

Berlin to Broadway, at Sherman**Theatre****Show that is
not to
be missed**

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEWS

RUN, don't walk to the telephone and book your ticket immediately for the Welsh College of Music and Drama's production of Gene Lerner's *Berlin to Broadway*, now at the Sherman Theatre until Saturday.

This production, a structured compilation of Kurt Weill's theatre songs, resoundingly reinforces Cardiff's position in the forefront of the continuing Weill renaissance.

The brief, jaunty overture, excellently played by the authentically-sized band which is anchored throughout by Kathleen Collins's flairful piano playing, lets you know immediately that you are in for a pleasure-filled evening.

And so it proves to be.

By the fourth song out of a total of 40, *Jealousy Duet* (sung by Ri Richards and Alison Roberts), the show is also vocally well under way and in safe hands. It is time to relax in a kaleidoscope of wonderful songs captivatingly performed.

Each piece is presented as a vignette from the relevant show and is ably linked by Gary Llewellyn who, incidentally, is an ideal Weill performer with considerable potential in

music theatre.

Carys Gwilym's intensely moving performance of *Surbaya Johnny* was the real thing, in stark contrast to Dagmar Kraus's recent grotesque and insensitive baritone butchery at Chapter.

Where are all you pseuds and camp followers now? This is it! Listen to the young Lenya and then fall in love with Carys Gwilym. (Though her *Pirate Jenny* needs stronger musical characterisation) and melt to Alison Roberts in *Alabama Song*.

First the vocal genius of H. K. Gruber singing Eisler songs and now this wonderful Weill. We are indeed blessed this fortnight.

Some might say this show lacks the ultimate in sophistication. But what I heard is young voices presenting the songs as though fresh minted; without affectation or pretension.

Berlin to Broadway is a show to send chills down your spine, bring tears to your eyes and joy to your heart.

It's your own fault if you miss this.