

National Operatic & Dramatic Association

London Area Report



Society : FARINGDON DRAMATIC SOCIETY with SPIRE
Production : BRUSH UP YOUR SHAKESPEARE
Date : 14th JUNE 2002
Venue : BUSCOT HOUSE THEATRE
Report by : GARETH JEREMY. REGION 12

Thank you for the invitation to your latest production.

Firstly, I must give credit to the person who decided that it would be good to put on a production for your Society at Buscot House Theatre.

Everything felt right for such a production. The setting, the unique intimate theatre, and perfect location for a romantic evening.

LUCY WALDEN had certainly spent hours doing her research for such an event - and the extracts from -
Twelfth Night,
Much Ado About Nothing,
The Taming of the Shrew,
A Midsummer Night's Dream,
Romeo & Juliet,
Merry Wives of Windsor,
The Merchant of Venice;
were all well directed by both LUCY WALDEN and DENIS PEACH.

The staging was simple, but very effective on such a small stage, and all the cast were confident in the restricted movement they could use.

The period costumes designed and created by JENI SUMMERFIELD, JOAN LEE, and SHARON GERRY were outstanding; were all these made 'in house'? (*YES - ALL OF THEM!*) They would have been a credit to any professional costumiers. The costume fit, and rich colours of the fabric were superb. The costumes fitted so well, and there was an elegance of movement by the individuals throughout. Did you rehearse in long skirts? This is always a good idea so that the actors can gain confidence with stage movements, and particularly if there is any dancing to do.

It was a pity that the Musicians and Singers (Spire), who were permanently on stage for the first part of the evening, could not have been dressed in similar fashion.

It would be wrong on this occasion to single out any of the actors, the understanding of Shakespeare and the individual roles came over well, diction was clear, and well delivered, extracting from time to time, the good humour from parts of the script.

The versatility and contrast was there for all to see, especially as I've seen many of you on the 'boards', previously in panto etc..

All the cast worked as a 'team', and from the harmony of the music and singers large and minor principal roles, young dancers; one could not select individual performances. Everyone on stage gave the impression that they were enjoying themselves.

The programme was fitting for the occasion. and well balanced. Obviously. a lot of thought had been put into it's preparation. I was saddened to see that no reference was Made to N.O.D.A. It is usual for all programmes to include 'Affiliated to N.O.D.A.'