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Society : Mortimer Dramatic Society
Production : Anybody for Murder?
Date : Saturday 27th October 2018
Venue : St John's Hall - Mortimer
Report by : Jeanette Maskell

[Show Report](#)

This comedy turned out to be quite farcical. It was extremely well written with a witty script and ludicrous plot. As with all good plays the first half hour was taken up with introducing the characters and laying out the plot and sub plots! However once it got going it was excellent. It had been well cast with some super performances from all the actors; and the final twist was brilliantly delivered.

Darren Reed – (Max Harrington) – As the duplicitous Max Harrington, this actor pulled off the equivalent of a theatrical conjuring trick by making the audience root for the villain of the piece. He also provided boundless energy which propelled the production along. His interaction and reaction was natural and intuitive; and his comedic timing superb.

Helen Sharpe – (Janet Harrington) – This actress gave a knockout performance! Her persona lit up the stage on every entrance. Her dialogue was exquisite with super diction and inflection; however the reference to a lisp she didn't have did not go unnoticed. That said her characterisation was great and the rapport she created with Max and Edgar was spot on. I so enjoyed the change in her character when she turned villainess and her dialogue delivery in the final scene was superb.

Kim Antell – (Suzy Stevens) – I so enjoyed this rather ditzzy characterisation. Her dialogue was wheedling and questioning whenever she tried to remember the plan; yet strong and confident when talking with the Ticklewells! There was a tangible rapport between her and Max which added to the humour of the piece.

Sam Foad – (Edgar Chambers) – As the drunken author and knowing a thing or two about murder; this young man was great. He pitched the character just right never going too far; meaning the humour came over famously. His dialogue was slightly slurred which was perfect for the character but always clear and audible. His movement also matched his drunken behaviour and the scene where he appeared sporting a mighty hangover looking for the hair of the dog was really amusing.

Mary Auckland – (Mary Ticklewell) – This was a terrific characterisation! Her bossy no nonsense dialogue was perfect and her whole demeanour created an almost caricature persona. Much of the comedy came from her and her inept lawyer husband which had the audience roaring with laughter.

Tom Shorrock – (George Ticklewell) – This actor was the perfect foil for Mary; their pairing was inspired! Dialogue between them bubbled along brilliantly with George bumbling and bungling his way through their conversations. His visuals were superb; at times he had a

vacant expression that was highly amusing and others he was strained and contorted as he tried to keep up with the plot.

Paula Stenson/Phil Collins – (Directors) – These two obviously work extremely well together and either agree on everything or at least complement each other famously. This was a super piece of theatre with the action moving along at a great pace. They had created some superb characterisations which I understand from reading the programme developed from workshops and improvisations. An interesting concept! Their staging was excellent with good positioning and groupings. I absolutely loved the blackouts giving rise to frozen pictures of the ongoing action. Entrances and exits were fluent and overlapped to perfection. I look forward to seeing their next venture!

John Bull – (Stage Manager) – Once again this SM did a grand job in keeping the stage operational. Other than having to ensure the prosceniums were pulled at the right moment; which they were he had little else to do.

John Bull/Mick Snyder/Members of the Society – (Set Design/Construction) – I really liked this set. It really did look like the interior of a property you would find in Greece. The green used for the doors gave a splash of colour to the stage and the painted outdoor flat created a distinction from inside to out. The stairs which played a major part in the action were superb and the practical doors worked like a dream

Amy Collins/Sarah Roper – (Wardrobe) – All costumes had been chosen to suit the personality of the character. Janet's modern trendy look, Suzy's and Edgar's casual one to the more formal dress of the Ticklewell's.

Kerry Thomas/Karen Dignan/Cynthia Newman - (Properties) – these had been well collated from rugs to suitcases ouzo bottles and the key in the bedroom door. However the dressing of the stage was brilliant! The kitchenette with a shelf packed with mugs cereals glasses and mustard? All looked totally authentic. The table and chairs complemented the set design and the sofa blended naturally.

Katja Hunt - (Lighting) – A huge well done to this technician! She controlled the blackouts' superbly. The warm general lighting flooded the stage creating the illusion of a foreign climate.

Chris Chapman – (Sound) – Sound was excellent! I could hear every word the cast said whether facing the audience or upstage. This technician cued everything perfectly.

Mari Flemming - (Makeup) – It was nice to see such consistency with the makeup; including the men. Features were well defined and enhanced the visual affect brilliantly. It is a long time since I have seen anyone take the trouble to use body makeup in order to give authenticity to the character.

Jean Chapman/Jacky Bowyer/Rosemary Wallace – (Front of House) – I would like to thank Jean for her warm welcome and for looking after me so well. The rest of the team were also doing a grand job in looking after the audience.

Thank you

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Jeanette Maskell - NODA Representative - London Region - Area 13