

Group: Starburst
Show: Love Online – the Musical
Venue: Samuel Cody School, Farnborough
Date: Friday 6th July 2012
Director: Gary Phillips
Producer: Shaun Garrett
Choreographer: Liz Woodford
Musical Director: Paul Darrah



Love Online is an old-fashioned story of boy-meets-girl in the true tradition of romantic musical comedy – but with a 21st century twist. This is a musical of laptop love and texting sweet-talk – but it still winds up with a clinch and a clutch of happy endings. This is only the second production of this new show and the Starburst's team as usual showed great style.

Front of House: A warm welcome was given to all members of the audience by the front of house staff. Members of the production team very kindly greeted us and made us feel most welcome.

Theatre Ambience: The traditional school hall was well laid out with plenty of space to move between rows. The lighting was subdued and the focus was on the stage. There was a great buzz in the audience.

The Programme: A very striking programme with 28 pages with many interesting articles, fascinating pen portraits and relevant information about both the show and the charity Starburst. It was very interesting to see an article by the composer.

Scenery/Set/Props: The set was truly mobile. The three right-angle sections forming the three flats at the beginning took on many different roles when rotated and angled. All the movements of the scenery were very quiet which is unusual for trucking. The stage manager and his team are to be congratulated on their use of innovative materials and creating a large flexible space for the performers to use. The props were well sourced and managed.

Lighting & Sound: The team created all the different atmospheres from flats to restaurants from offices to street scenes utilising a plethora of multifunction equipment. The use of an "on-line" screen for the dating agency scenes was very slick and enhanced the scene. The sound team had a more challenging task with the change of venue but they rose to the occasion and showed their expertise.

Wardrobe & Make-Up: The wardrobe had been selected with great care and attention to detail - each piece of costume was most apt for the character. The pink finale was GREAT.

The Production:

The production team obviously enjoyed utilising their creative skills not only with a new show but with the new venue. There were some fresh challenges to which everyone rose and ultimately excelled. The use of movement and dance in this show was breath-taking. The energy and vitality of delivery of all the movements really set the show alive. The tonal quality of the ensemble singing was outstanding and the soloists were first-rate. The band supported all the musical numbers sympathetically and covered scene changes with a degree of panache.

The highly talented cast maintained their enthusiasm throughout the whole evening right through to meeting the audience at the end. Congratulations to each and every person involved in this super production.

A short review will appear in due course in the South-east section of the NODA website.

Kay Rowan - District 14 Regional Representative