



THEATRE

Review

**SISTER ACT
SHEFFIELD LYCEUM**

Who needs Whoopi Goldberg? Alexandra Burke puts her own stamp on the role the American star made famous in the 1992 movie, not only nailing the musical numbers but with a bold and sassy stage presence and even some nice comic timing. She's nightclub singer Deloris Van Cartier who witnesses a murder by her gangster boyfriend and is hidden away in a convent, the last place anyone would look for her. She is introduced to the other nuns by the disapproving Mother Superior as Sister Mary Clarence and takes charge of the caterwauling choir. In no time she has turned them into tuneful soul sisters whose performances revive the fortunes of the rundown church - and picks up the show after a slow start.

They provide a rousing finale to the first half and that energy drives the second half which lets rip on the gospel and soul and also the Seventies disco and funk in composer Alan Menken's original tunes.

One of the touches that director Craig Revel Horwood has introduced is for the live band to be augmented by the cast playing musical instruments. So cops, hoodlums and nuns brandish a variety of instruments. Even Mother Superior (Karen Mann) blows her own trumpet. It's a nice idea, but sometimes it can look awkward and be distracting. But nothing can distract from Alexandra Burke and her powerhouse voice