MIT G&S give a solid performance of Gondoliers

THE GONZOLIERS
The MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players.
Directed by Peter Stark.
Book by Sir W.S. Gilbert.
Score by Sir Arthur Sullivan.
Starring Chris Bailey, David C. Jedlinsky '89,
Julie-Marie Anderson and Grace E. Colon G.
La Sala de Puerto Rico.
April 15-17, at 8 p.m.
April 16-18, at 2 p.m.

By Kimberly A. Knowles

The opening night of the Gilbert & Sullivan Players' production of The Gondoliers was the result of hard work and team spirit. The camaraderie of the performers came through in all aspects of the show, from the cohesion of the orchestra to the synchronicity of the dances. The singing was the usual high quality that has come to be expected of G&SP.

The plot centers around two young gondoliers (Chris Bailey and David C. Jedlinsky '89) who find out that one of them is really the long-lost King of Barataria and was married as an infant to Casilda, the daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro. They are, however, in love with their new brides (Julie-Marie Anderson and Grace E. Colon G), while Casilda loves Luis, her father's attendant. Through a maze of ambiguous identities, jealousy, and confusion typical of Gilbert & Sullivan shows, the couples attempt to resolve their relationships.

The casting of the leads is particularly good. Luis (Neal M. Addicott '97) is especially suited to the part of the young lover opposite Casilda, as he captures just the right balance of spontaneous youth and lovesick boy. Sallyanne Powers convincingly portrays Casilda as a young woman waiting for the husband she is going to marry. The Grand Inquisitor (John S. Wilson), who brings everyone together to preserve the royal throne and title until positive identification is made. They act particularly impressive effect. Anderson and Colon, playing the gondoliers' wives, are witty and properly jealous at the right moments.

Despite some beginning difficulties, the orchestra pulled itself together quickly to produce high-quality music that adds to the charm of the musical. The woodwind section shines, especially Susan M. Dacy '97 on oboe and Professor Harold Abelson PhD '73 and Yoshimasa Ito G on clarinet. The only recurring difficulty in the show was the tendency of the singers and the orchestra to get out of sync occasionally, especially in the faster songs. Still, they displayed an impressive ability to pull together again.

The cast's voices have become the showcase of G&SP, as the women's chorus was as strong as any of the leads. The men's chorus could use more development for a mellower sound, but overall the chorus is quite good. Excellent solo voices bring superior quality to the show, and though the Italian accents are difficult to understand sometimes, the spirit of the theater is captured in the enthusiasm of the performers.

Mesmerizing choreography and stiff-legged dancing are the low points of the show. High points of the performance include well thought out costuming and arched doorways on the stage, which provide cohesion for the Venetian setting, and several corny modern references, such as a modern disco ball during the dance and banquet. Overall, the show is worth seeing for Gilbert & Sullivan fans, as well as for anyone seeking a three-hour respite from serious matters.

A. Knowles

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