

## **9 to 5, CAODS - Chelmsford**

What a blast of fun and fresh air this production is. It is guaranteed to blow away any post-Christmas blues. This was a slick show which was a joy to watch.

9 to 5 takes us back in time to the late 1970's when men ruled the office and the golf course, and women made the coffee and typed the memos. Of course... sometimes the underdog wins!

What a strong principal line up this show has. It is led by the three leading ladies of Violet, Doralee and Judy, who were played respectively by Robyn Gowers, Keeley Denman and Nicola Harrington-Smith and their boss, Franklin Hart played by Gareth Barton.

Robyn has an ease to all her performances and shines when in her element - never more so than in her number 'One of the Boys' when she got to show off her dancing prowess as well as her singing and acting skills.

Keeley was sweet and sexy as Doralee and brought a hint of Dolly Parton without it being a full impersonation of her. She has a good feel for comedy and brought lots of warmth to the role.

Nicola has an amazing voice, and she allowed the character of Judy to grow throughout the show allowing us to relate to the abandoned wife and first time employee. Her solo number 'Get Out and Stay Out' was sung beautifully and very dramatic. My only personal notes on this, are that I would have preferred it if she had kept her eyes open more whilst singing the song and used less small repetitive hand movements, I simply am not a fan of over gesticulation.

Gareth Barton, oozed across the stage, brilliantly taking on the role of sexist, bigoted, egotistical Franklin Hart. Gareth has an uncanny knack of metamorphosing into his roles and never more so than in this performance. With remarkable stage presence he was a pleasure to watch.

There were also a couple of other nice performances including Kieran Bacon as Junior accountant Joe and Frankie Mae as Roz. However, one of the highlights for me throughout the production was the choreography. Director and Choreographer, Sallie Warrington really delivered with some strong and polished moves and you couldn't help but noticed the amazing set of male dancers in the production.

The costumes were bright and colourful but more indicative of the 80's than the 70's and the large set was skilfully managed by the stage crew. The lighting design was good, and the sound was excellent.

Taking on the challenging change in performance dates, must have been a worry for the society but this show definitely deserves good audiences, so if you haven't got tickets yet this is a must-see show.

Huge congratulations to all involved on one of the best shows I've seen from CAODS recently.

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