

CLACTON
OPERATIC SOCIETY



PRINCES THEATRE

1949

CLACTON OPERATIC SOCIETY

Affiliated to the N.O.D.A.



presents

(By permission of Exors. of R. D'Oyly Carte Esq.)

“ I O L A N T H E ”

OR THE PEER AND THE PERI

by W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan

APRIL 5th, 6th, 7th 8th and 9th, 1949, at 7.45 p.m.

Matinee Saturday April 9th at 2.30 p.m.

Preliminary Announcement

Our Next Production

“ THE ARCADIANS ”

CLACTON OPERATIC SOCIETY

Affiliated to the Clacton Arts Centre



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Story of the Opera

"THE PEER AND THE PERL." Peri is a Persian word for fairy. There, you have the gist of the play. Fairies, as everybody is aware, are always meddling in our affairs, and here they make a terrible mess of the House of Peers. Their methods are unfair and dishonest; also they are strongly organised, and obey their leaders implicitly; and how can mere men struggle with people who can swing on cobwebs, gambol on gossamer and pop through keyholes?

Iolanthe, one of the prettiest and cleverest of the fairies, had, five-and-twenty years ago, married a rising young barrister. It was stupid, because she must have known the penalty it involved—death. But she had made herself, before her fault, so extremely pleasant and useful to the fairies in general, and the Fairy Queen in particular, that her sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life; a sentence she is working out, apparently upside down, at the bottom of a stream. The Queen under pressure, pardons her, and Iolanthe emerges at the correct angle from the water. She had chosen this dreary, damp and froggy spot in order to be near her son Strephon, who was born twenty-four years ago. Now this Strephon, a good-looking young shepherd is betrothed to Phyllis, a nice girl who is a ward in Chancery; but he says nothing to her of his parentage. He does not tell her that half of him is fairy and the other half mortal; that half of him can be made invisible while his legs are solid flesh; that his lower half ages daily, being mortal, while the rest of him goes on through centuries. The fairies themselves are, as a matter of fact, about two hundred years old, but have the youthful charm of sweet seventeen. Consequently, when Phyllis catches Strephon caressing his mother, Iolanthe, she cannot believe that it is his mother. No girl could—especially as Iolanthe is provokingly pretty. Moreover, some fifty peers—a precisely equal number of Liberals and Conservatives—are in love with Phyllis, and so, too, is the Lord Chancellor, who is none other than the rising young barrister who, years ago, married Iolanthe. All of these encourage poor Phyllis in her disbelief, and they eavesdrop while the lad is talking with his mother. They only half hear, apparently; otherwise, being gentlemen, they could not have so twisted the words. In vain Strephon asserts the truth; it is obvious that, since Iolanthe looks about seventeen, and he is twenty-four, her age at his birth must have been minus eight. A poor sort of excuse for a young man to make? Besides, there are all Iolanthe's sisters, his aunts. They, too, are young (to look upon) and beautiful, and it would not do for a youth, when seen embracing a very young lady, to say it is an elderly relative. Phyllis denounces Strephon, who, in despair, calls upon his fairy folk to help him. Up they trip in full force, but even their evidence is set aside by the Chancellor and the peers. Phyllis offers herself to her two most persistent admirers, Lords Mountararat and Tolloller—she does not care twopence which. But the Fairy Queen soon puts the sceptical and rather rude peers in their place. For their offence she prepares a deadly retribution. Strephon shall give up playing about with his crooks and ribbons and things, and shall go into Parliament and introduce measures that will make the peers sit up in more senses than one. The session shall extend over the grouse shooting and salmon fishing;

all councillors (the number not limited to five hundred) to be made peers, and dukedoms thrown open to, or limited by, competitive exams. The peers kneel for mercy but it is too late. Strephon gets into Parliament as a Liberal-Conservative by a vast majority, and is made leader of both parties. Those rascally fairies so influence the members that he carries every conceivable measure. They prefer voters to votes but they rely upon their influence over the voters. But this does not quite do. What is a House of Lords without ancestry? And if all the intelligence of the nation is to be squeezed into the Upper Chamber, what on earth is to happen to the Commons? Tolloller and Mountararat explain this to the fairies, who are very much drawn toward the noblemen. By-the-bye, these young ladies have crept, somehow, into the sacred precincts of Palace Yard, Westminster, without challenge from the sentry, and without chaining themselves to the rails. The Fairy Queen catches them hob-nobbing, and chides them but she herself has been smitten by the portly, stolid charm of Private Willis (B. Company, 1st Grenadier Guards) who is on sentry-go. He is large, but quite un-beautiful, and a lady with the ripening knowledge of two hundred years might have been expected to exhibit more taste; still, she determines to overcome her weakness, and the other fairies sorrowfully do the same.

Now comes the time when Phyllis must choose between her two peers. Really, she has not an atom of choice: both are Earls, both rich, and both plain, she says: moreover, her heart aches for Strephon. The two highly-gifted noblemen worry the matter out between themselves, and each finally decides, in friendships' name, to abandon her to the other. Noblesse oblige. Now is the Lord Chancellor's opportunity. He has long been wrestling with himself as to the rights and wrongs of allowing himself to marry his own ward, but after a brilliant and pathetic speech to himself he persuades himself to permit himself, most reluctantly, to pay court to the beautiful young lady. Things look bad for poor Strephon. No "quite, calm deliberation" can put the matter right, but a mother's love can. Of course, Iolanthe has, so far, screened herself from the probably myopic Chancellor—she must die if she reveals her identity to him. She "takes the fence" readily, makes a beautiful appeal and finally, all else failing, tears the veil from herself. He sees again the bride of old, who, no doubt, used to come popping down the chimney to break the briefless monotony of his chambers.

Now Iolanthe must die. But wait a minute. Those naughty girls, the fairies, are all equally guilty; they have all become fairy peeresses. Being, as I have said, thoroughly organised, they go on strike, if Iolanthe perishes so do they all. The Queen cannot slay them all, and be left alone herself among a world of humdrum mortals, yet the law is quite clear. The Chancellor, lawyer-like, sees a loophole. What simpler than to insert the little word "don't" in the fairy code? Thus: "Every fairy shall die who don't marry a mortal." Just a pencil-mark, and the thing is done. Now, the only one in trouble is the Fairy Queen, and Private Willis, being a British soldier naturally steps forth to console beauty in distress. So that is all right. Dear little wings sprout from the shoulders of the men; the peers become peris, and give up politics for pairing. Such was Gilbert's humorous idea of a Parliament Bill in 1882.



HERBERT S. SHARP, *Producer*

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“ I O L A N T H E ”

OR THE PEER AND THE PERI

by W. S. GILBERT and ARTHUR SULLIVAN

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The Lord Chancellor	- - - - -	Frank McCulloch
Earl of Mountararat	- - - - -	Ernest Hunt
Earl Tolloller	- - - - -	Harry Bailley
Private Willis (<i>of the Grenadier Guards</i>)	- - - - -	Leslie Doe
Strephon (<i>an Arcadian Shepherd</i>)	- - - - -	Kenneth Collitt
Queen of the Fairies	- - - - -	Dorothy Wilkinson
Iolanthe (<i>a Fairy, Strephon's Mother</i>)	- - - - -	Doris Long
Celia	} <i>Fairies</i> - - - - -	Margaret Webb
Leila		Jean Titford
Fleta		Margaret Doe
Phyllis (<i>an Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward in Chancery</i>)	- - - - -	Joan Harris
Page	- - - - -	GEOFFRY TITFORD

CHORUS OF DUKES, MARQUISES, EARLS, VISCOUNTS, BARONS
AND FAIRIES

ACT I. An Arcadian Landscape.

ACT II. Palace Yard, Westminster.

Date. Between 1700 and 1882.

Costumes by B. J. SIMMONS, Ltd.

Scenery by STAGE SCENERY, Ltd.

LADIES OF THE CHORUS

MESDAMES :

M. Burgess, B. Curtis, D. Copeland, E. Dove, B. Evans,
G. Griggs, E. Goodey, D. Goodman, R. Goodey, B. Huckin,
B. Mayhew, D. Page, M. Prentice, C. Prestidge, E. Pike,
D. Rayburn, M. Spencer, E. Turner, F. Thomas, J.
Westwood,

GENTLEMEN OF THE CHORUS

MESSRS :

L. Archer, H. Cole, L. Cato, J. Chatten, R. Carter, E. Cox,
J. Howlett, A. Judge, I. McCulloch, D. Simcox, A. Smith,
V. Spurgeon, D. Skitmore, E. Tassell, W. Timmens,
A. Wilkinson.

ORCHESTRA

Conducted by Raymund J. Salt, L.R.A.M.

1st Violin :

(Leader) Mr. E. Gordon

2nd. Violins :

Mr. P. Arthy Mr. Nimms

Viola :

Miss Doris Fluck

'Cello :

Mr. E. H. Bateman

Double Bass :

Mr. A. Walton

Clarinet :

Mr. R. W. Kirk

Flutes :

Mr. G. D. Gwilt Mr. J. F. Stokes

Bassoon :

Mr. D. H. Howe

Oboe :

Miss Evelyne Dunball

1st. Trumpet :

Mr. S. Stanley

2nd Trumpet :

Mr. S. Romano

Trombone :

Mr. J. A. Peate

Tympani :

Mr. E. Rushworth

Pianist :

Miss Nora Davall, A.T.C.L.

Lighting Effects by PRINCES THEATRE



RAYMUND J. SALT, L.R.A.M.,
Hon. Musical Director

“IOLANTHE”

MUSICAL NUMBERS

OVERTURE

ACT I

- OPENING CHORUS OF FAIRIES, SOLI (Celia and Leila)
Tripping Hither, Tripping Thither
- INVOCATION (Queen, Iolanthe, Celia, Leila, and Chorus of Fairies)
Iolanthe, From Thy Dark Exile
- SOLO (Strephon and Chorus of Fairies)
Good-Morrow, Good Mother
- SOLO (Queen and Chorus of Fairies)
Fare Thee Well, Attractive Stranger
- SOLI (Phyllis and Strephon)
Good-Morrow, Good Lover
- DUET (Phyllis and Strephon)
None Shall Part Us
- ENTRANCE AND MARCH OF PEERS (Tenors and Basses)
Loudly, Let the Trumpet Bray
- ENTRANCE OF LORD CHANCELLOR
- SONG (Lord Chancellor and Chorus of Peers)
The Law is the True Embodiment
- TRIO AND CHORUS OF PEERS
(Phyllis, Lord Tolloller, and Lord Mountararat)
My Well-Loved Lord
- RECIT (Phyllis)
Nay Tempt Me Not
- CHORUS OF PEERS AND SONG (Lord Tolloller)
Spurn Not the Nobly Born
- ENSEMBLE
(Phyllis, Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat, Strephon, Lord Chancellor
and Chorus of Peers)
My Lords It May Not Be
- SONG (Lord Chancellor)
When I Went to the Bar
- FINALE, ACT I
(Phyllis, Iolanthe, Queen, Leila, Celia, Strephon, Lord Tolloller,
Lord Mountararat, Lord Chancellor, and Chorus of Fairies and Peers)
When Darkly Looms the Day

FIFTEEN MINUTES INTERVAL

MUSICAL NUMBERS—*Continued*

ACT II

SONG (Sentry)

When All Night Long a Chap Remains

CHORUS (Of Fairies and Peers)

Strephon's a Member of Parliament

SONG (Lord Mountararat and Chorus)

When Britain Really Ruled the Waves

DUET

(Leila, Celia with Chorus of Fairies, Lord Mountararat, and Lord Tolloller)

In Vain to Us You Plead

SONG (Queen with Chorus of Fairies)

Oh, Foolish Fay

Quartet (Phyllis, Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat and Sentry)

Tho' P'r'aps I May Incur Your Blame

RECIT AND SONG (Lord Chancellor)

Love Unrequited Robs Me of My Rest

TRIO (Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat and Lord Chancellor)

He Who Shies at Such a Prize

DUET (Phyllis and Strephon)

If We're Weak Enough to Tarry

RECIT AND BALLAD (Iolanthe)

My Lord, A Suppliant at Your Feet

RECIT (Iolanthe, Queen, Lord Chancellor, and Fairies)

It May Not Be

FINALE

(Phyllis, Iolanthe, Queen, Leila, Celia, Lord Tolloller, Lord Mountararat, Strephon, Lord Chancellor and Chorus of Fairies and Peers)

Soon as We May Off and Away

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE DURING INTERVAL

Clacton Operatic Society

Hon. Musical Director :

Raymund J. Salt, L.R.A.M.

Hon. Pianoforte Accompanist at Rehearsals :

Nora Davall, A.T.C.L.

Hon. Chorus Master :

William Goodey

Hon. Stage Manager :

Jimmy Thompson

Prompt :

Doris Westwick

Wardrobe Mistresses :

Mary Chasemore, Evelyn Johnson

Perruquiers :

Phil Gascoigne, John Gascoigne

Peter Bevis, Jack Gleave

Wigs Dressed by :

W. Timmens

House Manager :

V. W. G. Gardner

Hon. Auditors :

Norfolk Pawsey and Co.

Executive Committee :

Mr. V. Spurgeon (*Chairman*)

Mrs. A. F. Chasemore, Mrs. D. Long, Mr. H. Cole

Hon. Treasurer :

Mr. W. Timmens

Hon. Publicity & Business Manager :

Mr. E. W. Hunt

Hon. Secretary :

Mr. D. C. Taylor

Frontispiece of this Programme Designed by :

R. C. Harris, Esq.

Acknowledgements

The Society express grateful thanks and Appreciation to the under-mentioned for their loyal support and valued assistance.

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PROGRAMME SELLERS AND STEWARDS.

MR. and MRS. A. H. HAINES for their interest on the occasions of Rehearsals and Social Events.

WEST CLACTON LAUNDRY for their assistance in the distribution of pamphlets.

MESDAMES D. and M. LEWIS.

Mr. E. J. TONG for assistance behind Scenes.

MRS. HOWARD.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS.

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS HAVE BEEN :—

1930 "Pirates of Penzance"	1934 "Monsieur Beaucaire"
1930 "Iolanthe"	1935 "Ruddigore"
1931 "The Gondoliers"	1935 "The Vagabond King"
1931 "Trial by Jury" and "H.M.S. Pinafore"	1936 "Pirates of Penzance"
1932 "The Mikado"	1937 "The Rebel Maid"
1932 "Merrie England"	1938 "Rose Marie"
1933 "The Rose of Persia"	1939 "Good Night Vienna"
1934 "The Yeomen of the Guard"	1947 "Merrie England"
	1947 "The Gondoliers"
	1948 "The Mikado"

CLACTON AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY

NEXT PRODUCTION—

"Quiet Week-end"

AT THE PRINCES THEATRE MAY 4th—7th

Clacton Operatic Society

will welcome applications from young men
with ability to sing in chorus work. Meet
our secretary, he will be pleased to enlighten
you on the conditions of membership . . .

In conclusion . . .

KEEP IN MIND OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

THAT EVER POPULAR MUSICAL COMEDY

“The Arcadians”

(ALWAYS MERRY AND BRIGHT)