

BWT Review
Witham Amateur Operatic Society
Kismet
26 April – 1 May 1999

Sparkling daughter brings Kismet to life

THE combination of the colourful world of the Middle East of a few centuries ago, a story that could have come out of the Arabian Nights and the music of Borodin is certain to provide the material for a successful musical show.

Last week all these elements were combined when Witham Amateur Operatic Society performed Kismet at the Public Hall.

The opening was colourful but it did not really come to life until the appearance of Natalie Cudlip who played the part of Marsinah, the sparkling daughter of the Public Poet. It has been a pleasure to see her grow from a star in the youth group, the Witham Operatic Workshop, to a fully fledged star in the adult company.



Darren White was an elegant Caliph and acted as a good foil for the vital and sweet singing Natalie Cudlip. We look forward to hearing her for many years to come.

Lalume, played by Pat McLeod, was the real scene stealer. She made the most of all her lines, in most cases she made more than was written. The innuendo was a delight to enjoy. She managed to get laughs where there could have only been chuckles. This was a star performance.

Brian Brown's musical direction was always well controlled and Eddie McKay's direction of her large cast always kept a colourful sight before our eyes.

We can now look forward to the autumn production of Calamity Jane.

James Bright.

Reg Charity No. 265029

Witham Amateur Operatic Society
Presents

KISMET

A Musical Arabian Night



BOOKED BY
CHARLES LEBERTON & LUTHER CHAVEZ
PRODUCED FOR A STAGE BY CONRAD BROADBENT
MUSIC BY
ROBERT WRIGHT & GEORGE FOREST
(From the film of Arabian Nights)
The amateur production is given in partnership of JOSEF WEINBERGER LTD.
(Licence of MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL of NEW YORK)

at the
WITHAM PUBLIC HALL
MONDAY 26th APRIL to SATURDAY 1st MAY
Nightly 7.30pm - Doors open 7.00pm
Saturday Matinee 2.30pm - Doors open 2.00

BOX OFFICE: 01376 515871

Essex Hearing Aids Ltd.
are very pleased to support this production of "Kismet"

Howard Brooks, the Public Poet, brought back memories of John Hansen as he dominated the stage with lively style. His over-acting was typical of the original production. When he was with Lalume he was at his best.

Lavinia Farmer who was the choreographer added a great deal to the show. Dancing was a feature throughout and the young ladies were always flowing and colourful.

Richard Cowen, a forceful Wazir of Police, finally murdered by the poet, was a good match for Tom Whelan, the Master Brigand. Geoff Coverdale was at ease as the poet Omar Khayyam.



NODA REPORT FOR THE SEPTEMBER 1999 EASTERN NEWS

WITHAM A.O.S. - KISMET PERFORMANCE OF 27th April 1999

Good sets; well lit; gorgeous costumes, and lots of colour upon which to feast ones eyes; a good orchestra expertly playing the adapted music of Borodin; and a company that can sing and move well. Given the plot, all this should add up to impact, and under Edwina MacKays direction this certainly was the case, but only in parts.

There was a curiously 'laid back' and leisurely feel about some parts of the show, and in particular the opening sequences and the elevation of the glib Poet to prime beggar. He might be a Poet, but he does live off his wits and Howard Brooks' interpretation as the personification of pleasant amiability, regardless of circumstance, seemed a little out of line. In contrast Pat McLeod's Lelum delivered every last ounce of comedy available, and at her first appearance, with the three princesses, everything seemed to spring to life.



Geoff Coverdale gave us a lively and devious Omar Khayyam. Richard Cowen's Wazir and Peter MacKay's Police Chief made a good pair. Marsinah was played by Natalie Cudlip, a promising young lady from WOW, the Company youth section. She gave us a good characterisation, but more projection was needed, both in dialogue and singing. Darren White, a tall young man, also from WOW, wasn't quite the imposing figure that he could have been, as the Caliph, but there is plenty of potential there, and a promising voice. Chorus singing was up to scratch and movement patterns provided good atmosphere. On the whole the solo work was rather disappointing, though certainly in the case of Marsinah and the Caliph, the larger than usual orchestra, under M.D. Brian Brown, seemed to make no allowance for their pleasant, but as yet underpowered voices. A thoroughly pleasant evening, but I have seen the Company do better.

John Warburton

Cast of Characters

Imam of the Mosque/Pearl Merchant
Muezzins
First Beggar/Slave Merchant
Second Beggar/Orange Merchant
Prosecutor/Fig seller
Omar Khayyam
A public poet (sometimes called Hajj)
Marsinah, his daughter
Hassan-Ben (a brigand)
Jawan (the master brigand)
Bangle man
Silk merchants
Merchants
Chief policeman
The Wazir of Police
Lalume (Wife of Wives to Wazir)
Three Princesses of Ababu
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The Caliph, The young Commander of the Faithful
Widow Yussef
Princess Zubbediya of Zanzibar
Marriage Arranger for Zubbediya
Princess Samahris of Turkestan
Marriage Arranger for Samahris
Ayah to Lalume

Paul Chittleborough
Tim Clarke, Jonathans Baron, Paul Chittleborough, John Slade
Richard Herring
Danny Mullane
Alf Farmer
Geoffrey Coverdale
Howard Brooks
Natalie Cudlip
Alf Farmer
Tom Whelan
John Slade
Paul Chittleborough, Jonathan Baron
Joyce Ryder, Katrina Brooks
Peter McKay
Richard Cowen
Pat McLeod
Natalie Hawkes
Callie Shaw
Carolyn Wash
Darren White
Sarah Wilson
Laura Furnival
Janet Wash
Helen Clark
Pamela Adams
Bonny Osborne



Worshippers, citizens, policemen, merchants, shoppers, judges, spies, Harem girls, wedding and Diwan guests etc.

Pamela Adams, Jonathan Baron, Katrina Brooks, Paul Chittleborough, Helen Clark, Tim Clarke, Anita Collings, Alf Farmer, Helen Fox, Richard Herring, Marea Irving, Helene Jones, Peter McKay, Danny Mullane, Muriel Loveridge, Sandra Moorhouse, Bonny Osborne, Julia Reed, Joyce Ryder, John Slade, Sue Siddalls, Janet Wash, Tom Whelan, Sarah Wilson.

Dancers and dervishes

Tim Clarke (Aziz), Jonathan Baron (Akbar), Kathryn Adkins, Marea Irving, Helen Clarke.