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Society : Mortimer Dramatic Society
Production : Di and Viv and Rose
Date : Friday 25th October 2019
Venue : St John's Hall - Mortimer
Report by : Jeanette Maskell

[Show Report](#)

Although this play has been around for a while, I have to admit to not knowing anything about it. When the play started I really wasn't sure; however as the characters and plot developed I found myself becoming totally absorbed.

It was well written with witty text and interesting three dimensional characters. I felt I knew Charlie, Di's mum and Ted even though we never see them! Spanning a period of 26 years gave the three actresses plenty of scope to evolve and mature with the plot. They embraced this fully and each put in a fine individual performance and as a trio they were formidable.

Kerry Thomas – (Di) – As the sporty lesbian this young lady was a delight. She was so natural her personality shone through and endeared the audience to her from the start. She was easygoing as she strived to keep the peace between the other two and really discovered the meaning of friendship when she was put through an emotional trauma. She had some of the funniest lines in the play two of which “I've gone back to fish on Friday and not being a lesbian!” and “They're Japanese!” both of which she delivered with impeccable timing.

Mari Fleming – (Viv) – This actress had her composed, poised character off to a T. She really looked the part of the sociology student with her 1940's frock jacket and beret! I liked the rapport she forged with Di and her despair at Rose's licentious behaviour. She gave a driven performance with energetic dialogue and expressive visuals.

Cathy Ramsell – (Rose) – As the promiscuous art student this actress gave an honest open performance. She had a delightful naivety that she carried right through to the end. I loved the way she spoke so freely about the boys she was sleeping with and how proud she was to have had 8 in two weeks! She was visually animated and her dialogue was vivacious and sassy. Her interaction and reaction was spontaneous and impulsive which completely befitted the character.

The bond created by these three was truly exceptional. They drew the audience in and took them with them on their journey sharing all their hopes and dreams.

Phil Collins – (Director) – Having read the directors notes I see this was Phil's first solo effort as director. Let me tell you he had done a fabulous job; creating some exceptional in depth characters and highlighting the flaws and vagaries in their relationships. Whilst there were long delays between scenes I cannot offer any advice on how this could have been avoided; maybe denoting the end of a scene with a blackout and not pulling the curtains might have kept the audience's attention more readily on the action. That said the pace achieved during the scenes was excellent with delightful groupings which kept the plot moving. Exits and

entrances had been well contrived and also contributed to the fluidity of the action. He brought out all the humour pathos and emotion of script creating an impressive powerful piece of theatre.

Katja Hunt – (Producer) – I am much more used to seeing this young lady's name attached to lighting! Having taken on this new challenge she had clearly done a great job as everything connected with the performance ran smoothly from start to finish.

Ian Vernon Wilson – (Stage Manager) – assisted by **James Burton Stewart/Gary Vernon Wilson** My goodness this SM along with his team was certainly kept busy. Even if it was just pulling the curtain at the end of each scene! Then there were the changes that I'm sure they effected rather more quickly than the cast changed their costumes; however this did lead to rather long delays between scenes.

John Bull/Mick Snyder/Phil Collins/Members of the Society – (Set Design/Build) – This was a minimalistic set designed to be utilised for the various scenes. It did work and in doing so optimised the acting area. I liked the archway at the back of the stage and the hatch through to the kitchen which was used to great effect.

Amy Collins – (Wardrobe) – assisted by **Michelle Burton Stewart/Susan Walker** The costumes had been well coordinated and looked right for the time periods. They were as diverse as the characters wearing them and suited them down to the ground.

Karen Dignan - (Props) – These had been well collated and were all appropriate for their use. 42 Mossbank Road was well dressed with mismatched furniture books on shelves and a radio tape deck. The furniture used for the stations and Viv's New York apartment was just right and the little props; glasses bowls mugs and champagne and cider bottles all adding to the overall look.

Mick Snyder - (Lighting) – It is not easy to light a stark white set and make it look warm and inviting. Whilst I would have liked to have seen a bit more colour this technician did flood the stage without creating shadows; a feat in itself. There was also a good use of spots for the black tab scenes.

Tom Shorrocks – (Sound) – I was so impressed with the sound effects produced by this technician. They were absolutely on the money, cued to perfection with an ideal sound level; clearly audible yet unobtrusive. In particular I would mention the railway stations which were outstanding.

Susan Walker/Sarah Roper/Jean Chapman/Mary Cawley/Jacky Bowyer/Rosemary Wallace – (Front of House) – I am sorry to say that I do not know the name of the lovely lady that greeted me and showed me to my seat! The whole team were friendly taking care of the audience and making them feel welcome

Thank you

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Jeanette Maskell - NODA Representative - London Region -