



National Operatic & Dramatic Association

London Area Report

Once again my thanks to your secretary, - Karen Whiffen, for the invitation to review your latest play. This was a first class production, and one that I could find no fault in. The entire cast gave a truly memorable performance., -- and one that they can look back with pride, and satisfaction for many years to come. With all the hard work put in by the cast, and set builders, --- it's a shame that you hadn't got bigger audiences. However those who did attend enjoyed the evening, and were I'm sure full of admiration for the splendid entertainment. Congratulations to everyone.

The play was Directed by -- Gary Field, and assisted by Jeff Barry. Much thought had been put into this production prior to casting I would have thought. The people appointed to play the characters had been well thought out, --- and each individual fitted the part brilliantly.-- it seemed as if the character had been written for them.

The play by Alan Plater, --- who has been involved with much T.V- work, --and may not be well known as a play writer, certainly produced the goods in this play, --- which I'm sure more by chance, than anything, -- was so up to date with some of the happenings we are reading in the press, about some of our politicians!

The play moved at pace, and the music chosen during the scene changes was so apt for the play.

The Cast were so professional in all that they did, -- and Bill, and Ellen, were hardly off the stage for the entire performance, -- how did they manage to remember it all??.

The Cast in order of appearance. —

Bill Robson, — Daniel Lander. — perfect for the role, --- a real cowman who could have ' sold sand to the Arabs'!! Very relaxed as his character needed to be, excellent 'Geordie' accent throughout, -- and his facial movements were a joy to watch, --- his timing, mannerisms, were that of a very experienced performer. Congratulations.

Ellen Scott, — Joan Lee: --- again perfect for the role, -- the middle aged lady whose job in the Library, -- as Senior Librarian, -- and read Two Books a week -- lived for her vocation. Typical of one you would expect working in a small branch library in the 1990's. She however was not to be fooled by Bill, — she could see through him, but she came to enjoy his company, and humour. All facets of her role were played to a very high standard, --- and again her experience showed, after many years of performing, and being involved with theatre in general. Congratulations.

Councillor Graham, — Sandra Keen. -- again Sandra had studied her character, --- perhaps she has attended some Council Meetings, --- or is a councillor in her own right.?? --- whichever, she did a first class job, again excellent facial expressions,--- especially when she felt embarrassed with some questions she was asked by the 'Press Officer', --- as to how Bill had got the post of ' Poetry writer in residence'.? Good diction,-- and she looked good on stage. Again well done. Will you be standing in the forth coming elections.!! — if so I suggest you get Bill to act as your Agent.!!

Gerald Nutley, -- Allan Dover.— another fine performance, -- again so suited to the character, -- I enjoyed the contrast from his opening as the journalist, -- to when he appeared at the library with his two volumes of his manuscript, to be reviewed by that remarkable poet Bill, (ably assisted by Librarian, - Ellen.) Another great performance by a trained actor.

Bernard, — Jonathan Keen. — the gentleman from the local planning office, --did his job with the utmost enthusiasm, and interest in his work. ! (well it's a job isn't it). I liked his characterisation of the role, was that the Directors idea, or his.! —it worked well. I hope you enjoyed the experience of working with such a talented group of people. Well done.

The Set, designed by Jeff Barry, Garry Field, Peter Webster, -- this was well designed, and well built- - it could easily have been 'a small branch library' in some town- — everything fitted perfectly, -- even the kettle boiled for tea. The constructors, ---Jo Webster, Carole Tappenden, Nick Evans, Richard Lock — all played their part also.

Costumes, — Jeni Summerfeld---- your Society are so fortunate in having such a dedicated person (along with Joan) make sure that everything is of the correct period, and always look in perfect condition.

Sound, — Scott Gildert, --- everything worked to perfection, --- the telephone ringing, -- the kettle boiling,--- the music mentioned earlier, --- all were spot on. Well done.

Lighting, — Ian Chandler, ---- well lit set, and we had the contrasts when appropriate.

Other behind the Scenes workers, --

Props, — Alex Oliver, Fiona Merrick

Prompt, — Lois and Adrian Wells.

Posters, — Adrian Wells.

Programme, — Dave Headey.

Publicity, — Fiona Merrick.

Front of House Coordinator, — Denise Monk.

Front of House Team, — Kate Goodwin, Dave Heady, Fiona Merrick, Jeni Summerfield, Alan & Carolyn Taylor, Peter & Jo Webster, Simon & Lynda Wisbey

Without this gallant team of volunteers where would any production, or Society be -- we can not do without them if a show is going to run smoothly and efficiently. Thank you one and all.

It was a first class evenings entertainment, by a very talented cast. You could not have had better drama on TV, --- it was well worth the visit.

May I wish you every success with your next venture, ---- and I hope we can see some of you at the London NODA AGM, on Sunday 28th June at Potters Bar. --- starting at 10am— full details are available from your Secretary, — Karen -- it will be an interesting day, — please try and make it.

Gareth Jeremy, Region 12, London Area