



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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PATIENCE

South Australian Light Opera Society

Latvian Hall

Until 16 Aug 2009

Review by Brian Godfrey

Although originally written as a satire on England's Aesthetic Movement of the 1870/80's (where it seemed that every second person was a writer, poet or artist), "Patience or Bunthorne's Bride" bears all the hallmarks of its originators, Sir William Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan: a wonderfully frothy, convoluted storyline; a sweet, very innocent heroine; a multitude (supposedly twenty in this case) of love-sick maidens; the obligatory presence of bumbling authority - usually in the form of soldiers who seem to have been enlisted for their vocal talents rather than their combat skills; and, of course, very clever, funny lyrics and extremely melodic music.

SALOS's version of this little performed gem is competent and enjoyable to watch. The fact that director Pam Tucker has a passion for the works of the comic opera geniuses is very evident. The whole feel of the production is as if the audience have been transported back in time to the Savoy Opera - even to the style of make-up. The rouge on the soldiers' cheeks is a great touch; however, the iridescent blue eye-shadow on some of the ladies is not.

Costumes by Pam Tucker and Cyndy Trezise are extremely colourful and great to look at, but seem to be caught in a rip in the Space/Time Continuum as various eras of costumery history are represented.

Musical Director, Peter Potts, has produced some lovely vocals from the cast (without the aid of microphones - ahh! So refreshing in this modern age!), whilst Melvyn Schlank conducts a small but fine orchestra (although he must learn not to hum along).

Standout principals are Danielle Ruggiero (Patience), Helen Loveday (Lady Angela), Damon Hill (Reginald Bunthorne) and Maria Geraghty (Lady Jane). Ruggiero has a magnificent soprano voice and marvellous presence but needs to watch her accent (it seems to tour most parts of England). Loveday is a delight and should continue pursuing singing roles, while Geraghty is strong in her vocals and makes a suitably "plain" Jane. Hill is his usual hilarious self, but aided this time by a lovely flowing black wig and the best purple pant-suit ever!

Able support is given by Aaron MacDonald (Duke Of Dunstable), David Roberts (Colonel Calverley) and Peter Potts (Major Murgatroyd) (watch out for their hilarious trio in Act Two), whilst the rest of the cast prove their worth vocally.

Though not faultless, this is an entertaining production and works quite well (especially acoustically) in the Latvian Hall. "Patience" certainly kept this reviewer from losing his.