

This show was a new one for me as I have never seen A Chorus Line before, like a lot of people I know the famous songs but that was it. Sallie Warrington and her team have made a thin plot based on real life conversations, become something really engaging with characters that we cared about. There wasn't an overture in the traditional manner so the performers came on before the opening scene giving the audience hints as to their personalities.

The choreography was challenging and non-stop. There were lots of interesting shapes which the cast moved into seamlessly and I liked the changes from jazz to ballet to football. The steps at the front of the stage and the auditorium itself cleverly became part of the performing area.

The band, under Rachael Plunkett and conductor Stuart Woolner, were together and coped well with what at times seemed an edgy score.

This was definitely an ensemble piece so it would be wrong to pick out particular performers if I can't mention them all. Each of the dancers on The Line had their own characterisations and personalities; this was obvious from the start in the way they stood, and each one had their moment in the spotlight. There were moments of almost slapstick comedy and then deep emotion, well done. I was particularly impressed during Act One when there was a long time of standing for most of the cast, their discipline and stillness was impressive.

Sallie and her dance captain Andrew Harding, must have spent many hours working with the cast to create the unity and precision we saw. The dancing in the finale was glorious and it was great to see the stage completely full as The Line were joined by the Ensemble Dancers. Much of the score was unison but when required the harmonies

were tight and clear. There were a few moments when the band overshadowed the voices but as I attended on the evening of the captions, I didn't miss any dialogue.

The outfits worn by the dancers were appropriate and contrasted with the fabulous gold and sparkly costumes worn in the finale. Some of the cast had to manage a very quick change.

There was very little used in the way of scenery or props, the mirrors were clever as they reflected the action but didn't blind the audience. Lighting was used to direct our attention to the action and darkening upstage created a different mood for the memory sections.

There were a couple of missed mic cues and moments when the performers stepped out of the lit area but this was a slick, enjoyable and moving production. My guest and I were warmly welcomed and looked after, both of us left humming 'One'. Thank you again CAODS.
Helen Wilson on behalf of Victoria Carey
Assistant Rep for Region 8
NODA East