

2012 South Pacific

Director: Nick Lawrence

Musical Director: Anna Minear

Choreographer: Maureen Pascoe

Costumes: Costume Workshop, Isle of Wight

Scenery: Andy Martin Production Support

Venue: The Keay, St Austell

As usual we received a warm welcome from the Front of House team, all of whom were wearing island-style garlands of flowers.

With no front tabs we had time to study the excellent set which consisted of a central revolve which enabled efficient scene changes throughout. The lighting on the cyclorama behind and a profusion of foliage created a real Pacific island feel, and the raised area across the back allowed entrances and exits to be seen.

Well done to the two children who opened the show with 'Dites-Moi', which was performed with real confidence and big smiles.

The first act of this show is packed full of familiar songs, and these were performed with aplomb, particularly by the two leads Emile and Nellie, who both possess fine voices and created good chemistry.

The chorus numbers were performed with energy and enthusiasm. Whilst a little older in years than is usual in the U.S. Navy, the male chorus performed with huge confidence and energy, creating an excellent team of individual characters. 'Bloody Mary' and 'Nothing Like a Dame' were performed with gusto and great volume. The nurses all sang and danced confidently, and I was pleased to see so many smiles!

The shower and shampoo effect in 'Gonna wash that man' worked well and the lively choreography was tightly performed. Interaction between chorus members was animated at all times, and their enjoyment of the show was transmitted to the audience. Accents were well maintained.

The Bali Hai scene was atmospheric, with smoke, star cloth and 'flames' and the interaction between Cable and Liat was believable and touching, with clear, confident singing in 'Younger than Springtime'.

Props looked authentic, as did costumes. The uniforms fitted well. Make-up was good, with the islanders' dark make-up looking particularly realistic. Lighting was used to good effect and the sound balance between the band and the performers was correct. Sound effects, such as the telephone ring and the radio, were well timed.

The start of Act 2 was very high energy, with the ever-popular 'Honey Bun' number, and I liked the way the cast came down into the auditorium to watch the Follies with us. Pace, which was good throughout the first act, slowed a little during the second, particularly in the lengthy scenes in the Communications Office.

The finale acapella number, which started off stage, was so very beautifully sung that it rather detracted from the last lines of the show. However, with the freeze, it was a moving ending.

It was a bonus after the show to have the chance to chat to members of the company, whilst enjoying a glass of wine and some well-themed 'nibbles'. Thank you for your hospitality.

Kathy West, NODA Rep