



SHARPE'S SURE SHREW SOFTENS & SHAMES AUDIENCE APPRECIATES ADVENTUROUS APPROACH



photo: Jim Webster

John Sharpe - Kate the Shrew

The Taming of The Shrew, the second of our productions, was brought to audiences in Pocklington and York in June. Under the direction of Paul Toy, it was clear from the start that this would be a somewhat unconventional production.

It certainly seems that Paul has achieved much of what he hoped for in his programme note, that the production be "less of a treatise and more of a game". The cast came across as a cohesive group intent on participating in this game.



photo: Jim Webster

Ali Borthwick - Petruchio

Peter Lathan (*British Theatre Guide*) wrote: "I felt that the whole company was...at home with Shakespeare and that they "felt" the text rather than simply appreciating it intellectually".

Charles Hutchinson (*York Evening Press*) observed: "Paul Toy has shaken up Shakespeare without damaging the goods" and a little more searchingly: "...the comedy acquires a newly pantomimic quality while emphasising the deeper theme of the needs of individual freedom versus the demands of social conformity." Exactly. And it was also a good laugh too.

Paul Toy's imaginative approach to the work has been well received by those on both sides of the curtain.

As in Richard III, live music was used to good effect in the production, the harmonious singing providing comment on the action as well as making the scene changes an entertainment in themselves.

The need for a set which would work in both Pocklington and York meant that it had to be one that could be relatively easily erected and transported between venues. Though a simpler set than that of Richard III, it lent itself well to the action and was used creatively by the cast. The mobile platforms and materials used will hopefully be of use in future shows.

Many of the cast were new to YSP and we hope that their interest will continue for those numerous future productions.

The Next Production

will be 'A Comedy of Errors' directed by Chris Rawson, with Ali Borthwick stage-managing. Auditions have taken place and there has been no shortage of talent, including many new faces (as well as a few old ones!). Chris has fully cast the play and work is already under way to deliver an entertainment of comedy, music, weirdness and violence in a mid-Victorian setting.

The performances will take place at Foxwood, Burnholme and Tang Hall community centres before playing at the Friargate Theatre 3rd-6th December.

Followed by...

Titus Andronicus, to be staged at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre 20th-24th April 2004 - would you like to be its' Director?

An advert has been placed in *The Stage* for one, which could be you!

Don't forget that as we are non-professional we need a long rehearsal period of two or three nights a week which for Titus would mean beginning in January 2004 with auditions held in late November, early December of 2003. The closing date for applications is Friday 19th September with interviews on Saturday 4th October. For fee details contact Alan Lyons email alan@yorkshakespeare.org.uk or 'phone York 638865.

Annual General Meeting

held on 20th May at The Stables, off Scarcroft Road was well attended and lively (perhaps we ought to re-consider the provision of wine...). New members were elected to the Executive Committee; here's the current line-up:

Chair: Ray Baggaley
Treasurer: Kit Bird
Project Secretary: Linda Maloney
Minutes Secretary: Eileen Dale
Education & Outreach Officer: Judith Ireland
Membership Secretary: Jamie Searle

Other members were elected to the committee: Jennifer Aitken, Ali Borthwick, Alan Lyons, Lee Maloney, Barbara Miller and Chris Rawson.

The Holding Trustees (who have an overview of the direction of the Project) are Frank Brogan, Janet Looker and Adam Myers.

Funding

is boosted as we have received a grant of £5,000 from Awards for All (a National Lottery Scheme for local groups) and £500 from Norwich Union - these sums will keep us afloat for the next year or so, BUT we still need more bums-on-seats for the performances, not only to increase the box-office takings but also to spread the word about what we are doing and to get people interested and involved-there are many plays to perform yet!

Fun(draising)

Friday 26th September, York's Bedern Hall, Bartle Garth (sort of behind Boyes') is to be the lovely setting for an evening of songs and sonnets (written) by Shakespeare and his contemporaries entitled 'The Passionate Pilgrim'.

This promises to be an entertaining event, starting at 7.30pm, tickets priced at £4 in advance, £5 on the door, available from Kit Bird on York 625415. Contact Kit if you'd like to help on the night. It's only on once, and the hall only holds about sixty folk, so get your tickets soon!

More fun(draising)

Thursday 11th December we shall be running a cafe with book and bric-a-brac sale at St. Crux's Church (at the bottom end of The Shambles)-this will need staffing and also some cakes & biscuits for this as well as any items that you can contribute for sale- please contact Barbara Miller on York 728480 if you would like to help in any way.

Other fun

was had by YSP members once again in July under the direction of Paul Toy in a new work "Caesar in Eboracvm" penned by Richard Stell. This was staged just outside of the Roman Baths at St. Sampson's Square as part of the York Roman Festival.

YSP Website

is much enhanced and includes details of past productions- thanks to the application of Alan Lyons and Kestor Edmonds - take a look at www.yorkshakespeare.org.uk

Please send your contributions for the next issue of *Will* to me, Jamie Searle 20 Bootham Row, YO30 7BR or e-mail: jamie.searle@bbc