



Society : Hounslow Light Opera Company
Production : A Nice Dilemma!
Date : Saturday, March 23rd 2019
Venue : St Mary's Church Community Hall
Report by : Des Wilby – Regional Representative (District 3)

Show Report

It was once again a pleasure to have visited with HLOC and this time enjoy their spring 2019 production - A Nice Dilemma! The question of 'what shall we perform next?' is one that's a hot topic of discussion amongst those involved with any am dram society.

This storyline focuses on the fictitious St. Expedite's Players committee as they consider possibilities for their next show. As is often the case, thoughts naturally turn to previous productions and which ones were both successful and fun to stage. In this case, and following various suggestions, the company appeared and treated the audience to various musical numbers from each one.

In this case, it was Gemma Martinez, Patrick Hooper, Andrea Wilkins, Paul Huggins and Elizabeth Malone formed the committee and provided a backdrop, and direction, in the ongoing search for a future production. With some interesting personal characteristics this committee kept the performance moving along and did a good job in linking the songs.

I have always enjoyed attending HLOC performances and been impressed with the quality of singing and Gilbert and Sullivan shows in particular. I was pleased to see that 'A Nice Dilemma!' emphasised this strength with selections from various G&S shows. It was also pleasing to also see those performing attempt numbers that were somewhat more challenging and unexpected. Overall, a nice selection with variety throughout.

HLOC is fortunate to have a strong women's section but, like many other societies, is struggling to attract sufficient men. This has the inevitable effect of male voices being somewhat overshadowed at times and I certainly wish the society good luck in attracting additional men.

Johanna Chambers is to be congratulated as Director for this production and ensuring it was an enjoyable experience for cast and audience alike. It should be noted that Johanna also joined those onstage and added her wonderful voice to the singing.

Lee Dewsnap brought his talent to this production as Musical Director, keyboard player and conductor. Lee had clearly rehearsed the entire company well and ensured the blending of music and vocals was always perfectly matched.

Fay Ellingham added some unexpected cast movements and, as Choreographer, ensured this wasn't a 'static' production but that those performing added to the event creating further interest for those watching.

The Company sang throughout Act 1 and was formed by Chris Blackmore, Elizabeth Chambers, Johanna Chambers, Laurie Coombs, Maria Devaney, Karen Heyworth-Taylor, Stephen Hopkins, June Hume, Gwyn Jones, Ruth Jones, Veronica Martin, Bobbie McNulty, Harriet Muir, Suzie Modak and Helen Smith.

Following a terrific rendition of 'One', from a Chorus Line, they then moved into a medley of songs from West Side Story. 'You Can't Stop the Beat', from Hairspray, was next being both fun to watch and well sung. A medley of songs from 'Into the Woods' was next before the first half ended with 'Soon As We May' from Iolanthe.

The second half the of programme started with the company singing a lovely version of 'Bread', from The Baker's Wife before Andrea Wilkins delighted the audience with 'Wishing You Were Somehow Here Again' from Phantom of the Opera. A brave choice for this iconic song and one certainly sung with feeling. Swiftly moving on and it was the turn of Chris Blackmore who sang 'Somewhere' from West Side Story.

June Hume and Bobbie McNulty then sang 'Hoity Toity' from Princess Ida before the full company returned with a Rodgers & Hammerstein medley and then ended on a high note with 'Pray Observe The Magnanimity' from The Pirates of Penzance.

Overall, this was an enjoyable performance with some tight harmonies, excellent timing and a volume that clearly resonated throughout St Mary's Church Community Hall.

Jack Tidball must have been pleased to have the relatively easy job of Stage Manager with no real scenery or entrances/exits to be concerned about.

Anne Pringle and Tony Cotterill put together a short Programme with various details for the audience to enjoy reading. I was pleased to see the prominent NODA reference and interested in the news regarding HLOC's November production.

For now, congratulations to everyone involved with 'A Nice Dilemma!' I hope you have a great summer and I look forward to being invited along to enjoy Gilbert & Sullivan's comic opera - 'Pirates of Penzance'.

Des Wilby
Regional Representative
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