

Wadhurst Dramatic Club
WYTKidz & Dramatiks
Hairspray the musical
Wadhurst Commemoration Hall
Saturday 28th October matinee 2017
Director: Amanda Dann
Choreography: Kirsty Cooper
Musical Director: Steve Frampton

Wow, wow, wow – well young people of Wadhurst first of all sincere congratulations on your exciting, energetic and entertaining production of ‘Hairspray’. Thanks must go to your wonderful Director Amanda, together with your Musical Director Steve, your singing coaches, your backing singers, your Choreographer Kirsty and her assistants and to all the hard working behind the scenes helpers. Technically you coped exceedingly well when personal mikes were not behaving and hopefully things improve for your final performance.

A perfect colourful little A5 programme was designed and produced by Nick Dann with a good middle page spread cast photo.

F of H was well-manned, and the refreshment kiosk was open for business. A great electric feeling in the hall with programmes collected, hellos galore ‘Hairspray’ started with a bang – what an opener - Tracy Turnblad a suitably enlarged Charlie Frampton burst forth with ‘Good Morning Baltimore’ – the song I’m still singing in my head whilst writing! Joseph Trotter was unrecognisable as Edna smoothing away on her authentic ‘60’s ironing board – who’s come a long way from a Royal Page in the panto ‘Puss in Boots’ and Fat Sam in ‘Bugsy’ and created a great plus sized Mum. After learning some new dance steps from an African-American student during detention she wins a place on Corny Collins TV show. Her dream comes true to dance – she’s a success with huge resentment from others however she believes in equality everyone to have a chance despite looks, size but colour – a strong message throughout.

The set designed once again created by Colin and Nance Hand allowed for movement and dance. The backdrop with the logo hairstyle, a school gym all beautifully painted as well as the three panels depicting the Motormouth Records, Mr Pinky’s and Ron’s Liquor Store, whilst on the other side was the interior of the Turnblad home dressed with the laundry basket, ironing board, iron, the telephone etc. Plenty of props were collected and prepared by a team of helpers. I liked the rolling camera and the TV with a live newsreader in place namely Logan Daly. Tracy’s upright bed worked really well, and the three roll-on goal bars looked most effective.

Ellie Meredeen Martin plays a sophisticated, scheming pushy Producer Velma Von Tussle

wanting horror daughter Amber well characterised by Holly Reynolds to win the TV Miss Teenage Hairspray Pageant. Corny Collins is the fast-talking polished host also fond of his hair was confidently played by Louis Dunn. Blond Lauren Perry played Penny Pingleton, lolly licking best friend to Tracy eventually falls for hip curly haired Seaweed J Stubbs danced skilfully by Alex Bush - much to her mother's initial disapproval who comes around in the end very nicely played by Katie Perry. Max Murphy was Link was the school heartthrob – tall with a kiss curl and he falls for Tracy. Some great numbers included Edna and Wilbur's (Joey Walker) duet 'You're Timeless to Me' – 'I Can Hear The Bells from Tracy and company, a fun routine to 'The Madison', a lively Welcome to the 60's from Tracy, Edna, The Dynamites and Mr Pinky, a particular moving 'I Know Where I'm From sung by Annamay Reed as Motormouth Maybelle and a splendid whole company 'You Can't Stop the Beat'. After agreeing a protest everyone is arrested, strictly disciplined and all escape. Devising a plan to integrate the show – the telephone response is amazing. Tracy is pardoned and beats Amber, Link's offered a record contract, Velma a high position in beauty products and all's much better in the world if you look beyond the colour of skin and to fight for every human being's equal rights.

The costumes throughout were thoroughly sixties, colourful, very well put together by the ladies of the wardrobe and with curly wigs, well applied make up, and appropriate hair styles – kept in place of course by hairspray, added pizzazz to the splendid performance.

Stage management was headed by James Bush assisted by his team, Dot sat quietly in the corner on the book. Please don't be offended if you have not been mentioned by name – you all did so well. Thank you for all your hard work.

A shortened version of this review will appear on the national website shortly.

Anne Lawson
Regional Representative
NODA SE
District 3

National Operatic and Dramatic Association

15 The Metro Centre, Peterborough PE2 7UH

Tel01733374790 **Fax**01733237286 **Email**info@noda.org.uk **Web**www.noda.org.uk

Twitter @NODAtweets **Facebook** NationalOperaticDramaticAssociation

Registered CIO charity number 1171216 Registered company number 241572 Registered in England and Wales at the above address.
Patrons: The Lord Lloyd Webber and Connie Fisher