Gilbert and Sullivan presents parody

By Ed Lamon

Gilbert and Sullivan wrote the "Pirates of Penzance" as a grand parody of Verdi, and proclaimed in general, 'pity, pity, pity.' But the MIT Gilbert and Sullivan Society presented this delightful operetta to an enthusiastic and receptive audience. Although occasionally marred by two major faults, a lack of both vocal enunciation and orchestral intonation, the overriding spirit of Sullivan, as revealed in the score, was more than enough to carry the performance through, making the evening quite an enjoyable one.

The plot is quite complex, which itself is a parody on the intrinsically involved librettos found in Italian opera. It centers around the trials of Frederic, the Slave of Duty, as he is carried by his sense of obligation between being a pirate and a virtuous young man.

Skillful coordination

The operetta was completely directed by Nancy-Illene Wehr. It never dragger, and was smoothly coordinated. The acting was also at a high level. Ronald Mahtan played Major General Stanley with a brightness and clearness delighted to see. Norm Ruble as Samuel, as indicated in the Pirate King, even though at times his singing seemed to be lost because he was usually possessed.

The primary male lead was Randall Scheri. His performance was also quite good, but not as consistent as those mentioned above. His acting varied from unemotional and uninviting to impersonal and involved. He played the role of Edgar, who was given a golden opportunity to display his beautiful soprano voice in a coloratura aria, thrillingly parodying Verdi. In collaboration with Nanci Scheri, who managed to produce one of the wittiest parodies of opera, Mozart and Verdi, that I have heard in a long time. Martha Reardon played the role of Ruth, and although her singing in the first act started out amusingly, her projection steadily improved throughout the play, and by the second act she was carrying her role with an assurance.

Orchestra work

As previously stated, the orchestra was seemingly out of tune a few times. The strings especially seemed to play out, without listening to themselves, half a tone off the mark. But except during these few folksy moments, the orchestra managed to stay anonymously below the soloists and chorus. On the other hand, the main two monarchs, the pirates and the savages, were a joy to listen to, beautifully tuned, in tune all of times at the first difficult to understand. The third chorus, that of the police, was not as good as the other, but occasionally because the men seemed unable to execute the low notes of their voices. The acts were very ambitious, and quite successful. The costumes were even more so, with the excellent array of vivid colors. Together with the aforementioned excellence in acting and directing, they produced a production of unqualified merit.

YAF to conduct current issue poll

A Student Poll on Current Issues will be taken by the MIT Chapter of Young Americans for Freedom tomorrow, April 27, in the lobby of Building 30. The poll will consider opinion on a variety of subjects, including the draft, the Vietnam War, loyalty oath for professors, reapportionment, right-to-work, and other subjects of importance to students.

The YAF poll will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday and the questionnaires will be counted by YAF and any members of Students for a Democratic Society who are interested.

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