

belgrade

Princess Ida

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W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan

Characters in order of appearance

King Hildebrand
Hilarion, his son
Cyril
Florian
Hilarion's friends
King Gama
Arac
Garon
Scynthus
his sons
Princess Ida, Gama's daughter
Lady Blanche
Professor of Abstract Science
Lady Psyche
Professor of Humanities
Melissa
Lady Blanche's daughter
Sacharissa
Chloe
Ada
Girl Graduates

BRIAN DANIELS
JOHN FENNER
ALLAN HAWKE
WILLIAM BOSWORTH

ROBERT JAMES
ANTHONY CRYER
ROD WASHBROOK
KEITH GILBERT

PAMELA SUMMERS
KATHLEEN GRIFFITHS

AUDREY DANIELS

FAY TAYLOR

SYLVIA GREEN
FREDA VENUS
JOYCE GARRATT

Ladies, Girl Graduates and Daughters of the Plough
E. Aves, J. Barker, B. Bliss, M. Brewer, E. Clare, J. Cox, S. Duffy, L. Fenner, P. Gibbons, H. Hill, J. Holmes, S. Lee, C. McConway, R. Perry, A. Radburn, J. Stewart, M. Tibbs, M. Tudor, S. Washbrook, A. Webster, A. Wheeler, E. Wilson, M. Withers

Couriers and Soldiers

R. Baker, J. Bowen, J. Cox, N. Davis, G. Gaskell, W. Gough, G. Howell, J. de Lange, A. Newman, R. Phasey, P. Sizer, G. Suddens

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act 1 Pavilion in King Hildebrand's Palace
Act 2 Gardens of Castle Adamant
Act 3 Courtyard of Castle Adamant

Produced by **DOROTHY DILLAM**

Musical Director **JOHN AVES**

Scenery by Clifford and Brown, Nuneaton
Costumes by Charles H. Fox, London

WOMEN'S LIB —SAVOY STYLE

THEATRE

IT IS doubtful if even the devotees of Sir William Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan would claim that their idols were at their best with "Princess Ida," the operetta chosen this year by the Coventry Savoy Opera Society.

Perhaps, then, it is too much to expect members of the society to be at their best in the production which opened last night at the Belgrade Theatre.

Nevertheless, one must confess that there were moments last night when the whole affair—in spite of several good performances by the principals—appeared to be heading for the sort of unmitigated theatrical disaster the critic dreads as much as the players.

Fortunately the corner was turned shortly before the end of the short first act on the appearance of Robert James King Gama—a character stumpy which seemed to ignite some of the hitherto damp fuel in the others.

The steady progress achieved during the long second act was enough to indicate that there will be better performances as the week continues.

The story suggests—I will not

argue the validity of the case—that any fight for women's liberation is doomed to disaster. There is some good singing from Pamela Summers and John Fenner is at home with the style of composer and lyricist. Allan Hawke, Brian Daniels, Anthony Cryer and Kathleen Griffiths are more animated than most, and the chorus singing is usually fairly well synchronised with the efforts of the orchestra, conducted by John Aves.

But though the chorus may sound well enough, they appear to spill on to the stage as if by accident and having completed their choral work, find the greatest difficulty in making their way off.

Dorothy Dillam, the producer, must take the blame for the clumsy staging, ragged chorus work and general lack of verve.

And as for the wit of Sir William Gilbert on this occasion . . . Well, I can only say that I wouldn't back him in an intellectual argument with Germaine Greer.

DAVID ISAACS.

Simple plot

Coventry Savoy Opera Society are presenting Princess Ida this week at the Belgrade Theatre.

They demonstrate that apart from its topical interest the operetta is a pleasant and easy-going piece. The plot is simple, the intrigues thinly veiled, and the comedy ageless.

The company obviously enjoyed performing and the audience were contented. A 16-piece orchestra was exceptionally competent and the lead singers, if lacking somewhat in volume, seldom went wrong.

SPIRITED

Pam Summers as the Princess stole the show. She was vivacious and spirited as her would-be Amazon followers laid down their arms to the night of manhood. And throughout the show she delighted the audience with a voice excelling in quality. The Savoy were lucky indeed to be able to call on such a talented leading lady.

Costumes were splendid, the scenery effective if sparse, and the mammoth task of drilling a cast of 50 was handled well by producer Dorothy Dillam and Musical Director John Aves.

Especially worthy of comment are Hilarion (John Fenner), Cyril (Allan Hawke), and Florian (William Bosworth).

As the prince out to claim Ida and his two friends, they make an amusing comedy team and a completely acceptable vocal trio. The show closes tomorrow.



Under the disapproving eye of Kathleen Griffiths, Allan Hawke pays court to Audrey Daniels, egged on by his friends, John Fenner and William Bosworth, in "Princess Ida" at the Belgrade Theatre.

