

# Christie is memorable

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## OKLAHOMA Chelmsford Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society. Civic Theatre

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CAODS' value-added Oklahoma hit us straight away with a fully-choreographed Prologue in typical Ray Jeffery style.

It combined telling individual detail with a stunning big picture.

A strong cast was headed by Angela Broad as a formidable Aunt Eller. Other experienced Op

& Dram hands taking key roles were Leo McGiff as Andrew Carnes, Peter Smith as Cord Elam and Patrick Tucker in a splendid character turn as the naughty pedlar Ali Hakim.

Curly and Laurey, the young lovers, were David Pridige and Christie Booth whose gamine charm and unforced singing style made hers a memorable performance. Contrasting character roles from Barbara Synnott as a sassy Ado Annie, and a powerful reading of Jud Fry - with excellent vocal work - from Karl Wilson.

The chorus, including several promising young performers, were on superb form in production numbers like Kansas City and musical director Andrew Denyer kept the marvellous Rodgers music moving along. But I found the sound system a little intrusive.

It muddled the stage picture, the head mikes were visible even from the back row, and the levels encouraged a few in the audience to behave as if they were at the Proms in the Park.

**MICHAEL GRAY**