



Written by W.S. Gilbert. Composed by Arthur Sullivan.

An Aesthetic Opera in two acts. **PATIENCE** OR BUNTHORNE'S BRIDE.

THE CAST

Reginald Bunthorne	A fleshly poet	Mr. John Fenner
Archibald Grosvenor	An idyllic poet	Mr. David Valentine
Colonel Caverly	Officers of the Dragon Guard	Mr. Brian Daniels
Major Margatroy		Mr. William Besworth
Lieut. The Duke of Dunstable		Mr. Nigel Hopkins
The Lady Augusta	Rapturous Maidens	Miss Fay Taylor
The Lady Saphir		Miss Audrey Daniels
The Lady Ella		Miss Virginia Cronshaw
The Lady Jane		Miss Ethel Law
Patience	A Village Milkmaid	Miss Pamela Summers
Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor		Mr. Peter Gibbons

THE SCENES

ACT I Exterior of Castle Bunthorne. ACT II A Glade.

Musical production by Mr. Anthony Ayres. The opera produced under the personal direction of Miss Dorothy Dillam.

Society from Scenic Display Services, Ltd., Bradford.
Costumes from William Mullie & Son, Ltd., Edinburgh.

Coventry Journal, 5th April, 1974.

Patience sets high standard

COVENTRY Savoy Opera Society's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*, being presented this week at the College Theatre, the Butts, fully lives up to the high standards we have come to expect from the group.

The plot deals with the rather unlikely amorous twists surrounding 20 lovesick maidens moping over a "fleshly poet" named Bunthorne, who is himself yearning after *Patience*, an incredibly naive milkmaid. After a series of farcical twists everybody lives happily ever after.

From both the musical and comedy viewpoints Dorothy Dillam's production is of a high standard, more than compensating for the few rough edges one expects on a first night. Lavish sets and costumes, which were acquired from professional sources, were complimented by the excellent performance of the Beauchamp Sinfonietta under the direction of Anthony Ayres, and by the efforts of the cast as a whole.

Pamela Summers as *Patience* displayed a particularly fine voice with considerable power and range.

John Fenner produced a brilliantly camped-up performance as the intellectual charlatan Bunthorne, which was well-matched by David Valentine as the insipid Archibald Grosvenor.

Nigel Hopkins and Ethel Law also turned in excellent performances displaying considerable vocal talents and a great sense of comedy. R.C.

Patience needed by audience, too

PATIENCE—at the Coventry Technical College Theatre, until Saturday.

THEATRE

THE Coventry Savoy Opera Company continue their steady if undramatic improvement with one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas which is less frequently performed than some.

It's difficult to know why this stab at the pseudo-aestheticism of the Oscar Wilde copyists should be

By DAVID ISAACS

less popular than other G. and S. pieces. It is no worse and no better than many of the others. Still, if it remains something of a museum piece—again no more and no less worthy of revival than the rest of the repertoire—it's difficult to find much sym-

pathy for the programme note which suggests it has some contemporary relevance.

There are no such pretensions about Dorothy Dillam's production, which starts with a worthy dullness and continues in the same vein until we are close to the interval. There's a rousing climax to the first act and a new inventiveness in the second.

I cannot say if Miss Dillam gave her cast a half-time pep talk, but certainly they looked more enthusiastic and better equipped in the second half, where John Fenner, particularly, distinguishes himself with a new-found vitality.

Pamela Summers, in the title role, sings pleasantly and does her best to appear young enough, and the voice of Nigel Hopkins is never worth less than an acknow-

ledgment, especially when it is accompanied by the extra dash which has sometimes been lacking in his stage performances.

There is a commendable competency about the contributions of Brian and Audrey Daniels and although the chorus are sounding better, their lack of stage-craft is still monotonously apparent.

The company have the advantage of a fine orchestra in the Beauchamp Sinfonietta, skilfully conducted by the company's musical director, Tony Ayres, and the costumes are colourful.

The first half remains the problem. Without extra impact there, the show will suffer from audiences failing to return after the interval. As for the 20 lovesick maidens—well, I'll give them 50 per cent for quantity.

