

YAOS Productions

Fiddler on the Roof

Book by Joseph Stein

Music by Jerry Brock

Sheldon Harnick

Directed by Jeremy Tustin

Music Director Lucy Singleton

17th – 21st March 2026

Fiddler on The Roof is an iconic show, and it's always great to see it work it's magic on those new to the music and story. In the hands of YAOS this was a wonderful journey which had you laughing and crying and wishing you had booked tickets for the following night!

Written in 1964 and set in 1905 in Imperial Russia, this is every bit as relevant and thought-provoking today. The story is about Tevye, a Jewish milkman embedded in the heart of his community. Striving to uphold tradition in a fast-changing world, he is challenged to maintain his own faith with his daughters' decisions to marry for love rather than through a matchmaker. All the while the outside world is forcing it's way in. Ultimately, worlds collide and Tevye and family face mounting anti-Semitic threats and eventual expulsion from their homes in Anatevka as the entire village is forced to disperse to Europe and the US.

It is immediately apparent how much work has gone into this show, the set depicts the Russian town of Anatevka, featuring the wooden dwelling of a rustic town and across the road, a flat-roofed timber building where a lone fiddler perches on the roof. In the centre are doors which open and become the interior of Tevye's family home.

The villagers stand silently as Tevye introduces himself and sets the narrative with an insight into a simple life underpinned by Tradition – moving into the iconic song was powerful and memorable. The energy and pace was now set and didn't falter for the duration.

We shortly meet Tevye's daughters as they playfully begin another of the best known songs: Matchmaker in a beautifully executed number with some lovely vocals by Amy McIntosh, Rosie Horsey and Amelie Rendell-Graham.

This was a rich production, brimming with talent and energy with stylish and painstakingly rendered choreography with beautiful music performed by a gifted orchestra. Every golden and memorable moment was simply replaced by yet another all the way through.

As the ensemble performed Sabbath Prayer, surrounded by the music and the company who were in "homes" dotted across stage and auditorium, were carrying candles and practising their sabbath prayers. A beguiling song, this was immersive and moving. Such great use of the theatre space and wonderful storytelling.

Tevye does some very fancy footwork to get Golde on board to liberate daughter Tzeitel from the matchmaker's arrangement with Lazar Wolfe. He therefore conjures a dream he supposedly had involving dire warnings of doom from both Golde's deceased mother and Sarah, Lazar's late wife. This was an absolutely spectacular routine, with a heavenly chorus of brides and appearances from both Grandma

and a rather terrifying apparition of Sarah complete with six-inch nails. Including Tevye and Golde in their marital bed this was full of humour and superb vocals particularly from Sian Spencer as Grandma and Lauren Francis as Sarah.

Another evocative and emotive song was Sunrise Sunset, gorgeous vocals and full company harmonies, touchingly directed and moving into the wedding celebrations before it ends with the interference of the soldiers and the menace of what was to come.

Beautifully directed, throughout, the tension between the Jews and the Russians grows through the story and is palpable and sinister. Tevye more adaptable than most, getting the odd warning from the Constable with whom he shares a sympathetic relationship. Played by Fred Broom the Constable is a fairly fleeting character but a powerful performance.

A very talented cast, Golde was Naomi Lawton who gave a lovely characterisation which spoke of the challenges faced in very different time with some heartfelt vocals particularly in Do you Love Me?

The daughters played by Amy, Rosie and Amelie all gave charming and very authentic performances as each character wrestled with the challenges of taking back their lives and what that would mean in their own futures.

Charlie Lawson played a wonderfully downtrodden tailor and worked well with Amy, Perchik was played with great intensity by Nick Toop particularly as the play progresses and in fact it's clear that Perchik is well aware of what is coming and what it means to this community. Hodel falls for Fyedka and grows up overnight as they prepare for the onslaught of discrimination that comes with mixed marriages. Both Amelie and Josh Levye played these characters with great maturity.

I very much enjoyed the antics of Charlie Waanklin as Yente – she played the role with real wit and great comic timing but also as the story begins to chill, she adopted great sensitivity. Loki Collins played a lovely fiddler and seemed to have a good grasp of how to play a bowed instrument which added authenticity.

But the final bouquet must go to Luke Whitchurch who was a charismatic, tireless rounded character who I believed throughout. Superb.

In all Fiddler on the Roof was an absolutely stunning show and, had it not been deservedly sold out, I would have been back!!

Congratulations YAOS – you have done it again!

Katie Jones (for Kate Marshall)
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NODA REPORTING:

Any observation made by the reviewer can only be based on what he sees at the performance in question. The reviewer may have received information in advance of the performance and it is inevitable that his assessment will be effected by that knowledge.

The N.O.D.A. Representative's intention is to give an objective critique of the overall production and in particular the performance viewed. It should be remembered that any review of this nature can only be objective as far as the techniques used during the performance observed. Any criticisms expressed may not have been valid at other performances, and are only made to encourage higher standards in Amateur Theatre.

It is hoped that the audience's appreciation of your efforts will have given everyone a lift and encouraged you to greater achievements in the future and that the observations made by the reviewer will prove helpful in improving future productions.