

## **LEND ME A TENOR**

### **Tea Tree Players**

Tea Tree Players Theatre

Until May 28

Review by Simon Slade

This comedy by Ken Ludwig revolves around a charity performance of the Cleveland Opera Company whose general manager has invited a world-renowned tenor to sing a one-night-only performance of Othello.

As with many farces, much of the humour of "Lend Me a Tenor" depends on proper timing. Director Theresa Dolman has done a fine job of navigating the cast through all the subtle and not so subtle jokes in the show. Dolman also uses the two-room set very well.

The eight members of the cast work well together. They are particularly proficient when it comes to the timing of sight gags. Throughout the show, doors open and close, people are discovered hiding in closets as well as bathrooms and there is the mix up of medication, and...well, you get the picture.

Troy Brailsford, as Max, seemed a little nervous at first but soon warmed to his role as the insecure assistant to the General Manager. Brailsford fidgets, shuffles, wrings his hands and defers to his boss. Brian Godfrey, as Saunders, was demanding and manic in just the right combination!

Kristen Webb, as Maggie, is perfectly cast as the young lady about to meet her idol. Tina Cini is hilarious as Julia, with all the rounded vowels you could expect from a lady on the board of the opera.

Stephen Mulady, as Tito Merelli "Il Stupendo", presents a varied performance as a character so full of himself that you wonder how his swelled head will fit through a door, and yet engendering pity. Stacey Webb, as his wife Maria, has some fine moments and lines.

Kim York, as Diana, only appears briefly in Act I, but does well in Act II when the dramatic and comedic purpose for her character becomes obvious. Adam Bates, as the Bellhop, is hilarious. His timing and facial expressions are perfect for the role, and he has a real feel for the comedy in the writing.

The two-room box set by Peter Pudney and Damon Hill is exceedingly colourful, to say the least, and displays an inventive use of connecting doors.

"Lend Me a Tenor", provides relief from everyday insanity by taking the audience to a place of absolute confusion and improbable events.

The curtain call alone is worth the price of admission!