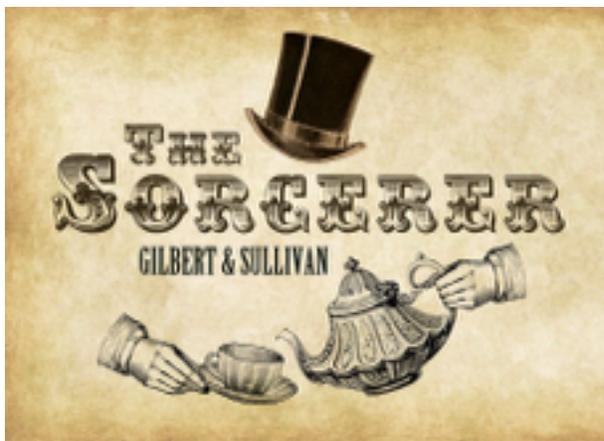




YOUNG CRITICS CIRCLE

VOL. 1 – “THE SORCERER” (JUNE 28-JULY 2, 2016) & “OF THEE I SING” (JULY 5-9, 2016)



Welcome!

Since its founding, The College Light Opera Company has striven to provide a rich theatre experience to the community, and a unique educational opportunity for students. Expanding upon our mission, we have started a new program at CLOC, the Young Critics Circle! Through the Young Critics Circle, middle school and high school students write reviews throughout the season, and share their experiences at the Highfield Theatre with the Cape Cod community and beyond. We are delighted to kick-off this new program during CLOC's 48th season with two very contrasting shows, Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Sorcerer," and George and Ira Gershwin's "Of Thee I Sing." Please enjoy the first installment of College Light Opera Company's Young Critics Circle!

A Review of *The Sorcerer* by Brian Berestecky

When it comes to enticing an audience in a theatre, it's important that the beginning and ending act be the strongest, as they should both make the audience want to come back for more. Now this act could be anything, such as the first of three acts to a dramatic play, or an opening musical number that hooks the audience. The 48th season opener for the College Light Opera Company, Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Sorcerer* (first opened 1887), is that opening key act for the entire 9 show season. But did it do its job of appealing to the audience? With charm and wit, it proved to be a delightful way to kick off a very promising season. So yes, it did its job quite well. The stage was a canvas that was painted with beautiful scenery and costumes, with the hollowing voices as that final brush stroke of fine art. On June 28th, the Highfield stage showcased this marvelously painted show, glowing with harmonious voices and much assurance for a terrific season ahead.

The show features the theme of love and what happens when you decide to mess around with it by artificial means; basically, you could get burned by playing with matches. This theme is expanded upon by following the story of Alexis, a man who wants everyone in his town to experience the feeling of love he has for his betrothed Aline. With this intention, he hires a sorcerer named J. W. Wells to bring about love to everyone with a philtre (a love potion) that is to be poured into a tea kettle that's going to be shared with everyone in the town. The show starts off slow, as does every Gilbert & Sullivan piece, but progressively gets better and more exciting as the mischief skyrockets upwards with a very steady pace that carefully handles its fast and slow moments, leaving you full of excitement once the curtain closes.

Director Mark Pearson executes this hilariously complex operetta by means of a presentational style, which arguably is the best way to go about staging a Gilbert & Sullivan show. The operetta was continuously well treated with costuming, scenic design, and of course, bold and beautiful performances by some very talented college students. Stage couple Alexis and Aline were actually quite pleasant to see on the stage; actors Daniel Terry and Claire Leyden created a very much believable chemistry that actually made me feel like the characters were really in love. I may come off surprised because it's very rare that I find a genuine romantic chemistry on stage. Terry and Leyden brought the characters' love to life, winning the hearts of everyone in the audience. Other performance highlights include the comically masterful Dr. Day (Andrew Campbell) who had a remarkable presence on stage, the hilarious relationship between Sir Marmaduke

and Lady Sangazure, and the show stealing Dennis Wees as the sorcerer himself, John Wellington Wells. The entire ensemble sounded beautiful, all in character and sync with one another, consequently carrying the show in all the right directions.

Set designer Joshua Warner created a memorable little world in what seemed to be a Bone China teacup. In my opinion, this as brilliant as a set design can possibly get. It's got acknowledgeable attention to detail with correlation to the show and overall it's very beautiful to look at. I can't wait to see what else he's got in store for sets for the rest of the season, because Warner shows great promise. Costume designer Jenni Oughton has the touch needed to set the stage with all the right outfits; they suited everyone so perfectly from the dramatically depressed Constance wearing dull colored outfits that best represent her characters mood, to the bright and radiantly red colored uniform for Alexis, a beaming young man full of love for his Aline. Additional technical backstage effects were all timed and managed professionally, such as the large variety of smoke machines used throughout the performance, all of which adding to the exciting feel of the show, especially in the second act.

With excellent craft and effort from both cast & crew, a production in which it seems both the audience and actors were having fun, took the stage at Highfield Theatre from June 28th to July 2nd. *The Sorcerer* wasn't a show to miss, given that it's such a rarely done classic. The entire cast was on point with all aspects of performance, and the entire backstage creatives generated a rather enchanting world full of new surprises around every corner. To anyone with a fine taste, this should be an experience that should appeal to all theatre-goers. It's got catchy tunes (most notably the patter/charm song "*My Name Is John Wellington Wells*") sung by talented performers featuring a wonderful set and showcase of costumes. *The Sorcerer* guaranteed that an exciting season is ahead for CLOC, fulfilling its duty as the key opening act that casts a spell out into the audience, making them want to come back for more.

Student Spotlight: Caleb Gartner

What show did you see at the Highfield Theatre?

“The Sorcerer on July 1 at 8 PM”

What was the show about?

“The small village of Ploverleigh and the effects that a love potion has on the romances of the town.”

What were your favorite parts of the show?

“I enjoyed the high amount of energy each actor put into his or her role even if they were not lead roles.”

What were some musical highlights/favorite songs from the show?

“I especially enjoyed the song when Constance sings to the old man.”

What were the main themes/ideas of the show?

“I think the main theme was that love cannot be faked. You cannot have a soulmate handed to you.”

How did the show make you feel?

“The show was funny and made me laugh, and even during serious parts, had a light mood to it.”