. Dame Ding a Ling a Doorbell was played in serious mien and deep voice by Lara Hain but with outrageous costumes and wigs. In contrast Rachel Higgins as her son Silly Billy gave us a cheery chappie with attitude. Together their "baking" scene cracked open the gloom and heralded what was to come. Cody Rushford gave us a wonderfully evil Demon Coron - note the play on words - whose nasty laugh and cruel intentions were well portrayed. Just as wonderful was her red costume with spikes for epaulettes, resonant of the virus and a hat with flames. In a smaller part Valerie Wyzgowski was convincing as Actor. Well voiced soloists Isla McIntosh, Carice Baillie and Sophie Gilland sang with power and emotion. The dancers Caitlin Lee and Suzanna Strang showed talent, grace and athleticism in their solo acts. With two long years without performances, it is inevitable that there has been a turnover of youngsters. However the new and enthusiastic youngsters showed that talent is there. This was an imaginative production devised to put into the limelight the youngsters' abilities in singing and dance while reflecting on all our recent experiences. The tartan touches at the end rounded it all off. Entertainment is alive and well. Congratulations to all involved.

Falkirk Operatic Society: Hello Dolly!

Director & Choreographer: Judy Brown; Musical Director: Jon-Luke Kirton

Based on the play 'The Matchmaker', with added music and lyrics by Jerry Herman, who could fail to be captivated by this musical? Carol Sutherland splendidly captured Dolly Levi in the title role with grace and charm as the matchmaker attempting to arrange a second marriage for the grumpy Horace Vandergelder, William Cunningham, who provided a first-class performance as the well-known "half-a-millionaire". As his two store assistants, Graeme Scott (Cornelius Hackle) and Darrek Tasker (Barnaby Tucker) both excelled in their partnership and were very well paired with Anne Rice (Irene Molloy) and Hannah Gillies (Minnie Fay) who both provided performances to the highest standard. Collectively, through song, dance and drama, all four could not have been cast better complementing each other as they made their way to the Harmonia Gardens restaurant proving they each had elegance. Similarly, all other principals provided sterling performances as Ambrose Kemper (Andrew Tasker), the sobbing Ermengarde (Rebecca Gillies), Head Waiter Rodolph (Tom Keeble) and the mischievous Ernestina Money (Susan McFarlane) with Elizabeth Donald (Mrs Rose) and Robert Wardrop (Judge). All musical numbers were well staged and well performed by the entire company as was the comedy in the hat shop and again in the restaurant. I was particularly impressed by the creative detail within the Waiter's Gallop which I felt demonstrated the full potential in the male chorus. All principals, chorus and dancers must be praised for their performances for what was a highly entertaining evening. It is fifty years since the society last performed 'Hello, Dolly!' when it was choreographed by Irene Langlands MBE, and on this latest visit to Yonkers, it was ably directed and choreographed by her daughter Judy making this a special family milestone linked to the history of the society. This was a thoroughly enjoyable production and is one that the society, Jon-Luke Kirton and Judy Brown should be really proud of.

David Black

Larbert Musical Theatre: Kinky Boots

Director: Derek D Easton; Musical Director: Jan Cunningham; Choreographer: Yolande Borthwick

They say good things come to those who wait, and this was certainly the case when Larbert Musical Theatre was finally able to take to the stage with the Scottish amateur premier of Kinky Boots. From the red-carpet welcome and gala reception to the last bow this was a classy show in so many ways. It was also a pleasure to be able to present long service awards to 16 members of both Larbert Musical Theatre and OPUS totalling 363 years of service to amateur theatre – a remarkable achievement. Based on the 2005 British film Kinky Boots, written by Geoff Deane and Tim Firth and with music by Cyndi Lauper the show is mostly inspired by true events, telling the story of Charlie Price. Having inherited a shoe factory from his father, Charlie forms an unlikely partnership with cabaret performer and drag queen Lola to produce a line of high-heeled boots and save the business. In the process, Charlie and Lola discover that they are not so different after all. In the lead role of Charlie, John Coe, gave a very convincing and believable performance as the son of the previous factory owner struggling to decide what is best for him, the factory and the workers many of whom he considers friends. This was perfectly summed up in the moving 'Soul of a Man' sung with real feeling. As his unlikely saviour John-Ross Weir as Lola/Simon gave a superb performance capturing all the subtleties of the character. The scene where she performed to her father in the nursing home was particularly moving. As Charlie's unexpected love interest Lauren, played by Claire Coyne, proved an excellent foil to Charlie ensuring she got her way in the end. Excellent comedy timing was evident in 'The History of Wrong Guys'. As factory foreman Don, Stewart Borthwick, captured the character perfectly as gradually he learned to accept people for who they are. The rest of the principals provided great characterisation to ensure the show had a real authentic, realistic feel to it. Special mention to Lola's angels for looking fabulous and moving effortlessly in heels! The cast was completed by a great sounding and moving chorus who really enhanced each scene they were in. It was obvious everyone on stage was delighted to be back and were giving everything to their performances. Clever use of back projection and minimal staging

by Director Derek D Easton ensured the action moved seamlessly from scene to scene with the pace never dropping. A well balance orchestra under the direction of Musical Director Jan Cunningham enhanced the singing by both principals and chorus alike to ensure they were never overpowered. Choreography by Yolande Borthwick was slick and together and complemented each song and its style. The costuming by Utopia Costumes added the icing on the cake especially the 'Kinky Boots'. All too soon we reached the rousing finale of 'Raise You Up' and the thoroughly well-deserved standing ovation. Congratulations to all involved on and off stage for a triumphant return.

Stuart McCue-Dick

The Livingston Players (SCIO): Sunshine on Leith

Director: Sandy Queenan; Musical Director: Eddie MacLennan; Choreographer: Jemma Farnham

After a three year enforced gap it was clear to see the cast's delight at performing again. Familiar music, an emotive story line and a talented cast made this a show to remember. Considering current world events, the opening with the soldiers and their guns and the storyline of the two soldiers returning home seeking normality was particularly poignant. Josh Ure as Davy brought an edge to the role and grew in stature as events passed. David Mack belied his years as he tackled the part of Ally, rejected suitor, and how the audience felt that public rejection. The lads brought energy and pathos to their roles and proved well matched in their harmonies especially in opening numbers. Their girlfriends were just as effective. Charmain Leitch as Yvonne gave a rounded performance and her duets with Davy 'Misty Blue' and 'Then I Met You' were beautifully sung. Holly Marshall as Liz showed her mettle as she strove to make her own decisions and also sang strongly in the likes of 'Make My Heart Fly'. All four created wonderful and powerful harmony. Meanwhile the crisis at the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Davy's parents and the ensuing difficulties were well performed. Keith Carlyon gave us humour in the Scottish father of few words but deep feelings and canny advice. His love for wife Jean was obvious as was his need to recognise his daughter from the past. Despite conflicted feelings he brought dignity to the role creating emotional impact and singing his heart out. Gill Sullivan's stage experience came through as she developed the role of loving mother and then confused and hurt wife in both action and song, By the time she fired up emotions in 'Should Have Been Loved' and 'Sunshine on Leith' she had demonstrated what a talented performer she is. All other roles were well focussed and supportive, Lauren Clark as Eilidh, Fiona Wandless as Hazel, Nicholas Brown as Innes, Josh Enever as Andy, Iona Watson as Moira and Eilidh Mack as Karen. The ensemble contributed to the whole: in character, moving with ease and singing with heart. This was a finely nuanced production, minimalist in terms of scenery; transitions accomplished seamlessly and cast using the stage to maximum effect. A powerful and engrossing performance, with the iconic '500 Miles' at the end, left the audience begging for more.

Sabos Musical Theatre: Nunsense

Director & Musical Director: Andrew Nicol; Choreographer: Gwyneth Grant

What a refreshing and entertaining night this turned out to be. Faced by a cast of nuns giving their all in the opening numbers, one wondered what was coming next. Decorous at first then bursting into energetic moves, the nuns took the audience into immediate enjoyment zone. The incredulous story of a cooking disaster which decimated the convent and depleted their monetary resources so that they could not pay for the last three funerals - who were stored in the freezer! - meant they were putting on a concert to raise funds. Cue lots of fun and laughter aplenty. It was a strong female cast. Shirley McNulty as the Reverend Mother threw herself into the role of leader, of organiser and of dealing with factions. She caught the distracted character and was hilarious under the influence of drugs with her solo 'Turn Up The Spotlight'. Her second in command Sister Hubert, played by Jo McKie, with an eye on promotion carried off the straighter role with aplomb singing beautifully in duets and in leading everyone in the finale 'I'm Holier Than Thou'. Chris Taylor as Sister Robert Anne, the diva who wanted but was denied a solo, gave a powerful performance as the overlooked rebel with the trainers. Her solos, 'Playing Second Fiddle' and 'I Just Want To Be A Star' demonstrated her singing talent and energetic characterisation. Susan McFarlane as Sister Amnesia was a joy. With well timed quips and delivery, she took us through from the comically forgetful nun with woeful face to a raving nun with backing group and wigs in 'I Could Have Gone To Nashville'. In the number 'So You Want To Be A Nun' complete with puppet Sister Mary Annette, she revealed her versatility as well as the character. Cherry Hayburn was in fine voice as Sister Leo and Hannah Sanderson came across well as the disastrous cook, Sister Julia. But all the Sisters and four Brothers took on their roles with gusto never missing a beat in the company numbers 'The Nunsense is Habit Forming', the tap dancing in 'Tackle That Temptation' and with the yellow gloves in 'We've Got To Clean Out The Freezer' dragging the wrapped up bodies across the stage. Singing was clear and well enunciated throughout so that the storyline could be followed. All seemed comfortable and natural in their roles. This was a well executed and entertaining show. Congratulations to all.

Encourage your society to enter the programmes and posters competitions.

See the up to date information on the NODA website.

Elysian: The Wedding Singer

Director: Craig Inglis; Musical Director: Andrew Scott; Choreographer: Liam McGrath

It is always great to welcome a new member club into the NODA family and Robbie and I were delighted to have been invited to the first show by Elysian since they joined NODA. Based on the film by the same name this was a show that captured the look and feel of the 1980s with suitable costumes and a simple set. A strong cast was led by Steven Milby as Robbie Hart (the wedding singer) jilted at the later by his fiancé Linda. Steven captured the real highs and lows of the character with a strong stage presence and good singing voice. Linda played by Emma Fyfe was suitably nasty without being over the top. Chloe Milby was a convincing Julia torn between her boyfriend Glen Guglia and her real love Robbie. Steven and Chloe worked well together showing a real connection between the characters. As the real villain of the piece Glen Guglia was convincingly portrayed by Gary Fyfe and showed his true colours in his love for money. As the other members of the wedding band Sammy (Bryan Jamieson) and George (Raymond Caffrey) brought many of the comedy moments to the show especially Sammy's on off relationship with his girlfriend Holly played perfectly by Jennifer Scott. The real laugh out loud moments from the show came from Carol McLaughlin as Rossie (Robbie's grandma). Her characterisation and facial expressions were just hilarious. The excellent principal line up was supported by a small but hardworking chorus who sang and moved well. Director, Craig Inglis, made good use of the small stage area with some clever touches and the choreography by Liam McGrath was in keeping with the 1980s and was well executed by the full cast. Musical Director Andrew Scott's band provided good backing and never overpowered the vocalists. Congratulations to all involved in the show. Welcome to NODA and Robbie and I look forward to your next production.

Stuart McCue-Dick

EROS Musical Society: The Addams Family

Director: Jon Cuthbertson; Musical Director: Aileen Shaw; Choreographer: Kirsten Keenan

Based on the TV series of the same name this production by EROS certainly lived up to its billing as creepy, kooky, mysterious and spooky and was a great choice for their first show back. Having taken the decision to double cast almost all the principal roles, just in case, I was delighted to have the chance to see both casts during the run. A show like The Addams Family relies heavily on being able to recreate the very individual characters from the TV series and film. To this end both casts excelled! Did I have a favourite cast – certainly not. Each member of both casts captured the essence of the character whilst bringing their own individualism to it. Both casts worked well together and created believable, albeit slightly strange, characters, who at the end of the day loved each other in their own strange ways. This show features many real laugh out loud moments all of which were exploited by each character for maximum impact. In addition, the score features a range of styles and tempos for the principals to cope with. All were handled with ease whilst remaining in character – not any ease task. As a collection of misfit ancestors, the chorus brought an extra dimension each time they appeared on stage with excellent costumes and individual characters and traits that never faltered. A well-balanced orchestra provide suitable accompaniment that supported the cast and never drowned them out. Clever direction ensured the show moved along and creative lighting helped to enhance the atmosphere. Choreography was effective and appropriate and was well executed. All in all, this was two great evenings of entertainment that fully justified the hearty applause at the end of both shows. Well done to all involved on and off stage and I look forward to seeing The Sound of Music next year.

Stuart McCue-Dick

DISTRICT No 5 (Lanarkshire)

Airdrie Arts Guild Drama Group: The Steamie

Director: Susan Campbell

Set in Glasgow in a local wash house, four women find themselves reflecting over the past and previous years as they each share their own stories whilst remaining poised with great anticipation and hope as the New Year approaches and they prepare to toast 'The Bells'. Although some of the Scottish New Year traditions may have disappeared in the passage of time, this production took us on a nostalgic journey back to a time when family, friends and the local community were central to daily life. The cast of this production brought the story alive by re-enacting the spirit of Hogmanay in 1953, with humour, comedy and drama provided by Nicole Cowan as the naive Doreen, Morag Donald the impatient Magrit and Geri Greenhill the talkative Dolly. Similarly, Linda Gowther portrayed the part of the frail, vulnerable but respected Mrs Culfeathers with great ease as did Nicola Young as Jeanie and Peter Paterson, Andy - the Handyman. This was a slick production which allowed each cast member to play to their strengths capturing the essence of the characters they were portraying and had the audience hooked from start to finish. I thoroughly enjoyed this production and congratulate Susan Campbell on this her first show with the company as Director and look forward to many more! Thank you and well done to all involved.

Airdrie & Coatbridge Amateur Operatic Society: Encore

Director: Eleanor Mackay; Musical Director: Ross Angus; Choreographer: Lisa Kennedy

This show provided a true insight into the behind-the-scenes fun-filled world of amateur theatre sharing the highs, lows, tears and laughter of being a part of a Society. It was comical and captivating which embraced various elements of the amateur dramatic world taking us on the amdram journey from deciding a show through to its on-stage production. The company entrusted the production team to create something memorable and this was exactly what they did using some musical numbers from shows previously performed by the company to tell the story. This also doubled up as a celebration of achievements from past shows including Footloose, West Side Story, Cabaret, Annie Get Your Gun, Singin' in the Rain, Rent, All Shook Up, Sunshine on Leith, Best Little Whorehouse and Rock of Ages etc. In rehearsing in four distinct groups when social distancing guidelines were in place, the company continued to perform in those groups but came together for the opening, 'Footloose' and in the appropriate finale closing number, 'Don't Stop Believing'. However, in taking a trip down memory lane, the audio-visual sequence provided a poignant reminder of members no longer with us and who brought so much to the society. This was a most entertaining evening and one which I could not single any one performer out as it was clear this was a team effort. The production team and all supporting the production in the background should be really proud of the end result even down to the detail of impressively transforming the chancel area of the sanctuary into a purpose-built performing area which incorporated the band of talented musicians and excellent sound and light. Excellent show, AACOS are back!

Cumbernauld Musical Theatre Society: Sunshine on Leith

Director: Fraser Morrison; Musical Director: Ian Monteith-Mathie; Choreographer: Kirstin Stewart

James McShane and Lewis Kerr took centre stage in this production delivering spotless performances with impressive vocals as soldiers Davy and Ally adapting to civilian life on their return to Leith from war in Afghanistan, whilst balancing the effects of war and looking ahead at their personal love interests with Liz (Davy's sister) and Yvonne, ably played by Jodie Differ and Christine Duncan. All four were superbly cast playing against each other and each gave performances of the highest standard. As Davy's parents Rab and Jean Henshaw, David Campbell and Lorraine Keenan brought maturity and drama to their roles as they reflected on family values and working through Rab's infidelity in dealing with Eilidh, the product of an affair Rab had early in his marriage and the daughter he had no knowledge of. Eilidh was played with great compassion by Rachel Hepburn. The entire company engaged in the drama and delivered some powerful musical moments with drive and passion through solos, ensembles and the collective chorus. However, one of the highlights for me was Lorraine Keenan's excellent delivery of 'Sunshine on Leith'. The company was supported by an able band of musicians positioned within the stage set. Choreography was slick with everyone on stage moving in the right direction at the right time. This was indeed an outstanding production which Fraser, Ian, Kirstin and all on and off stage should be extremely proud of making this the first production from the Society in the new Cumbernauld theatre. Well done!

Lanark Amateur Musical Society: Lamstravaganza

Musical Director: Jack Thomson; Choreographers: Nicole Duthie, Vicky McIntyre, Nicki McLachlan

In marking the 40th Anniversary of LAMS, members of the company were devastated when their production of 'Hairspray' got as far as the dress rehearsal and had to closed due to the first COVID 19 lockdown and unfortunately were unable to reschedule this production. However, following an absence of three years since they last performed, their return to the Lanark stage with LAMSTRAVAGANZA was met with a huge mark of approval from the audience. This musical revue brought musical theatre back to centre stage with a varying selection of familiar, and some less-familiar, songs from musicals including Shrek, Les Misérables, Mamma Mia, Sister Act, Legally Blonde, Little Shop of Horrors, Moulin Rouge and Hamilton, all ably performed by soloists, ensembles and the entire company. The energy, enthusiasm and passion provided from each performer was outstanding and strongly acknowledged by the audience and it would be unfair to single out any individual or musical number as all were of the highest standard. Stage lighting created the mood and atmosphere for each musical item in the programme, balanced against a group of five talented musicians in the band. Jack Thomson should be commended on his leadership and musical direction for this production which provided a great evening's entertainment. Welcome back LAMS!

Our Lady's Musical Society: Musical Harmony

Director & Choreographer: Joanne Tulips; Musical Director: David Fisher

Musical Harmony provided a fitting tribute to Our Lady's Musical Society marking its Diamond Anniversary coupled with a further celebration of 50 years of the Concert Hall and Theatre complex in Motherwell, the venue used by the company for the majority of their productions. Through visual technology and Raymond Tulips as our compere, we were steered on a nostalgic journey recalling former shows and past and present cast members, taking us back to the very beginning

and bringing us up to the present day, highlighting many of the successes along the way which took the society from strength to strength. Society members opened the concert with great enthusiasm in a specially written arrangement of 'I'm Still Standing', 'Walking on Sunshine' and 'Sing', with the City of Glasgow Wind orchestra. Thereafter, the society performed a selection of songs from musicals under the musical direction of David Fisher accompanied by his talented band of musicians. The selection of music and quality of sound provided by the City of Glasgow Wind Orchestra under the baton of Martin Thomson, was excellent as were the outstanding solos exquisitely performed by Monica McGhee direct from London's West End, ably accompanied by David Fisher on piano. I regret owing to space I cannot list all musical items but the concert certainly provided a wide and varied programme. The finale was led by Monica McGhee and the entire company with a powerful rendition of Highland Cathedral joined by the full orchestra and pipers creating a very stirring moment which brought the audience to its feet and provided a fitting end to the evening. A lot of work for just one performance but regardless it was most enjoyable and I applaud all involved in bringing this production to the stage, re-kindling our love for live theatre after an absence of nearly three years. Well done to one and all on marking both historic milestones.

DISTRICT No 6 (Edinburgh Area)**Bohemians Lyric Opera Company: Shrek The Musical**

Director: Robert Nee; Musical Director: Finlay Turnbull; Finlay Turnbull Choreographer: Fiona Jackson

The Bohemians were so very disappointed when their production of 'Shrek The Musical' was cancelled two years ago just a week before its opening date. It was therefore a brave decision to go ahead this year knowing the financial implications of staging this show, wondering if audiences were ready to return to the theatre, and concern that Covid might ripple through the cast. But going ahead was certainly the right decision. Despite the difficulties of the last two years and although changes had to be made in the cast and orchestra during the week and I'm sure lots of fingers were crossed, the production team and cast pulled off an energetic and polished first class production which, in my opinion, was comparable with any professional production. Based on the film, the storyline is well known and there are expectations of how characters should be portrayed. In the title character role, Andrew Gardiner gave a flawless performance in this demanding role and brought real depth to the character. His physical appearance, wonderful stage presence, excellent singing voice and acting skills combined to make him the perfect, loveable green giant. Shrek's peaceful existence in his swamp is interrupted by the arrival of a mob of fairy tale characters who have been expelled by Lord Farquard of Duloc and who descend upon his swamp. These many larger than life fairy tale characters made a real impact with their fabulous costumes and brought reality to their own individual characters with their mannerisms and movement. Ross McPherson as Pinocchio and Kirsty Hogg as Gingy both gave delightful performances. On his journey to find Lord Farquard in order to regain his privacy in his swamp, Shrek meets up with and is accompanied by his loyal friend Donkey. Alex Singh revelled in this part with his animated facial expressions, excellent comic timing and inexhaustible energy. There was a genuine bond between Shrek and Donkey who was a true friend in his determined efforts to make sure that Shrek and Fiona lived happily ever after. The children in the audience loved Donkey. Rachael Anderson was a convincing Fiona contrasting the sadness she felt in being cursed and locked away as a child with her feisty determination in both her acting and vocally. The scene portraying the three stages of her life with young and teenage Fiona was quite enchanting. On the performance I attended young Fiona and teenage Fiona were played by Violet Beattie and Olivia McGowan respectfully (these parts were double cast). 'I Know It's Today' was a joy to listen to and I'm sure revealed stars of the future. The so called 'baddie' of this piece is Lord Farquard who is somewhat ruthless in his aim to rescue Fiona and make her his bride. Dominic Lewis gave an absolutely brilliant performance as the diminutive Lord extracting the comedy from the role with his perfect comic timing and wonderful singing voice. He certainly mastered the art of walking on his knees working his short legs and costume. This was brilliantly done but must have been painful by the end of the week. He was a most likeable bad guy! One of the stand out performances was Rebecca Drever's Dragon. Her stunning voice almost raised the roof of the theatre and she also looked amazing. This most talented principal line up was surrounded by a very strong ensemble who were dynamic and effervescent in both singing and in executing the very slick, varied and well rehearsed choreography. I loved the tap routine. Spectacular costumes added to the overall visual impact of this production. This is a very heavy show technically but the many scene and costume changes were slick and smooth. Although there were several changes in the pit during the week due to positive Covid tests, with some musicians sight reading, the orchestra sounded very good indeed and supported the singers. The final 'I'm a Believer' created an almost euphoric atmosphere both on stage and in the auditorium. This was altogether a wonderful production in every way and I'm sure that, despite the worries and hiccups, the Bohemians should very proud and satisfied that 'Shrek The Musical' was certainly a real winner.

Edinburgh Gilbert & Sullivan Society: The Pirates of Penzance

Director: Alan Borthwick; Musical Director: David Lyle

The Pirates of Penzance is probably one of the most popular Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. It tells the story of Frederic, an orphan boy who was mistakenly apprenticed to a pirate instead of a pilot. He is looking forward to leaving his pirate

career on his 21st birthday only to discover that he was born on a leap year and is persuaded that he is only actually 5 years of age and faces a real dilemma. The audience fell silent in the theatre as they listened to the overture played by a wonderful, well directed orchestra whose playing throughout was a pleasure to listen to. The opening scene with raucous pirates celebrating Frederic's birthday was vivacious and had a real party atmosphere complete with balloons and hilarity. This cast of rollicking pirates was very well drilled particularly in 'With Cat Like Tread.' Mairi Coyle (Ruth) gave a convincing performance taking a delight in trying to unsuccessfully woo Frederick in her playful manner. She was partnered well with the vocally strong Sebastian Davidson (The Pirate King), another strong performer, both obviously enjoying taunting Frederic with their 'paradox'. Andrew Crawford (Samuel) and Sebastian worked really well together with their cool wit and little asides. Keegan Siebken (Fredric) appeared a little reticent initially but settled quickly and soon came into his own no more so than in his gorgeous scene and duet with Mabel in Act 2. Major-General Stanley is a fun part which requires someone with agility and perfect diction. Colin Povey certainly had these skills. His articulation was excellent in the well known 'I am the Very Model of a Modern Major-General' and his number in Act 2 was very well delivered. I loved the gimmicks with the night cap concealed in the cuddly toy and also the large slippers! Major-General Stanley has a rather large family of charming daughters and the ladies of the company looked splendid in their crinoline dresses. They all worked together as a group in some of the stylised moves but also developed individual characters acting and reacting. Alan Borthwick always adds a freshness to his productions so seeing this group of ladies doing their work outs having climbed over rocky mountains was interesting. Angela Fowler's characterisation of Isabel left us in no doubt that she was love sick and very anxious to get her man. The only daughter willing to marry Frederic is Mabel. Megan Bowen (Mabel) gave an absolutely charming performance. Totally at ease in the part, Megan has a natural stage presence and an absolutely stunning voice. Her solo 'Poor Wand'ring One' was superb as she soared effortlessly to the very high top notes. This part was double cast and I believe that Lorna Murray too was a superb Mabel. As Mabel and Frederic are about to be separated they are supposed to be saved by a bumbling squad of policemen. Nathan Auerbach (Sergeant of Police) successfully conveyed his cowardliness leading the motley crew of all singing and nimble footed all dancing timid policemen. The combat between pirates and police was one of the funniest scenes. Although initially unsure of the pirates' intentions, this amorous group of ladies didn't hold back laterally with their swooning making their true feelings known. One expects great singing from EDGAS and they didn't disappoint. As well as having strong soloists, the ensemble work was most impressive particularly in Act 1 finale 'Hail Poetry' and in the double chorus of daughters and policemen in Act 2. This was altogether a vibrant, slick production where every cast member played his or her part. Good lighting enhanced the colourful costumes and set creating great atmosphere. I have seen 'Pirates' many times but there was a freshness about this production which I thoroughly enjoyed,

Edinburgh Music Theatre Company Ltd: The Drowsy Chaperone

Director: Jo Heinemeier; Musical Director: Matthew Brown; Choreographer: Ashleigh Le Cras

'The Drowsy Chaperone' might almost be described as a musical within a musical. The scene is set in the apartment of the narrator of the piece the 'Man In Chair.' As he sits in the corner of his living room, he tells the audience of his love and passion for musical theatre and invites them to listen to one of his favourite records 'The Drowsy Chaperone.' As soon as the needle touches the record on his record player we are transported to the 1920s as he leads the audience through the recording and the show comes to life. Ian Fallon was absolutely superb in this demanding, testing role. He is the focal point of the piece and had the audience in the palm of his hand throughout with his copious amount of dialogue delivered with humour and excellent timing. His interjections and interaction with the audience were perfection. As the story unfolds we meet many different and interesting characters most of whom have been invited to an impending wedding between Janet van de Graaff, a show girl, and Robert Martin. Chloe Anderson gave an impressive performance as the bride Janet with a lovely singing voice and a stage presence compatible with the style of the 1920s. Cameron Kirby captured the style of the smooth, young beau of that era who not only sang well but was proficient in his tap dancing and roller skating blind folded. He is supposedly supported by his best man George. David Bartholomew successfully portrayed the flustered, incompetent and somewhat harassed best man George who also did well with his tap routine. Trying to stop the wedding is Feldzieg, a show biz manager who fears his future is at stake if Janet marries and leaves his show. Ian McKenna was a suitably frustrated director constantly agitated by Kitty who is determined that she could take over Janet's role. Kirsten Weichen Wong gave a lively, animated portrayal of the sexy Kitty with her exaggerated movement and expressive face. Katie McNulty gave a very subtle performance as the Drowsy Chaperone. More interested in herself than being vigilant of her charge Janet, and rarely without a drink in her hand she gave an elegant, controlled performance never going o.t.t. when she was slightly inebriated. Her solo number was delivered with absolute conviction. Andrew Hally was well cast as the self proclaimed Lothario and lover bringing out the humour with his outbursts and revelling in his scene trying to seduce Drowsy. Caroline Stevenson (Mrs Tottendale) and Colin Cairncross (Underling) her butler made a good pairing, the former suitably ditsy and the latter upright in controlling his exasperation with Mrs T, his facial expression telling all. Good timing is needed for comedy and Laura Dunning and Anna Spence worked very well together as Pastry Chefs/Gangsters. Arriving to save the day when it appears no weddings can take place due to George forgetting to get a minister is Trix the Aviator. Anya Coates made a real impact in this final scene with her strong singing voice and command of the stage. Throughout this well directed production,

the ensemble moved with ease and with good, disciplined choreography. The pausing and freezing to allow The Man to continue his narrative was used to good effect as was the use of the split levelled set. Vocally the cast produced a well balanced sound and was ably supported by the small orchestra. Colourful costumes depicted the style of the era. At the start of the show the 'Man In Chair' tells us that all an audience in theatre wants is to be entertained. This was most certainly the case with this production. When an entire audience rises to its feet clapping and cheering at the end of a show you know you have winner! A thoroughly enjoyable, fun production,

Forth Dimension Musical Productions: A Scottish Concert

Musical Director: Caty Kerr

As this small dedicated group took to the stage with their opening number 'Somewhere In My Heart' what was most striking was their obvious joy at being back performing. This very varied programme of numbers with a Scottish connection was delivered with happiness and enthusiasm. The full chorus were in fine voice in all of their numbers and I liked how some of the numbers allowed individuals to sing a solo line so that everyone had a chance to shine. I was very impressed by the junior trio who sang the more up to date 'Wellerman' and Lewis Capaldi's 'Someone You Loved' with great confidence. We had two Runrig numbers - 'Every River' was well sung by Joanne Hogg and 'Loch Lomond' had the audience clapping along. David Ritchie who accompanied the company on keyboard was excellent on the fiddle playing a 'Dashing White Sergeant' medley. Bagpipes also featured prominently and added authenticity to Gill Sullivan's 'When The Piper Plays.' The very small male chorus sang 'Belter' with gusto. The first act was brought to a rousing conclusion with The Bay City Rollers 'Shang-A-Lang.' The full chorus got the second act off to a stirring start with 'Suddenly I See' and 'Scotland Forever' more commonly known as 'Scotland The Brave.' The mood changed with Caty Kerr's beautifully sung 'No Place Like Home.' The more traditional 'Skye Boat Song' demonstrated the real blend of voices and part singing which came across well in many of the chorus numbers. One of my personal favourites is 'Caledonia' and Cameron Aitchison didn't disappoint with his heartfelt rendition of this moving number. Also, an accomplished guitarist he accompanied the trio 'Many Of Horror' which was well sung by himself, Caty and Claire with strong 3 part harmonies. As well as clapping and foot tapping along to some of the numbers the audience was encouraged to join the ladies in the actions of the fun 'Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep.' No Scottish concert is complete without The Proclaimers and we were treated to a rousing 'I'm On My Way' which also had audience participation and the lovely 'Life With You.' This most entertaining concert was brought to a lively conclusion with 'I'm Gonna Be (500 miles)' which had everyone buzzing. It was evident that not only were the cast delighted to be back doing what they love after a two year break but judging by the audience reaction they too were enjoying seeing live theatre back again. This was a real 'feel good' concert with an excellent choice of musical numbers which I thoroughly enjoyed. Very well done, Forth Dimensions. So good to see you back.

Musselburgh Amateur Musical Association: Chess

Director: Richard Tebbutt; Musical Director: David Gibson; Choreographer: Caroline Inglis

Like many companies, MAMA had to postpone their production of Chess for over two years. This meant that several changes had to be made but this small cast rose admirably to the challenge of presenting this hugely demanding and powerful musical. The hard work by the ensemble, principal cast and production team resulted in a most slick and enjoyable staging of Chess. An excellent principal cast were most convincing in their roles, each establishing his or her own character from the onset. The Arbiter (Gordon Horne) made an immediate impact opening the show and kept the narrative of the piece moving along purposefully with his excellent, clear and impressive singing voice. The three main characters involved in the love triangle were strongly portrayed and their angst and intensity totally believable. Anatoly (Paull Lyall) the Russian chess player gave a most convincing performance conveying his struggle and conflict in deciding what he really wanted - to be a chess champion or follow his love for Florence. His 'Anthem' closing act one was powerful and captivating. Anatoly's American opponent, Frederick was strongly played by Craig McKirgan. A ruthless, ill mannered and devious man with a powerful voice yet one who gave an insight into his soul as he showed his vulnerability in an emotional 'Pity The Child.' Florence (Alison Henry) was quite superb. There are so many contrasting styles of music in Chess and Alison had such variation in her voice from the powerful 'Nobody's Child' to the emotive 'Heaven Help My Heart' and the romantic 'Mountain Duet' with Anatoly. One of the most poignant moments in the show was the arrival of Svetlana (Monty Ray) who immediately gained our sympathy with 'Someone Else's Story'. One really felt the pain for her and Florence in the show stopping 'I Know Him So Well'. Molokov (Zorbey Turkalp) commanded the stage with his wonderful stage presence and fabulous voice. Alan Paterson gave a fine performance as Walter De Courcey. These talented main characters were well supported by a chorus who although small in number worked hard adapting to the various scenarios and who were strong vocally making a full sound with harmonies coming across well. Choreography throughout was well thought out to suit the mood and delivered with precision. 'Merano' and 'One Night In Bangkok' were vivacious and energetic and contrasted well with the more balletic 'Chess Game'. The simple staging and use of rostra enabled the best use of space on the 'chess board' flat area and the varying levels with the high level chess table most effective. Congratulations also to the orchestra who have no respite in this musical. This was altogether a thoroughly enjoyable production and was well worth waiting two years to see. Great work MAMA.

Musselburgh Amateur Musical Association: The Sound of Music

Director: Niall King; Musical Director: Julie Robinson; Choreographer: Eleanor Sinclair

It has been an extremely busy time for MAMA having staged a most successful 'Chess' in March and the ever popular 'The Sound of Music' about six weeks later. The storyline is very well known telling how Maria, a young postulant finds difficulty fitting in with what is expected of a nun at Nonnberg Abbey and is sent to be a governess for the seven children of the widower Captain Von Trapp. The opening scene with the nuns going about their business was effective with both the stage and auditorium put to good use and the Preludium sung harmoniously. Rebecca Kinross was charming in the part of Maria both vulnerable and forthright. She gave an animated performance throughout particularly when expressing her inner conflict between what is expected of a nun and her feelings for the captain. There was a real bond between Maria and the children. Most of the numbers in the show are well known and both Maria and the children performed in a most relaxed manner. All of the children played their parts with confidence and were well drilled in their moves especially in Do-Re-Mi number. It was good to see so many up and coming stars of the future! Richard Tebbutt was a dominating, demanding, self assured Captain Von Trapp who, after a great deal of persuasion, eventually softened towards his children and Maria. Becky Duncan Skelton gave a very warm performance as Mother Abbess. In the scene where Maria returns to the abbey there was genuine sympathy and almost maternal instinct as she tells Maria she must 'Climb Every Mountain' which was sung with great feeling bringing Act 1 to a fitting close. Alison Henry (Elsa) and Alan Paterson (Max) were both strong characters – Elsa dignified and stylish and Max a cynical impresario. Their strong singing voices came over well in their numbers. Liesl, played by Martina Gonzalez at the performance I attended, was a protective big sister to her younger siblings but a typical teenager in her admiration of Rolf (Gordon Horne). The two were a believable pair having fun in their duet 'Sixteen Going On Seventeen'. There was a most able supporting cast but special mention should be given to Laura Paterson and Justin Skelton who stepped into the roles of Frau Schmidt and Franz the Butler at the dress rehearsal. Both performed admirably. There isn't a great deal for the chorus in 'The Sound Of Music' but the nuns sang well and the Nazi officers were fierce and commanding. The familiar music was played by a supportive orchestra who made a grand sound. The many scene changes ran smoothly and good lighting enhanced the set. This was an enjoyable production which went down well with the audience many of whom were inclined to sing along to the tunes they knew! Well done to the cast and production team.

Portobello and Joppa Church Drama Group: My Fair Lady

Director: Shona Cowie; Musical Director: Nancy Kent

Based on George Bernard Shaw's 'Pygmalion', 'My Fair Lady' is one of the most popular musicals by Lerner and Loewe. It tells the rags to riches story of Eliza Doolittle a common Covent Garden flower seller who takes speech lessons from Professor Higgins so that he may pass her off as a lady. Higgins is a hugely demanding role and was expertly played by Tommie Travers. Totally at ease in the part, he commanded the stage with a flawless delivery of both dialogue and musical numbers where every word was heard. I particularly enjoyed 'I've Grown Accustomed To Her Face' which was sung with real passion. At the performance I attended, Eliza was played by Sylvia Cowie who looked delightful and gave a beautiful portrayal of Eliza transitioning from the rough cockney flower seller to the elegant lady. She didn't hold back in standing up to Higgins no more so than in 'Just You Wait' or in her outburst at Ascot. Sarah MacKinley played Eliza on alternate performances. Paul Cooke was a most likeable Colonel Pickering with his dry sense of humour and obvious support for Eliza. This trio worked well together and had a good rapport particularly in 'The Rain In Spain' number. Alfie Doolittle, Eliza's dad, is a gem of a part and Chris Cowie gave a very lively performance with lots of fun and good comic timing. His two mates Harry (John Lauder) and Jamie (Brian McKercher) also gave spirited performances in 'With A Little Bit of Luck' and led the company in the rousing 'Get Me To The Church on Time' which was one of the shows highlights. Aiden O'Brien was a most believable love sick suitor, Freddy, with a lovely singing voice which so suited 'On The Street Where You Live'. Other principal cast members were all very well played - Mrs Pearce (Arlene Lauder) calmly carrying out her domestic duties. Mrs. Higgins (Debbie Beveridge) an elegant matriarchal figure frustrated by her son's behaviour, the over exuberant Zoltan Karpthy (Mark Wilson) and Mrs Eynsford-Hill (Sheila Hay) astounded by Eliza's conversation at Ascot. There is loads for the chorus to do in this musical and the obvious joy of the cast on stage spilled over into the audience. The enthusiasm in the rowdy cockney scenes contrasted so well with the demure, expressionless faces at Ascot. The orchestra supported the company in the fabulous score which was very well sung especially the Ascot Gavotte. The servants too were an impressive vocal ensemble with excellent harmonies. Good use was made of the small stage and floor area below creating an effective set. Costumes too were excellent. This was altogether a well directed, enjoyable production by a company who had most certainly worked hard to produce a show of this standard in a comparatively short time. The reprise of 'On The Street Where You Live' after the curtain calls was a lovely touch and had the audience singing along. After two years of disruption and uncertainty it was wonderful to see this small group back on stage doing what they love and do so well and bringing the joy of musical theatre back into the community.

Note to Marketing Managers:

FREE PUBLICITY!!! Make sure that all your forthcoming productions are listed on the NODA website as far in advance as you know plans have been made.

Showcase Musical Productions: Showcase Spring Concert 2022

Director: Andy Johnstone; Musical Director: David McFarlane

As always, it was a privilege to be invited to attend and report on a Showcase performance, this time, it being their Spring Concert, held in the modern surroundings of the Music School of George Watson's College in Edinburgh. Since 1991, Showcase have raised in excess of £200K for their chosen charity, Macmillan Cancer Support. Their donations are ever increasing, all raised in the way they do best – by singing. From a chorus of 27, some 15+ stepped forward to take on a solo or duet, which must tell us something about the standard of the chorus. In a departure from my norm, I'll start with the ever strong Showcase chorus! The programme included a large number of choral items encompassing a wide variety of styles. Sources ranged from their opening number taken from *The Greatest Showman*, via *West Side Story*, to *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Simon & Garfunkel* and, including soloists, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* and the Beatles. "Hey Jude" which closed the Concert, brought back happy memories of my youth.....! The Showcase chorus was sound and well-rehearsed by MD, David McFarlane, exhibiting excellent dynamics, as required on several occasions, by the broad of music chosen for the Concert. Soloists were by no means any less worthy of praise. I will mention one or two who are chosen for the songs they were singing, and I should emphasize that if you were not mentioned individually, please do not feel you were in any way inferior – in fact, every one of you was absolutely superb, from the singers with years of experience to anyone singing solo for the first time. Keith Kilgour's "Maria" was enchanting, as was "We don't talk about Bruno" from Disney's *Encanto*, where a number of soloists rose to the challenge of this difficult number. Jacqui Mills gave us a fabulous rendition of Elton John's "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road". Andrew Edmonstone took the lead in "Close Every Door", accompanied by the Showcase chorus, as referred to above. Kym Robertson, too, held the audience spellbound with "Someone Like You". All in all, a very enjoyable concert, put through its paces by the excellent production team of MD, David McFarlane, together with Accompanist Andy Thomson, and Director Andy Johnson who also compered the show with his own inimitable style of humour and wit! Thank you again for inviting me to visit your show on behalf of your District 6 Rep Dorothy Johnstone – you missed a treat Dorothy!

Mike Pendlowski

Threepenny Theatricals: Enchanted April

Director: Simon Boothroyd

On a showery, June evening it was a pleasure to sit and immerse myself in *Enchanted April*. Not a story that I knew, the Elizabeth von Arnim novel and 1991 film of the book having passed me by. It tells the story of four ladies whose only thing in common is their dissatisfaction with their current life. Set in 1922, post First World War, they answer an advert offering a chance to rent an Italian castle, with a maid, for the month of April. What follows is a flower and sunshine filled exploration of relationships. This production brought out both the serious and comical sides of the tale and much credit should go to the whole cast and the artistic director, Simon Boothroyd. The first act set worked well representing a variety of sitting rooms, a church and latterly a train carriage with atmospheric lighting and sound effects throughout. The act two set brought us the flower filled and bright Italian castle. It was fascinating to watch the developing relationships between the women and the changes in their views of men once their husbands, lover and artist landlord arrive. Mention needs to be made of the Italian speaking maid played by Gillian Robertson. Who needs to understand exactly what is being said when the actions and facial expressions says it all? A small but appreciative audience were in attendance. Italian holiday anyone?

Alison Pendlowski

DISTRICT No 7 (Fife)

THE LONGEST RUNNING AMATEUR MUSICAL SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND

Leven Amateur Musical Association (LAMA) was formed in 1872 and is the longest running amateur musical society in Scotland. On 11 October 1872 a bill was exhibited inviting the people of Leven and the surrounding area interested in forming "a society to have for its object the practice of Vocal Music, particularly Music of the higher class", to attend a meeting on Wednesday 16 October.

The minute of that meeting shows that 45 people showed an interest and Rev Duncan offered the use of his school for rehearsals. Leven Amateur Musical Association was duly formed. The Association met for the first time seven days later with a membership of 158 and a subscription of six shillings (30pence) – this fee remaining the same for 100 years. A production, aptly named *The Creation* ushered in the beginning 150 years ago.

The following is a general outline of the path taken by the Association from the initial meeting until the present.

1873 – 1893 Choral works: *The Creation*, *The Messiah*, *Samson* and *Judas Maccabeus*.

1893 – 1915 Oratorios and G&S: *Trial by Jury*, *HMS Pinafore*, *Patience*, *The Mikado* and *The Pirates of Penzance*.

1915 – 1920 Break due to World War One.

1923 – 1926 *The Country Girl* starts musicals: *Merrie England*, *The Arcadians*, *Rose Marie* etc.

1926 – 1939 Musical Comedies.

1940 – 1947 Break due to World War Two

1947 onwards: Musicals: *The New Moon*, *The Quaker Girl*, *The Desert Song*, etc.

1950 – 1967 Dramatic shows plus musical productions: *The Happiest Days of Your Life*, *For Pete's Sake*, *Bachelors are bold*, *Royal Scotch*, etc.

1968 – 2022 Back to one musical production per year: *Carousel*, *Bless the Bride*, *White Horse Inn*, *Kismet*, *Me and My Girl*, *Sister Act*, etc.



Merrie England



The Arcadians

From 1934 onwards LAMA has performed in 7 venues:

1934 – 38 Town Hall Pavilion

1939 – Jubilee Theatre

1947 – 61 Scoonie Kirk Hall

1962 – 68 Beach Pavilion

1969 – 70 Kirkland School

1971 – 76 Buckhaven High School



The Gypsy Princess



Sweet Charity

1977 LAMA took up residence in The Centre, Leven where we now rehearse and stage our shows.

Over the years our stage sets etc. have been adapted to suit the facilities available to us in The Centre. This has led to our production team being able to produce slicker shows with a more professional appearance.

In striving to produce musicals which our audiences enjoy, we have presented shows as diverse as *The New Moon*, *The Land of Smiles*, *Camelot*, *Anything Goes* and *42nd Street*.

Since 2002 there have been some lesser known but nevertheless memorable shows including *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (2003 Scottish premiere), *Titanic* (2005 Fife premiere), *Jekyll and Hyde* (2007 Fife premiere), *Children of Eden* (2011 Fife premiere), *Sunshine on Leith* (2016 Fife premiere and complete sell out) and *Made in Dagenham* (2017 Fife premiere).

In 2011 an exciting development, which is hoped will secure the future of LAMA for many years to come. LAMA Youth were formed and put on their first show in 2012. Over 50 young people from the age of 10 upwards came together to put on a specially created concert show with songs and dances from a variety of musicals. The hope is that the young

people who take part and gain a grounding in musical theatre at a young age will go on to become members of the main company once they are old enough to join. This year's production of *Oliver!* was an inspired choice for LAMA's 150th year as it gave a rare opportunity for junior members to perform alongside the adults. The show was very well received and again a complete sell out! This was a fitting return to the stage after two years due to Covid.



Oliver!

The company is in a healthy state, well supported by members and well run by an enthusiastic highly competent committee. Next year's show, *9 to 5*, is a complete contrast to *Oliver!* and the company is already looking forward to beginning rehearsals in the autumn.

Dalgely Players: Big - The Musical

Director: Kathryn Bandeira; Musical Director: Isobel (Izzy) Brown; Choreographers: Stacey Gunn, Sophie Lister

The Fife Premiere of this show alerted me to how good this show is for a company with a range of ages and a good number of youngsters. It is a lengthy show though, compounded by some snagging problems on this opening night which hopefully would be ironed out for the succeeding performances. The cast performed well throughout, drilled in song and movement. The opening was busy with nicely phased chorus entrances and catchy music. This held good for all the company numbers especially so for 'Coffee Black' and 'Cross The Line'. The dancers had good timing and lots of energy. The storyline and role of a 12 year old boy being magically transformed to an adult body is a difficult part. However Scott Hunter is to be congratulated on playing the adult Big Josh in a convincing way: making us see how the child within, with his enthusiasms for creativity, became aware of his limitations as an adult. Meeting his adult girl's friends and the Nightmare scene were game changers and well portrayed. He was ably assisted by Ann-Marie Miller who as Susan fell in love with this whizz kid/adult and showed her hurt at his rejection. Both succeeded in maintaining their credibility. Their solos and duets revealed fine singing too. Wee Josh was confidently played by Adam Scott showing his mettle in the duet 'I Want to Know' while Theo Hart showed real talent as Billy Kopecki in a key role as the only one who knew what had happened to Josh. Other principal roles were well handled: Heather Henderson as the caring and concerned mother, singing her solos with heart, especially 'Stop Time'; Stuart McLean as MacMillan capturing his role as a boss frustrated by the lack of ideas in his staff; Cameron Kruger as Paul who recognised through his resentment that there was something odd about the upstart Josh; Sinead Black making the role of Ms Watson come alive; and Paul Graham investing the Zoltar with an otherworldliness. The set worked well with the split level accommodations and costumes were all 80s era appropriate. The evening though belonged to the cast. Well done.

Elizabeth Donald

Dunfermline Gilbert & Sullivan Society: Princess Ida

Director: Rae Lamond; Musical Director: Willie Campbell

Dunfermline G&S Society take to the stage, in person, once again – the first time since HMS Pinafore in February 2020. This time, they are presenting a performance, in concert style, of Princess Ida, sadly not one of the more frequently performed G&S operas, albeit with wonderful melodies and the usual Gilbertian topsy-turvydom of a plot. In fact to quote a gentleman sitting behind me in the audience, having read the very complete synopsis in the programme, "The story's bloody complicated isn't it!" First up, we meet the pompous King Hildebrand, played with suitable swagger by Martin Tarr, ably joined by his son and friends, namely Hilarion (Alex Gunn), Cyril (Nathan MacAuley-Dicks) and Florian

(Matthew Sielewicz-Stanhope). Hilarion, progressing his father's lead in to the plot, gives a very competent rendition of "Ida was a twelve month old" – just to further augment the convoluted nature of that which we are about to experience. We are joined by the menacing King Gama (Gordon Horne), Princess Ida's father, together with his three sons Arac (Zorbey Turkalp), Guron (Andrew Campbell) and Scynthus (Paul Graham). The latter three boisterous buffoons, excel, particularly in the Act Three stripping song, in which several pieces of armour in turn, are "gently" removed by members of the ladies chorus. Act Two brings us in to Castle Adamant, the ladies' university itself. Suzanne Horsburgh portrays Lady Psyche, Professor of Humanities, as a person with whom you would be foolish to argue. This thought, however, has not reached Lady Blanche, Professor of Abstract Science (Liz Landsman), whose penchant for using ten words when one would do, is evident throughout. Melissa, Lady Blanche's daughter (Sinead Black) enters and joins Lady Blanche in a beautifully sung duet "Now Wouldn't You Like to Rule the Roast". A modicum of awkward cross-dressing ensues before we have the entry of the title character played by Gillian Robertson. Normally, when I report on Gillian's performance I have to revert to adjectives such as first class and flawless. Not so this time, I'm afraid. Here, I have to say that Gillian raised the bar to extreme heights – her performance of "Minerva" was exquisite, and her character, in general, was unassailable. Well done Gillian! Minor characters who must also receive a mention are Sacharissa (Rachel Allan), Chloe (Morag Riley) and Ada (Clare White). These three dependable "Girl" Graduates were put to good use when stage dressing required setting or striking, or one of Hilarion's clan required a dance partner! The Dunfermline G&S chorus never failed to achieve. Seated on audience level, either side of the action, they were kept busy with the choral requirements – so essential in a G&S opera. Director Rae Lamond deserves full praise for an inventive production, bearing in mind the use of two differing production venues, which, necessarily, required minimal use of set pieces, but the use of heraldic banners helped to place Acts Two & Three. Musical Director Willie Campbell also brought out the singing to a high level for both experienced and inexperienced cast alike. The Company as a whole was provided with excellent backing by Carol Madden (Accompanist). Well done DGASS! Look forward to seeing your fully staged production of Pirates of Penzance next February!

Leven Amateur Musical Association: Oliver!

Director: Carol Sinclair; Musical Director: Alan Gibson; Choreographer: Jemma Guild

It's a pleasure to be out reporting on shows once more, and no less a pleasure than to kick off with Leven AMA's "Oliver!" A good opening scene with a healthy number of youngsters taking centre stage for "Food Glorious Food!". Tonight's group and, I am sure, the alternate group, were well rehearsed and disciplined in their movement. The future of LAMA is looking healthy with this number of enthusiastic young people making early steps on to the stage. The title role at this performance was ably performed by Inis Balfour, doubling on alternate nights with Matthew Garrie. Inis played the role well, with his solo "Where is Love" finding a place in the hearts of the audience. Alan Blair as Mr Bumble, paired with Elinor Hay as Mrs Corney, worked well together – some of their facial expressions behind each other's backs, adding to the comedy between the two. The Artful Dodger (Lewis Walker) had a great personality with just the right amount of cheekiness which he maintained throughout. Craig Spence was a powerful and menacing Bill Sykes, enough to draw good-hearted "boos!" from the audience at the calls! Andrew Doig put energy, as always, into the part of the loveable rogue, Fagin. Suitably distressed costuming and blacked-out (I hope!) teeth, all added to a first class portrayal of this, so well-known, character. Nancy (Amy Elder) was suitably feisty when required, but her softer side came out in her rendition of "As Long As He Needs Me" which was loved by the audience. Her faithful friend Bet (Luci Laing), offered fine characterisation, and, I feel, was an excellent pairing with Amy. Charles Sinclair played a suitably sombre Mr Sowerberry, with his wife (Shona Gardiner) being appropriately excitable. Mr Brownlow (Laurence Crowe) demonstrated first class stage presence, with diction and well-paced delivery being second to none. Noah Claypole (Alastair More) played this cameo role with the verve needed to scare the young Oliver into hiding. The LAMA ensemble together with minor and supporting characters helped to bring this show to the standard we have come to expect from the Society. Tonight's show was directed well by Carol Sinclair, with a very competent Alan Gibson as MD. Possibly it was where we were sitting (Row C) that on the odd occasion the singing was drowned out by the orchestra, particularly the opening number in Act Two. However, I am assured that this was not the case in the rear half of the auditorium! Choreography by Jemma Guild was controlled and actually quite amazing, given the numbers on stage and the tight space on which they were working. A workable, (very) minimal set was used, but, possibly a little more could have been added in some scenes to adequately place the action. Nevertheless, in the confines of The Centre Stage, this may not have been possible. Many thanks for the invite to your show – it's nice to be back!

Lochgelly & District Amateur Musical Association: Fun In The Footlights

Director: Ross Hadden; Musical Director: Calum Paterson; Choreographer: Yvonne Tait

It was an absolute delight to watch a group of 22 young persons, aged from 8 to 18 take to the stage and have such obvious fun as they were doing so. If that weren't enough, more than half of the cast stepped forward at one time or another to take on a solo or duet. They maybe weren't having quite as much fun internally, but to the small, but perfectly formed, audience at the matinee, they were having the time of their lives! It was very noticeable with this Company just how cohesive they all were, sometimes simply a little gesture from an older to a younger performer, was all that was

needed just to keep things on track – not that that was needed often! The Production Team of Ross Hadden, Director, Callum Paterson, Musical Director, and Yvonne Tait, Choreographer, must be hugely proud of their young performers, in this, their second major show. The soloists were remarkable, Sam and Oliver Morrison took on a challenging number from “Into The Woods”, and were, individually, to be seen later in a number from “Annie Get Your Gun” here joined by Sophie Anderson, and in one of three numbers from Oliver!. “Where Is Love” and “I’d Do Anything” were both charmingly sung by Ellie Tait and Renny Bell respectively. Jack Hadden made fine work of “High Hopes” from “A Hole In The Head” and in the second Act with a number from “Moana”. Solos in the first Act were completed by Anna Tait who excelled with “You’re Never Fully Dressed Without A Smile” and Reece Smith who gave a truly remarkable rendition of “Close Every Door To Me”. Second Act soloists, apart from those already mentioned, gave fine performances of “Part of your World” from “Little Mermaid” confidently sung by Iona Paterson, and last, but definitely not least, Jessica Holmes & Jorja Whyte gave us a most enjoyable performance of “Sisters” from “White Christmas”. Of course, like the adult LADAMA company, no show would be complete without a fine-voiced chorus, who showed off their talents numerous times during the show, some of the highlights being that song with the long name from Mary Poppins, “Be Our Guest” from “Beauty and the Beast” and closing the show with “You Can’t Stop The Beat” from “Hairspray”. I look forward to seeing some of the older members progressing to the adult company, where, I am sure, they will be warmly welcomed. An extremely well-performed show, the running order of which just pushed the young voices far enough without ever overdoing things! Good sound and lighting made for an enjoyable afternoon’s performance. Well done LADAMA Theatre School – roll on next year!

Lochgelly & District Amateur Musical Association: Chess

Director: Malcolm J Burnett; Musical Director: Suzanne Stewart; Choreographer: Clare Stewart

Chess has, at its heart, a central focus on love, political manoeuvres and how it is sometimes necessary to lose the game to win the ‘war’. It has one of the more complex plots for a musical and LADAMA were able to bring out the core messages without getting lost in the detail. This was especially true of the three central characters. Kirstin Breeze (as Florence Vassy), matched her vocal prowess with a sympathetic characterisation as she developed from second to the American Grandmaster Freddie Trumper (David Mutch), to the strong independent woman whom Anatoly Sergievsky (Darren Johnson) defects to be with at the end of the musical. David and Darren offered fine characterisations as the show progressed, both expressing strong, confident characters, with that of the Russian drawing sympathy by the final curtain. Amii Stewart gave a commendable performance as Svetlana Sergievsky. The Arbiter (Andrew Gardiner) and Walter De Courcey (Kevin Keir) both gave accomplished performances, but none more so than Mark Grieve (as Alexander Molokov), whose singing, accent and general Russianesque demeanour never faltered throughout. If I had to pick out my top number from the show, it would have to be the duet between Florence and Svetlana “I Know Him So Well”. The show was sensitively directed by Malcolm J Burnett and the LADAMA chorus were, as always, in fine voice, with the dancers too, in fine form – ably choreographed by Clare Stewart. A very fine orchestra was in the capable hands of MD Suzanne Stewart. Unfortunately, at times the sound balance got a bit out of hand, leaving a lot of the lyrics indistinguishable. Whilst on technical matters, please remember, the audience come to see their family and friends on stage. The lighting should light the show and not be a light-show. Too often chorus – and sometimes principals – were left in the gloom or, indeed, darkness. You can get away with this style in a West end show but not in a local musical company. Haze, too, has to be carefully controlled, and be sent where it is intended, ie into the beams of light, rather than staying at head level! Set-wise the show worked well with minimal, mainly trucked furniture pieces. The dancers’ tapping emulating the typewriters at the desks worked extremely well. Congratulations to Stage Manager, Sheona Goodall and her team for the smooth transition between scenes! Well done LADAMA for having the courage to take on one of the more difficult of musicals! Many thanks for inviting us along!

DISTRICT No 9 (Grampian & Highland)

Aberdeen Youth Music Theatre: 9 to 5 the Musical

Director: Shirley McGill; Musical Director: Kenny Hossick; Choreographer: Mhorag Anderson

The large cast of 16-21 year olds attacked this show, music and lyrics by Dolly Parton, with vim and vigour from the opening title song to the rousing finale, indicating their pleasure at being back on stage after the two year hiatus. The three female leads - Violet Newstead (Megan Love), Judy Bernly (Ellie Yeats) and Doralee Rhodes (Olivia Douglas) - were individually excellent and worked well as group. All had superb singing voices as shown in their solo spots – “Backwoods Barbie” (Doralee), “Get Out and Stay Out” (Judy) and “One of the Boys” (Violet). Sam Anderson as their arrogant, selfish boss Franklin Hart was also excellent and made the most of the humour in the role. Megan Cruickshank as Roz Keith, Franklin’s lovesick personal assistant, made a huge impact with her transformation from dowdy to sexy in her solo “Heart to Hart”. Max Paterson as Joe, Violet’s younger love interest, was another strong character and I particularly liked his duet with Violet “Let Love Grow”. Strong support was given by Sam Mitchell (Dick Bernly), Sophie Hatrick (Kathy), Orla Woods (office lush Margaret), Isla Mooney (Maria Delgado), Anna Thompson (Missy Hart), Alex Donnelly (Violet’s son Josh), Finlay Stripling (Dwayne Rhodes) and Fraser Wood (Russell Tinsworthy). The chorus sang

and moved very well throughout. The six main principals were double cast – Franklin Hart (Callum Mooney), Judy Bernly (Stephanie Walker), Doralee Rhodes (Gracie Spencer), Hollie Cunningham (Violet Newstead), Andrew Robertson (Joe), Hannah Clark (Roz Keith) - and knowing the high standards of this company, I'm sure they were equally as good as those I had the pleasure of seeing. The set, designed and built by Susan Bell, was simple but effective with the different locations being achieved by the changes of furniture. These changes were carried out by the cast resulting in no delays. The 10 piece orchestra under the control of Kenny Hossick provided excellent support to the cast. Congratulations to everyone involved for a superb show.

Aberdeen Youth Music Theatre: The Wizard of Oz

Director: Shirley McGill; Musical Director: Rhonda Scott; Choreographer: Fiona Beedie

Two years on and this group of 46 talented youngsters finally made it "Over the Rainbow" and their journey to the Land of Oz was greatly appreciated by the audience. Iona Crichton made a striking Dorothy with excellent acting and singing – her rendition of "Over the Rainbow" at the start of Act One setting the high standard for the rest of the evening from principals and chorus alike. Leah Elrick as Scarecrow was delightfully wibbly-wobbly with a good strong singing and speaking voice. Charlie Tole as Tinman gave another excellent strong performance in his quest for a heart and won the audience's heart from his first appearance. Lauren Taylor as Lion gave an outstanding comic portrayal of the cowardly feline and her rendition of "If I Were King of the Forest" was the highlight of the evening for me. Making up the troupe on their journey was Toto Once in Oz played Esme Wright. Olivia Skye Gray was magnificent in her portrayal of the Wicked Witch - so much so at the walk-down the audience weren't sure whether to cheer or boo her! Strong support was given by Sally Stewart (Glinda), Amber Bowie (Aunt Em), Alistair Dornan (Uncle Henry/Guard) and Matthew Hughes (Wizard of Oz). Special mention must be made of Bella the cute little bundle of fur who played real canine Toto and had the audience oohing and aahing at her every appearance. The large chorus of Munchkins, Emerald City citizens, Trees, Crows etc sang really well and were step perfect in the chorus numbers. Costuming was colourful and appropriate to each character. The set and lighting were relatively simple but very effective. Congratulations to everyone involved on an excellent production. PS. The principals were double cast – Dorothy (Maria Howe), Scarecrow (Ezra Usmani), Tinman (Alexander Denison), Lion (Jess Robertson) – and by all accounts all gave excellent performances.

AOC Productions: Calendar Girls the Musical

Director: Judith Stephen; Musical Director: Craig McDermott; Choreographer: Hannah McKenzie

This was a perfect choice of show for the company to perform as the first after lockdown, reflecting how a community/society can pull together to achieve something positive from a seemingly devastating situation. From the opening number the ensemble, under Judith Stephen's expert direction, had the full house audience fully enthralled in the characters - through both the laughter and tears. The six main characters worked extremely well together portraying the deep friendships that develop in a small community. This was particularly true of the two main characters – lifelong friends Chris (Leigh Benzie) and Annie (Leanne Craggs). Leigh brought out Chris's ebullient character to perfection as evidence in her rendition of "Dare" at the end of Act 1. Leanne's portrayal of Annie working through the illness, and then death from cancer, of her husband John was excellent and her quiet rendition of "Kilimanjaro" struck a chord with many in the audience. Alex Flett as single mum Cora brought much of the humour to the piece especially in her lead in the upbeat "Who Wants A Silent Night". So too did Jackie Arbuthnott as former air hostess Celia when she finally admitted not all was as nature intended in the number "So I've Had A Little Work Done". Wendy Ross's character of retired teacher Jessie brought a note of decorum to proceedings but with a twinkle in her eye and her rendition of "What Age Expects" elicited murmurs of agreement from many. Sarah Constable as Ruth enduring a loveless marriage was another strong character and her rendition of "My Russian Friend and I", full of both pathos and humour in equal measure, was a delight. Strong support was given by Hilary Esson (Marie, the overbearing WI President), Jennifer Brown (Miss Tea), Emma Land (Miss Coffee), Janet Renfrew (Brenda) and Gill Johnston (Lady Cravenshire). The gentlemen too gave a good account of themselves in their supporting roles – James Stephen (Rod, Chris's husband), Angus Mackintosh (Colin, Jessie's husband), Matt Garratt (Denis, Celia's Husband), Ian Towns (photographer Lawrence) and especially Steven Close as John (Annie's husband) in his portrayal of his battle with cancer. Mention too must be made of the three youngsters – Max Paterson (Danny, Chris's Son), Orla Woods (Jenny, Marie's Daughter) and Archie MacLean (Tommo, Cora's Son). Jenny and Danny's duet "Protect Me Less", a teenage rant against their parent's controlling ways, was a highlight. Chorus singing and movement was of the extremely high standard we have come to expect from this company. The seven piece band under Musical Director Craig McDermott handled the various styles of music with consummate ease and gave excellent support to the singers. The set was relatively simple with the many changes between the outdoor and indoor settings being handled with ease by the company ensuring a seamless flow of action. Congratulations to everyone involved in the production it fully deserved the extended applause and standing ovation received from the first night audience.

If you have a youth society or section, invite the Youth Coordinator as well as the Regional Representative to their shows.

Aurora Productions: The Little Mermaid

Director & Choreographer: Hannah McGinlay; Musical Director: Hugh Johnstone;
Choreographers: Alicia Riddell, Carrie Simpson

It had been a long time desire of Hannah and Hugh to put on a production of *The Little Mermaid* and they were delighted when the group were given the rights to perform the Scottish Amateur premiere of the piece. Not an easy task, given that no adjustments had been made to the script for the amateurs and given the constrictions of the size of the stage in the venue, but one which they rose to magnificently. The set looked relatively simple (though in fact wasn't!) and was brightly coloured - full marks must be given to the stage crew for their handling of the larger pieces and their smooth handling of the flying sequences. The costuming too was bold and bright leaving you in no doubt of the species of the characters – those of Sebastian, Ursula, King Triton and Scuttle particularly standing out. Kirsten Rennie as Ariel was the perfect Disney Princess – beautiful but headstrong and with a glorious voice shown to its best in “Part of Your World” and “If Only” - it is no wonder that Prince Eric was captivated! Prince Eric was played by 6th year Academy pupil Paul Chalmers – his maturity and strength in playing the role belied his years. Lewis Moggach as Sebastian the Crab – resplendent in red from head to toe – elicited much laughter and his rendition of the calypso-esque “Under the Sea” along with the ensemble was a delight and one of the highlights. So too did Mallory Black as Scuttle the Gull and her rendition of “Positoovity” – along with her troupe of tap-dancing gulls - was a hoot and a showstopper! Lauren MacAskill was clearly relishing playing the devilish sea witch Ursula with a suitably evil cackle and good strong stage presence in her tentacled black and purple costume. Neil Bell-Forsyth as King Triton (Ariel's over protective but loving father) was a commanding figure at his every appearance complete with crown and trident. Strong support was given by young Lily Chapman as Ariel's friend Flounder, Ewan Campbell as the Prince's guardian and factotum Grimsby, Elizabeth Ingram and Alicia Riddell as Ursula's electric eel sidekicks Flotsam and Jetsam, Sarah McWilliam as the hilariously French Chef Louis and Ariel's Mersisters played by Ellen Fairbairn, Andi Ingram, Kenna Johnston, Molly Riddell and Carrie Simpson. The company singing and movement in the ensemble numbers was excellent. The 15 piece orchestra, under the leadership of Hugh Johnstone, was flawless and, though they were large in numbers, never overpowered the singing. Congratulations to everyone involved on a beautifully presented production.

Culter Theatre Club: 'Allo 'Allo

Director: Kerwin Robertson; Assistant Director: Colin Jones

This was the fourth time this company had performed this hugely funny play based on the successful David Croft and Jeremy Lloyd TV sitcom of the 1980s but the talented cast attacked the tale of cafe owner Rene and his interactions with the German military invaders and the French Resistance with gusto. Stuart McMain as cafe owner Rene Artois was outstanding - wringing out every ounce of comedy in his delivery of every innuendo, double entendre and side-ways glance. His antics in the scene with Lt. Hubert Gruber (a delightfully camp performance from Grahame Whyte) in which he is trying to hide a rather large sausage under his apron had the full house audience in hysterics! Hilary Esson was excellent as his long suffering wife Edith – her cabaret rendition of “Fifi” was as hilarious as it was cringe-worthy in its off-keyness. Carla Barber and Sara Stewart as cafe waitresses Yvette and Mimi were suitably sexy and flirtatious, especially in their interactions with Rene, and Yvette's attempts to inflate the rubber Fuhrer almost brought the house down! Aneeka Anderson as the Resistance leader Michelle Dubois was another strong character and delivered her catch phrase “I shall say this only once” with suitable gravitas. Much comedy was generated by Mike Wakefield as policeman Officer Crabtree with his mis-pronounced pidgin French. Mention must be made of Christopher Cannon who took over the part of M. Roger Leclerc, in his many disguises, at a few days' notice. Kerwin Robertson as Col. Kurt Von Strohm of the German garrison, complete with obvious “wiglet”, gave a strong interpretation of the inept but corrupt officer. Richard Stables as the preening Italian Capt. Alberto Bertorelli deserves a special mention for valiantly carrying on with his impression of Adolf Hitler when the elastic on his false nose snapped. Colin Jones as the po-faced Gestapo officer Herr Otto Flick was another who gave a very strong performance - what a pair of legs in black fish net stocking and short usherette dress in the cinema scene! Nina McKay as Herr Flick's love interest Pvt Helga Geerhart and Alex Busch as General Von Schmelling also gave strong performances. Mary Sommerville and Annick Shaw gave strong support in their guises of peasants, soldiers and British airmen. The versatile set on multi-levels (and incorporating a working piano played by Lindsey Masson) made full use of the small stage moving easily between cafe, larder and offices. Ian Thomson's accordion playing before and during the performance helped set the scene beautifully. Congratulations to everyone involved for an excellent evening's entertainment.

Easter Ross Musical Theatre: Sunshine on Leith the Musical

Director: Barbara More; Musical Director: Sharon Macleod; Choreographer: Kerry Russell

The delight of the company at being back on stage after the two year break was obvious. The production by Barbara More was fast paced and full of moments of both comedy and pathos which had the audience with tears of joy and sadness in their eyes in equal measure. Shaun Cowan and William MacDonald, as the recently discharged Army buddies Davy and Ally returning to their home town, were perfectly cast. Both actors gave very strong performances

and William's was particularly powerful in the portrayal of Ally's struggles with settling back to civilian life. Their performances were equally matched by the young women in their lives – Yvonne (Catriona Macrae) and Liz (Rosanna Burton). The duets "Misty Blue" and "Then I Met You" between Davy and Yvonne were a delight. It transpires that Rosanna was having problems with her voice the evening I attended but this was not evident in either her speaking or singing and her rendition of "Letter from America" was outstanding. Davy's parents Jean (Kerry Russell) and Rab (Iain MacKenzie) made a very convincing couple portraying their deep-rooted love despite the bickering and the revealing of Rab's infidelity in the past. The scene between them in the hospital after Rab's heart attack where Jean sat quietly by his bedside holding his hand was particularly emotional and well handled. One of the musical, and comedy, highlights was the rendition of "Should Have Been Loved" by Jean and her cleaner colleagues played by Kate MacKenzie, Dawn Alexander Gregory and Kathryn Howes. Strong support was given by Lisa Johnston (Eilidh, Rab's illegitimate daughter), Andy Hurst (Barman), John Gunn (Call Centre Instructor) and Alister Sutherland (Busker). The chorus sang The Proclaimers numbers - whether numbers like the rousing "I'm On My Way" or the more reflective "Simple Things" (featuring Sharon Macleod) - beautifully. The whole cast attacked the finale of (what else) "I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)" with gusto - joined wholeheartedly by the audience. The set was simple but effective and the transitions between the various locations were handled well allowing the action to flow seamlessly. Putting the hard working 4 piece band on stage worked well. Congratulations to everyone involved – you certainly deserved the prolonged applause from the almost full house at the end of the evening.

Elgin Musical Theatre: The Wizard of Oz

Director: Callum Mcleod; Assistant Director: Audrey McWilliam; Musical Director: Angus Lawson;
Choreographer: Clodhna Regan

The society's delight at being back on stage after a two year break was palpable and shone through from the Front of House volunteers to the chorus members to the principals. The new production team of Callum Mcleod (Director), Audrey McWilliam (Assistant Director), Angus Lawson (Musical Director) and Clodhna Regan (Choreographer) did a magnificent job in working with the large cast of 56 to bring this uplifting show to the stage to such a high standard considering the difficulties they faced during the rehearsal period with social distancing and COVID 19 absences. Shannon Miller, in her first leading role, as Dorothy was very good and her rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" was beautifully delivered. Jessica Stuart (Zeke/Lion), Gary Collins (Hickory/Tinman) and Gregor Lawson (Hunk/Scarecrow) were individually and collectively excellent as her three travelling companions along the yellow brick road. Mention too must be made of Brodie Young who operated the lovable Toto puppet. Natalie Munro (Glinda, Good Witch of the North) and Charlie Welsh (Miss Gulch/ Wicked Witch of the West) made excellent adversaries in the fight of good over evil – Charlie's portrayal was particularly malevolent! Leigh Robertson gave a very strong performance in the dual roles of Professor Marvel/Wizard of Oz. Strong support was given by Janice Anderson (Aunt Em), Chris Hewett (Uncle Henry) and Claire Anderson (Emerald City Guard). The chorus singing and movement were both excellent throughout the show. Costuming was bright and appropriate to each character from the members of the Lollipop Brigade to the Flying Monkeys to Dorothy and her companions. Good use was made of visual and video graphics (created by Brodie Young) in the staging which greatly eased the flow of one scene to the next. The 14 piece orchestra, under the baton of Angus Lawson, produced a full and delightful sound and were always sympathetic to the singers. Everyone's efforts were greatly appreciated by the almost full house audience. Congratulations to all at Elgin Musical Theatre.

The Florians Dramatic Society: A Streetcar Named Desire

Director: Jo Galloway

This was without doubt one of the most powerful productions – both amateur and professional – I have ever seen. Jo Galloway's direction of Tennessee Williams masterpiece was exceptional, drawing the very best from every member of the cast. It was not a production to be "enjoyed" - in the normal sense of the word - due to its subject matter but definitely one to be deeply appreciated. The part of Blanche Dubois has been played by some of the world's best actresses (including Jessica Tandy and Vivien Leigh) and to that list must now be added the name Alison Ozog. She was simply magnificent in her portrayal of a woman spiralling into a nervous breakdown and must have been both physically and emotionally drained after each performance. Simon Lyall was truly convincing as the bullying, wife-beater Stanley Kowalski so much so that even I at one point (and I'm sure I wasn't the only one in the audience) had to restrain myself from getting up and giving him a punch! Rosalyn Paton as Stella, Blanche's sister and Stanley's wife, also gave a stellar performance in portraying the conflicting feelings for her husband and sister. David Saunders as Stanley's friend (and Blanche's beau) Harold "Mitch" Mitchell gave a strong sympathetic performance. Strong support was given by Matthias Kremer (Steve/Young Collector/Allan Grey/Delivery Man), Jay MacGregor (Eunice), Tom Masterton (Pablo), Michelle Grover (Mexican Woman/Nurse) and Gerry Sutton (Delivery Man/Doctor). There was also a cameo appearance by Anne Bamborough (Woman). The Southern American accents of the actors never slipped once throughout the production. The carefully designed and built box set by Allen Perrin, depicting the small two room apartment in which the action takes place, gave an insight into how the tensions between the characters could easily build up and explode.

The intimate size of the venue made you feel you were almost part of the piece. Congratulations to everyone involved for bringing this superb piece of theatre to the Inverness audiences.

Haddo Children's Theatre: The Wind in the Willows

Director: Graham Wilson; Musical Directors: Rob Fryer, Toto Coxo; Choreographer: Karin Leslie

This version of Kenneth Grahame's well loved tale of Mr Toad and his riverbank friends was originally commissioned by Pitlochry Festival Theatre for their 2021 outdoor season (adapted by Mark Powell; songs by Mark Powell and Ben Occhipinti; musical arrangements by Richard Colvin) and had been special adapted for this group of 7-15 year olds. The script was full of witty dialogue and peppered with corny "dad" jokes - courtesy of the whistle blowing Otter strongly played by Maisy Mackay – and the songs were catchy. Amelia Osborne gave a strong performance as the irrepressible, over-enthusiastic Mr Toad. Arianna-Skye Hunter and Abi Leslie, as the nervous Mole and sensible Rat respectively, gave excellent performances and had strong singing voices. So too did Katie Newlands as the sage Badger. Isaac Masson as Chief Weasel was another strong character and led his band of rascally Wild Wooders well in their "Welcome to the Wicked Wild Wood/Hall" numbers. Strong support was given by Rachael Clark (Judge), Karla Brand (Joyce), Devan Thornley (Horse) plus Robert Dennison and Dee Lawson as the upper-crust humans Kenneth and Elspeth. Rowan Moir gave a delightful comic performance in her cameo of the prison washerwoman Aunt Margaret. The chorus of squirrels, rabbits and other riverbank creatures sang and moved well in the company numbers. Costuming was colourful and appropriate to each of the characters. The set was simple and colourful and I liked the use of the projections of local views to indicate the riverbank, wild wood, roads and Toad Hall interior. Good use too was made of sound effects of the flowing river, the car engine and crashes and especially in the fight scene at Toad Hall. The 5 piece band handled the music well and were sympathetic to the young voices of the actors. Well done to Director Graham Wilson, his production team and the young actors for a delightful evening's entertainment.

Inverness Musical Theatre Company: Legally Blonde the Musical

Director & Choreographer: Claire Fisher; Musical Director: Alan Mackintosh

The energy and enthusiasm of the large cast in this musical, based on Amanda Brown's novel about her time at Stanford Law School, was palpable from opening number to the finale. Singing from the whole company, both chorus and principals, was first class and the choreography was step perfect. Natalie Sutherland in the lead role of Elle Woods was magnificent, portraying the change from dumb blonde to gifted lawyer with great skill and possessing a great singing voice. The two men in her life - the social climbing Warner Huntington III (Brandon Swain) and the studious Emmett Forrest (Matthais Kremer) - portrayed the contrasting characters excellently and it was obvious from the audience reaction who they were rooting for them to win Elle's affection! Caroline Macpherson as the beautician Paulette Buonufonte had the audience in hoots of laughter with her delightful comic performance and her rendition of "Ireland" was outstanding. Garry Black as Professor Callahan had the "win at any cost" attitude of the character to a T which was reflected in his strong rendition of the number "Blood in the Water". Alison Ozog as Brooke Wyndham, the client Elle came to successfully defend, was another strong performance – how she could skip and dance whilst singing "Whipped Into Shape" without seeming to be out of breath was amazing! Strong support was given by Sian Noble (Pilar), Ashley Fraser (Margot) and Amy Crook (Serena) as Elle's close friends. Also by Lauren Walker (Vivienne Kensington), Andrew Gill (Kyle the Magnificent), David Saunders (Sundee Padamadan), Amelia Savage-Lowden (Enid Hoopes) and Callum McLeod (Aaron Schulz and an over-the toply camp Carlos). Mention too must be made of the canine cast members Coco (Rufus) and Logan (Bruiser Woods) who behaved impeccably on stage and elicited an "Awww" from the audience at their every appearance. Costuming was colourful and appropriate to the period and characters. The large set was relatively simple and again colourful. Skilful handling by the stage crew made for smooth and quick scene changes. Well done everyone at Inverness Musical Theatre. The standing ovation from the almost full house, first night audience was richly deserved.

Islesburgh Drama Group: Calendar Girls (the play)

Director: Stephenie Pagulayan

After an absence of two years Islesburgh Drama Group took to the stage of the Garrison Theatre again in the play 'Calendar Girls'. From entering the theatre for the fully sold out four day production run you could tell this was going to be something special. Every audience member was left a gift of a Sunflower with a 'message of hope' – a nice touch. The open set was well designed as an archetypal Yorkshire scene of dry stone walling with stile which was to figure throughout the play. A stage wide backdrop photo of Kettlewell Hill (only a few miles from the original setting of the Rhylstone WI) really gave a flavour of the rural Yorkshire... The primary characters of 'Calendar Girls' Annie, Chris, Cora, Ruth, Celia and Jessie were played by Jennie Atkinson, Morag Mouat, Jacky Williamson, Donna-Marie Leask, Mandy Phillips, and Morag Maver respectively – each role with their own individual characteristics and personalities and each taking the audience into their hearts as their own individual stories unfolded. Friction between the sceptical WI chairman, Marie (Lesley Leslie) and the more adventurous member 'Girls' was

palpable and led to both humorous and explosive conclusions. Annie's husband John (Andy Long) who inspired the calendar was played with increasingly poignant demeanours as his illness progressed whilst Stanley Manson gave a sterling performance as the increasingly worried and neglected husband of Chris. Lawrence, the photographer, (Martin Summers) gave a wonderfully embarrassed performance with many laugh out loud moment of double takes and expressions by him. Supporting the production in various roles of Liam, Elaine, Brenda Halsey and Lady Cravenshire were David Smith/Kevin Briggs, Nicola Fleck, Joyce Williamson and Torana Bland. Passage of time and locations was fulfilled by well crafted lighting, strategic props and musical interludes and the play never faltered throughout in pace. There were several moments throughout the play that grabbed you by the 'feels' but the projection of the original letters from families of cancer victims to the 'girls' somehow brought it home to all the real reason for this venture..Ultimately this play is about friendship and compassion and walking the difficult path towards the right destination. In this venture the group under the imaginative directorship of Stephenie Pagulayan succeeded in their objectives and the audience (and myself) loved every second of it.

Gordon Richardson

Lyric Musical Society: Priscilla Queen of the Desert

Director & Choreographer: Victoria Cowan; Musical Director: Ewen Ritchie

After a two year hiatus, Priscilla the Bus finally made it to the Tivoli stage – and my goodness it was worth the wait. Under Victoria Cowan and Ewen Ritchie's expert direction the large cast gave us faultless acting, singing and dancing

full of exuberance and laughter but also moments of pathos handled with great sensitivity. The three leading men/ladies were magnificent each in their own way but also worked well together, making the growing friendship between the characters as they journeyed from Sydney to Ayres Rock truly believable. Callum Anderson played the young, carefree, reckless (and bitchy) Adam/Felicia to perfection and his rendition of "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun" was superb. Alasdair Corbett too gave a perfect performance as Tick/Mitzi torn between his life as a drag queen and his desire to be a father to his son Benji (Daniel McKay) and the scene between the two toward the end of Act Two when they sang "Always On My Mind/Say A Little Prayer" was extremely touching. Alasdair's strong singing voice was shown at its best in his rendition of "MacArthur Park". Craig Pike as the transgender, more experienced Bernadette was truly believable in the part handling the bitchy put downs with Adam/Felicia and the burgeoning love for Bob the Mechanic (strongly played by Scott Jamieson) with consummate ease. Strong support was given by Stephanie Longmuir-Smith (Marion, Tick's wife), Kyra Rostron (Shirley the love hungry bar owner), Stephen Summers (Miss Understanding/Young Bernadette) and Laura Pike (the hilariously funny Cynthia). Rhianne Armstrong, Laura Burnett and Tanya Read gave excellent musical support as the backing singing Divas. The score is full of disco classics too numerous to mention but among the highlights performed by the full company for me were "Colour My World" and the Act One finale "I Will Survive" and in Act Two "Boogie Wonderland" and "We Belong". The costumes were colourful and delightfully over the top as one would expect from such a camp show and were carried off to great effect especially by the three leading characters – they must have had three of the best pairs of legs in the theatre! The nine- piece band under Ewen Ritchie's conducting, handled the score flawlessly. The set was by necessity simple as Priscilla took up a large part of the stage but the changes, including the manoeuvring of the bus, were smoothly handled. Congratulations to everyone involved both on and off stage – you were truly deserving of the prolonged applause and standing ovation!

MSD Productions: A Monstrous Regiment of Women

Director & Choreographer: Rhona Mitchell; Musical Director: Alisdair Sneden

"A Monstrous Regiment of Women" is a specially commissioned piece by writer Alan Bissett telling the story of Caroline Phillips a young woman born and bred in Kintore, Aberdeenshire who in 1899 became the first female journalist on the Aberdeen Daily Journal (one of only 66 in the United Kingdom) and a the leader of the Aberdeen Branch of the Women's Social and Political Union from 1907-1909. She however disagreed with the Pankhurst's "deed not words" policy preferring to use political means to gain suffrage for women leading to her clashing with them and finally leaving the party. In a first for me I was asked to leave the venue before the play began – not because of something I had done – but to join a demonstration outside in which some members of the cast gave speeches for and against votes of women. We were then led back into an Old Time Music Hall setting by a group of "Votes for Women" placard waving women. On a very simple set we were then treated to an excellent evening of words and music in both English and Doric. The two white tie and tails clad MCs (Imogen Watt and Jordan Abberley-Nicoll) got the audience into the era with a delightful medley of Music Hall favourites and then proceeded to introduce the characters of the piece with plenty of humour in their banter. Emma Thomson as the lead character of Caroline Phillips was excellent in her portrayal of a young woman frustrated by the lack of opportunities given to her simply because of her gender and in her determination to do something about it. In this she was aided by Callie Birnie as suffragette Lady Agnes Ramsay in a strong, measured performance. Pamela Green as the formidable Emmeline Pankhurst owned the stage in her every appearance – definitely not a woman to be trifled with! Her lead in the Act 1 finale of "You Don't Own Me" was magnificent. Strong support was given by Alison Sandison and Stephen Henderson (Mr & Mrs Phillips), Mikey Nicolls (James Phillips),

Caroline's journalist brother), Lola Brown (Adela Pankhurst), Millie Goodyear (Christabel Pankhurst) Freya H T Wilson (Sylvia Pankhurst) and Andrew Saunders (Mr Maxwell the Newspaper Editor). Mention too must be made of the Knitting Group ladies Jessie Martin, Katie Lister, Amy McIntosh and Eilidh Swanston in their portrayal of ordinary working class "wifies". The music chosen by Alisdair and Rhona reflected the theme of the piece beautifully ranging from "Marching All Over Scottish Land" (specially written lyrics to the traditional tune Bonnie Lass O' Fyvie O') to Abba's "Winner Takes It All" and Adele's "Chasing pavements" to Curtis Mayfield's "Move On Up" and Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun". The singing, supported by a 3-piece band, by the principals and company alike was very strong and the harmonies in Alisdair's arrangements came across well especially in the finale number "Quiet". Movement was also first class as has become expected from this talented group. Costuming by Liz Cork was spot on for the era with particular use made of the suffragette colours of green, purple and white. Congratulations to everyone involved for an entertaining and educational evening.

Ragamuffins and Leading Lights: Celebrate! 25 Years of Ragamuffins

Directors: Alison Forsyth, Cath Munro, Marjory Reid, Shona Smth, Jennifer Brown;

Musical Directors: Rhonda Scott, Callum Massie; Choreographer: Jill Runcie

With a cast of 47 youngsters (aged 6 to 13 years), 3 musicians, 8 members of the production team and a host of backstage helpers this was a truly epic way to celebrate the 25 years (+2 due to the pandemic) of the group which, like topsy, has grown and grown over the years from its humble beginnings of a group of friends working with just 12 children. The programme consisted of 36 musical numbers taken from previous shows and revues including Annie Get Your Gun, Oliver!, Bugsy Malone, Annie, Grease, Joseph & the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, Wizard of Oz, Calamity Jane, Cats, Matilda and High School Musical. In a show such as this there are so many highlights. The company numbers were full of energy - from the opening There's No Business Like Show Business/Another Opening Another Show Medley to the rousing Act One closing Joseph Megamix to the rousing finale of We're All In This Together and the all singing and dancing encore of Greased Lightning. A special mention must be made of Jill Runcie's choreography for The Jellicle Ball where the whole company were on stage – how there were no collisions is a testament to her craft. Another nice moment was when the company were standing still singing "When I Grow Up" from Matilda images of previous members when they were in the company and as they are now were projected on to the back of the stage. There were some outstanding solos including for me Megan MacMillan's rendition of "As Long As He Needs Me", Murray Meldrum's "Sandy" and Ellie Stewart's "Hopelessly Devoted to You". Also a delightful arrangement of "Memory" by Izzy McRae, Aimey Scott, Celia Ray, Payton Greig and Megan MacMillan. A lot of hard work had obviously been put in by the production team and cast to bring about 2 hours of excellent singing and dancing and, going by the audience reaction and prolonged applause at the end of the show, it was much appreciated. Congratulations on the past 25 years and here's to the next 25!

Ury Players: Ali Baba and the Fortyish Thieves

Director: Heather Adams Officer; Choreographer: Georgia Lanning

Ali Baba opened the show, perfectly portrayed by Tamara Scherwitzel as the naive youth whose only aim in life is to buy his girlfriend Morgiana, out of slavery to the Sultana. Tamara's energy and perfect diction kept the storyline moving while Morgiana, nicely handled by Carys Moncrieff was the perfect foil for Ali. But over to the dark side and Alakazam (Andrew Dart) in the role of baddie was suitably gravel-voiced and evil. His hapless cohorts in crime, Mustapha Laugh (Tim Roberts), Mustapha Pee (Lewis Maitland) and Mustapha Screwloose (Liz Forrest) though useless criminals certainly succeeded in bringing lots of humour to the performance. Widow Baba (Ali's mum) played with endless vitality by Garry Brindley provided an abundance of sauciness to the delight of the audience. The sudden arrival of her shady brother-in-law, Cassim Baba (performed with suitable charm) by Murray Lawson, seduces Ali with tales of gold and gems hidden in a secret cave. The Song Off between Widow Baba, Cassim and the chorus is definitely a highlight. As was the cleverly choreographed Jobs. Throughout the performance there were some charming dances by the talented young dancers and the chorus including Pieman (Bill Williamson) provided able support for the principals. But Cassim plays the ultimate price when Alakazim discovers he's been in his cave and chops him up!!! After a failed attack to overthrow the Sultana regally portrayed by Freda Adams, Alakazim is brought to his knees. And all is not lost for Cassim as Tarook the Tailor in a lively performance from Joshua Horsfall – is able to sew him back together. A hard working company complemented by enthusiastic singing and effective choreography kept the audience entertained throughout. Well done Ury Players.

Gordon R. Smith

NODASafe

NODASafe is run by people who understand theatre and have personal activity in the community theatre environment, so we know what pressures and challenges face NODA societies on a show-to-show basis. Support includes - telephone and email support with production safety queries, general advice on all health and safety queries, dealing with serious accidents, generic risk assessments and coming soon will be online training.

Brechin Amateur Operatic Society: Hello, Dolly!

Director: Graeme W. Baird; Musical Director: Colin Grant; Choreographer: Liz Burns Smith

BAOS were "lucky" that they performed their 2020 show two weeks before lockdown and it was great to see them back on stage after a two year break with their production of "Hello, Dolly!" The title role of Dolly Levi is a big ask for any performer and from Gill Matheson's first entrance we knew we were in safe hands. Her experience and talent shone through as she swept effortlessly through each scene handing out advice and business cards to everyone in her quest to land the well-known half-a-millionaire Horace Vandergelder. Graeme Baird played the curmudgeonly character of store owner Horace just right. As Graeme himself says in his programme notes he may share some of Horace's traits – but he doesn't see it himself. Enough said... A large part of the humour in this show is provided by the characters of Cornelius Hakl (Alan Matheson) and Barnaby Tucker (Ross Robertson); Vandergelder's two store clerks. Their youthful sense of adventure and exuberance was certainly a hit with the appreciative audience. Both worked extremely hard and paired well, both with each other and with their partners Irene Malloy and Minnie Fay, Alan's version of "It Only Takes A Moment" suiting his voice perfectly. Caroline Fenwick as the flirty hat shop owner Irene Malloy was on excellent form, with her rendition of "Ribbons Down My Back" being another one of the many memorable moments of the show. Her scatter-brained shop assistant Minnie Fay confidently played by Emily Baird who is certainly a great addition to the company in her first adult role with the society. The antics of these four in their bid to escape the boys from being seen by Horace as he arrives at Mrs Molloy's hat shop were hilarious. "Dolly" provides an opportunity for a host of minor principals all of whom have their own well defined characterisations and these were all carried out admirably. Ermengarde (Emma Ferguson) and Ambrose Kemper (Millar Young) formed an excellent partnership with good individual characterisations, as were Rudolf (Keith Cuthill), Mrs Rose (Anne Andrew) and Kerry Guthrie who stepped into the role of Ernestina Money at short notice due to the unfortunate absence of Alison Niven. The chorus put a huge amount of effort and enthusiasm into the show and obviously enjoyed being back on stage. With great chorus ensembles in "Sunday Clothes", "Before the Parade..." and the title song "Hello Dolly" the hard working production team of Graeme, Colin and Liz certainly managed to get the best out of this talented cast. Special mention must be made of the hours of hard work from the company that went into the inventive choreography for the infamous "Waiters' Gallop". No mean feat in the confined space of this stage. In preparation for this show the society did not have its problems to seek right up to the final performance but they overcame them all and treated us to a great evening's entertainment. Well done BAOS - it was worth the wait and nice to say "hello". I was also delighted to be asked to present a total of eight awards for various lengths of service to well deserving members of the company culminating in a long service medal for 25 years dedicated service to Teresa Warden. Congratulations to them all.

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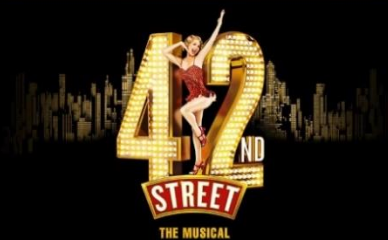
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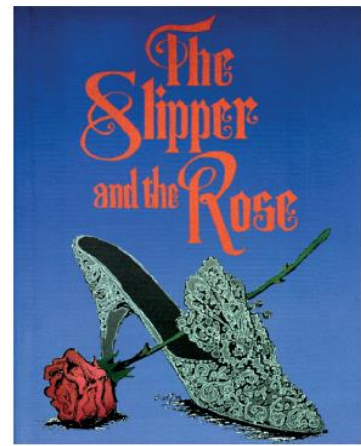
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Past Forward a full length drama by Carolyn Pertwee

(2m, 2f) Can the past ever let us go? Liz and Tom Fielding are poised to change their present life by selling up and moving to the coast for a brave new future, little knowing that a chance meeting with Sam Rutland, a long lost friend from their youthful past, will challenge the very foundations of their lives. What happened all those years ago when Sam shared their flat in those heady carefree days? Why is Liz so desperate to keep Sam and their daughter apart, and then so anxious when they not only meet at the family home, but become lovers?

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The Little Mermaid

Paisley Musical & Operatic Society
Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 August 2022 (Matinee on Wednesday & Saturday)
Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock

Seussical

Downfield Musical Society
Saturday 3 to Sunday 4 September 2022
Whitehall Theatre, Dundee

Legally Blonde

The Livingston Players (SCIO)
Wednesday 7 to Saturday 10 September 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Howden Park Centre, Livingston

Sunshine on Leith

The Minerva Club
Tuesday 13 to Saturday 17 September 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow

The Herd

Threepenny Theatricals
Thursday 15 to Saturday 17 September 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Church Hill Theatre, Edinburgh

Kiss Me Kate

Glenrothes Amateur Musical Association
Tuesday 27 September to Saturday 1 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Roths Halls, Glenrothes

Shrek The Musical

Loudoun Musical Society
Tuesday 27 September to Saturday 1 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock

Sunshine on Leith

Downfield Musical Society
Wednesday 28 September to Saturday 1 October 2022
Whitehall Theatre, Dundee

Peter Pan Jr

Project Theatre
Friday 30 September to Saturday 1 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
FTH Theatre, Falkirk

Calamity Jane

Theatre Guild Glasgow
Tuesday 11 to Saturday 15 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Village Theatre, East Kilbride

The Secret Garden

Cumbernauld Musical Theatre Society
Tuesday 25 to Saturday 29 October 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Cumbernauld Theatre

Evita

Our Lady's Musical Society
Tuesday 1 to Saturday 5 November 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Motherwell Theatre

Sunshine on Leith

Falkirk Bohemians Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society
Tuesday 1 to Friday 5 November 2022 (Matinee on Saturday)
Falkirk Town Hall

9 to 5

Hamilton Operatic & Dramatic Club
Tuesday 8 to Saturday 12 November 2022
Motherwell Concert Hall

The Bakers Wife

Dumfries Musical Theatre Company
Saturday 19 to Saturday 26 November 2022 (Matinee on Sunday)
Brigend Theatre, Dumfries

Matilda Jr

Leven Amateur Musical Association
Wednesday 23 to Friday 25 November 2022
The Centre, Leven

Nativity! The Musical

The Pantheon Club
Wednesday 30 November to Saturday 3 December 2022
Theatre Royal, Glasgow

Frosted – A Family Pantomime

Thomson-Leng Musical Society
Wednesday 30 November to Sunday 4 December 2022 (Matinee on Saturday & Sunday)
Gardyne Theatre, Dundee

Aladdin

Harlequin – Eastwood Theatre for Youth
Tuesday 17 to Saturday 21 January 2023 (Matinee on Saturday)
Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock, Glasgow

Sunshine on Leith

Elgin Musical Theatre
Wednesday 1 to Saturday 4 March 2023 (Matinee on Saturday)
Elgin Town Hall

Kinky Boots

Hawick Amateur Operatic Society HAOS
Monday 13 to Saturday 18 March 2023 (Matinee on Saturday)
Hawick Town Hall

The Wedding Singer

Carnoustie Musical Society
Tuesday 14 to Saturday 18 March 2023
Carnoustie High School

Legally Blonde The Musical

Lanark Amateur Musical Society
Friday 24 to Saturday 25 March 2023 (Matinee on Saturday)

Sunshine on Leith

Larbert Musical Theatre
Tuesday 9 to Saturday 13 May 2023
Dobbie Hall, Larbert

Kinky Boots

Downfield Musical Society
Wednesday 10 to Saturday 13 May 2023
Whitehall Theatre, Dundee

Chess The Musical

Dumfries Musical Theatre Company
Saturday 13 to Saturday 20 May 2023 (Matinee on Sunday)
Theatre Royal, Dumfries

The Sound of Music

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View your show reports online

Access to your region's social media to share ideas, ask for help, source props/costumes etc.

Access to Regional Conferences and Workshops

Need Information?

You will find lots of factsheets on our website to help with running your society.



Need Legal Advice?

As part of your membership, societies can get assistance from our Legal Helpline

To use this service please email a full explanation of your request to

info@noda.org.uk

noda
SAFE

Health and Safety support

Risk assessments
Production checklists
COVID-19 risk assessments
noda.org.uk/noda-safe

NODA THEATRE SUMMER SCHOOL

Exclusive access to spaces on our yearly Theatre Summer School

noda.org.uk

The fount of information for amateur theatre