

THE REVIEWERS CLUB

Theatre Review

Event: A Game of Love & Chance

Venue: Salisbury Playhouse

Date: 5 April 2011

Reviewer: Hannah Speed



As the red curtain rises, and doors are thrown open, the cast step out into a classic 1960's upper-class two-storey reception room. In the corner is a piano, which Maurice (played by Glyn Kerslake) takes up and begins to play but it's not long before Silvia (Hattie Ladbury) comes in to shout at her maid. Silvia's father, Mr Prowde (Stephan Critchlow), is keen for her to be married– and has invited an eligible young gentleman to the family home for dinner. However, Dorant (Tom Davey), the suitor in question, has decided that he'd like to take a look at his beau in disguise – and so swaps places with his chauffer. But Silvia has the same idea, and without Dorant knowing exchanges her dress for her maids. No-one can be taken at face value and all pre-judgements are to be cast aside as with this scenario, disaster and laughter is bound to occur.

In between the witty banter and declarations of love, there were a lot of aside notes from the cast to the audience. This kept me very entertained and made me feel involved with the story. The comedy in *The Game of Love and Chance* was marvellously delivered and well-scripted. My favourite comical character was the chauffer, Arlecchino (Antonio Magro) who was a man of Spanish roots who had been trained by his master, Dorant to speak like a gentleman. But you can see him slipping back into his ways, by forgetting to take off his hat and opening doors and bowing to people, the reactions from the rest of the cast towards him are hilarious.

The characters of Silvia and Dorant were beautifully played by Hattie Ladbury and Tom Davey. The scenes with them are particularly funny as you, the audience, know their real identity but it is unbeknownst to them. Jo Herbet, who plays the cockney maid Lisette, executes her role very well. Lisette was one of my favourite characters, it was very entertaining to see her pretend to be a lady, and then I couldn't stop laughing when she goes to Mr Prowde and suggests, in her cockney accent, that they give up the façade as she feels that there have been romantic advances from Dorant (who is not really Dorant, but his chauffer) to her, but Mr Prowde (who knows about the hidden identity on both sides) simply dismisses her worries saying that there was no way a gentleman would be attracted to her, a serving girl and with this he sets Lisette on a mission to prove him wrong...

Overall, this was a thoroughly enjoyable production. It had me laughing the whole way through. The plot itself was relatively easy to follow considering the story-line, as the audience, we always knew what was going on compared to the characters who were in the dark. If you can't wait to book your ticket for an amusing and very entertaining production then go on down do Salisbury Playhouse to book your ticket, it is being staged there until the 23rd April.

*The Young Reviewers Club is run by The Unit,
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