

Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company NOTES March 2007

'Kiss Me Kate' Casting

Very well done to all of those who were successful in being cast in the following principal roles:

Hattie.....	Jane Pryer-Smith
Paul.....	Steve Cowdrill
Lois/Bianca.....	Claire Stephens
Bill/Lucentio.....	Ed Hill
Gangster 1.....	Dave Hill
Gangster 2.....	John Johnson
Lilli/Kate.....	Sally Baxter
Fred/ Petruchio.....	Paul Lumsden
Gremio.....	Keith Dovey
Hortensio.....	Dan Bardell
Roz.....	Deb Middleton
Baptista.....	Martin Rainsford
General.....	Mark Skett
Dance Captain.....	Heidi Cresswell

Synopsis

A musical version of "The Taming of the Shrew" is about to open in Baltimore. In the show with producer- actor Fred Graham are his former wife, Lilli; Lois, a singer in whom he is interested; and Bill Calhoun, who is Lois's interest. The irresponsible Bill informs Lois that he has signed Fred's name to a 10,000 dollar IOU for gambling debts. She begs him to reform. Fred and Lilli patch up their differences as they reminisce nostalgically about other shows in which they have appeared together. Fred sends a bouquet to Lois, which is delivered in error to Lilli. On stage as Kate, Lilli discovers that the bouquet was meant for Lois and threatens to leave the show. Her departure is prevented by two gangsters who have come to collect the IOU with Fred's signature. As the first Act ends she is raging, both in character and reality.

Petruchio (played by Fred Graham) although just married to Kate, and beginning his tempestuous wedded life, begins to yearn for his life as a single man. Because of a sudden change in gang administration the gangsters tear up the now worthless IOU and Lilli prepares to walk out on the show as Fred muses on his love for her. The gangsters sing the always show-stopping 'Brush Up Your Shakespeare'. As the show comes to close, Lilli unexpectedly returns and in Kate's words expresses her intention of returning to her husband.

Music Maestro....

Some of the cleverest, funniest, and most romantic songs ever written have come from the pen of Cole Porter. He was unmatched as a tunesmith, and his Broadway musicals, from "Kiss Me Kate" and "Anything Goes" to "Silk Stockings" and "Can Can" - set the standards of style and wit to which today's composers and lyricists aspire.

Porter studied law at Harvard, his interest though remained in music.

In 1916, his first full score "See America First" was performed and was a flop, closing after only fifteen performances. It wasn't, however, until his song "Let's Do It, Let's Fall In Love" appeared in the 1928 musical 'Paris', that he had his first big hit.

His great wit and musical complexity won him the affection of music lovers everywhere. Songs such as 'What Is This Thing Called Love', 'I Get A Kick Out of You' and 'Too Darn Hot' became instant hits and have remained classics.

Despite a horse riding accident in 1937 that crippled him for life, Porter produced much of his best work in the 1940s and 50s. He wrote hundreds of songs for dozens of Broadway shows, movie musicals, and television specials. His most successful musical, "Kiss Me Kate", opened in 1948 and ran for over a thousand performances. Our production this year will be the fourth time we have performed this delightful score following our earlier shows in 1964, 1973 and 1992.

Focus on the Promotions Team....

We all hear about promotions in the final weeks leading up to the show when there are car park and leaflet drops and billboards placed out on public view (and please remember there is a leaflet drop for Kiss Me Kate in Lichfield on 2 May). Then of course there are those graphs recording ticket sales and comparisons with previous shows as the next production draws ever near. However it's not just in the weeks leading up to opening that our promotions team are busy - they're always working away to support our shows. With over three months to go before 'Kiss Me Kate' the promotions team were starting their impressive campaign to boost ticket sales and generate more SCMTC followers.

Our dynamic team led by Mike Castree includes Linda Pringis, Celeste Clark, Sarah Clarke, Paul Lumsden, Dan Bardell, Ed Hill, Deb Middleton, Pauline Hayes and up until recently Paul Cowdrill. The ideas on how to most creatively promote the show have been flowing for some time. There will be two press

releases created and nine local newspapers are being targeted. Ideas for front of house and press photos have been captured and the team have sounded out four local radio stations with links having already been made to nine key web-sites in the region. Booking forms have gone out into five local libraries and an electronic booking form has been circulated to company members. This enthusiastic activity helps to sell shows, grow our audience and keep SCMTC close to the hearts and minds of local theatre - goers.

Programme advertising....

Sales of advertising space in the 'Kiss Me Kate' programme are going very well there is still time though for anyone (businesses, friends) to include an ad. The prices are £100 for a full page, £ 50 for half a page and £25 for a quarter page. Advertising in our programme offers a great marketing opportunity as we have a circulation of 500 copies. To reserve your space contact Margaret Mallett on 0121 357 6053 or email brian_margaret@pageslane.fsnet.co.uk

Photos....

A photo shoot for front of house and the programme has been booked for the Friday rehearsal, 30 March.

Costumes....

The cast and company have been delighted to meet Jenny Lowe who will be in charge of costumes for 'Kiss Me Kate'. Jenny brings to the company her expertise and experience in wardrobe and will be ably assisted in her role by Rachel Gibbon.

Rehearsal Reminders....

The next two rehearsals, 16 and 23 March will be held at Britwell Hall, Boldmere. Between now and the show punctuality is vital and if you are unable to attend please let Sheila know in advance, on 01827 875408.

Maggie is going to run Sunday dance rehearsals starting on 18 March. These will be held from 10-12 at the dance school in Aldridge.

£££'s Wizard of Oz....

In the last edition of NOTES the Board reported lower than anticipated tickets sales for the Wizard of OZ. The financial accounts have been completed for the show and this is the main reason for a recorded overall loss of £2.5K. A £400 increase in production costs above the original budget to enable the show to

have the visual impact it had was also a significant factor in the results.

The Wizard of Oz was a great credit to the company yet it is still the case that for it to be possible to produce shows of this very high standard on a regular basis we need to have the financial support of other activities across the year to survive as a company. By and large company members and their families and friends support the company very well with their ticket sales. Some members sell an exceptional number of tickets. We also have the benefit of a highly enthusiastic promotions team who for each show go the extra mile to maximise ticket sales and ensure that our audience grows year on year. It has to be recognised though that some shows will always be more appealing to theatre goers and the general public than others.

The board is currently, as it has been for some time, pursuing the idea of finding a main sponsor for our productions and on a more limited scale selling advertising space in our programme. The financial performance of the company remains by far the biggest challenge for the board and your ideas and views on maximising the income we generate from our main shows is would be most appreciated.

And the nominations are....

The Wizard of Oz has been nominated for a 2006 BEST PRODUCTION AWARD (Musical) by NODA in their District 6.

The Awards Ceremony is to be held at the NODA AGM Gala evening on Sunday April 1st at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall. In recent years we have been awarded runners-up for our productions of 'Jesus Christ Superstar' and 'Me and My Girl' so lets hope that this year we go one better!

Things We Do For Love.....

Love is the central theme for pretty much every show but especially so for our Autumn compilation, 'The Things We Do for Love'. It follows the journey of five friends through the dating jungle, guided expertly by Cupid.

The show will follow the same winning formula as our 2004 hit 'That's Life' with music, dancing, poems and one liners. There will be 6 principal characters (three male, three female) with opportunities for some solo singing and plenty of chorus work, including a night club, love at the movies medley and a speed dating tango.

Helen, Sheila and Jenny are busy collecting pieces for the show and would welcome any first date/blind date/first kiss stories to add to the mix. Casting and rehearsals are in May and an early

confirmation from members of their commitment to performing in the show would be much appreciated by Helen, email nahamel9801@hotmail.com

Subs

There is no increase in Annual membership subs for 2007, these are due on 1st April. Remember that there is a discount if you pay before 30th April. Membership rates are:

Annual: Full Member £28, if paid before 30 April, £26.00

Unemployed/student £14.00, if paid before 30 April £13.00

All subs must be paid by the end of May as the data-base of membership is to be updated then and if you are not included you will miss out on updates from the company.

**The new system of paying weekly subs in advance on a show by show basis is working successfully. Many thanks to Lisa Cowdrill for collecting from the members who prefer to pay £2.50 weekly, or at the unemployed/student rate of £1.50.

Welcome

Since the last edition of NOTES we have welcomed two new members, Will Parsons and Sarah Turrell. We've also welcomed back Martin Rainsford and Keith Dovey to the performing ranks. Keith's first SCMTC show was in 1992 - 'Kiss Me Kate.'

Becoming a Patron

Are you looking for that ideal gift for Mothers Day? Why stop there? What about Father's day, a Birthday, anniversary or Easter Gift? How about making your special person a Patron of our company? Patrons get the VIP treatment; reduced ticket price, complimentary programme, interval refreshments in the patrons lounge and a free Christmas Concert ticket. For further information on making someone a Patron contact Margaret Mallett on 0121 357 6053, or email brian_margaret@pageslane.fsnet.co.uk

Exploits of our members

Paul Cowdrill

Paul is to leave the area for London to take up a new role with Sky TV. Paul's career in the media behind the camera and mic is blossoming having previously worked for Heart fm and ITV. A member of SCMTC for six years Paul will be greatly missed by all for his enthusiasm and energy both on and off stage. Following a terrific send off we all wish him well and every possible success in his future career. Keep in touch Paul!

Dawn Symonds....

Expert driving tuition is now available from Dawn following her qualification as a driving instructor. All the best Dawn in your interesting and rewarding new venture!

Congratulations Alison and Dean.....

Congratulations and very best wishes for a happy future to Alison (Gibbon)and Dean following their recent Wedding.

SCMTC Board....

Roger Dykes (Acting Chair and Secretary), Malcolm Harris (Treasurer),Jane Pryer - Smith (Production Manager),Margaret Mallett (Patrons), Mark Skett (Member), Celeste Clark (Promotions) Helen King (Membership and tickets) Matt Greenhill (invited member until July 2007,Editor NOTES)

Minute Secretary, Julie Callaghan

Forthcoming Productions....

Kiss me Kate, 15-19 May 2007, Lichfield Garrick Theatre

Producer: Lynne Hill
Musical Director: Sheila Pearson
Choreographer: Maggie Jackson

The Things we do for Love (Compilation Show) 9-13 October 2007, Sutton Coldfield Town Hall

Producer: Helen Gilfoyle
Musical Director: Sheila Pearson
Choreographer: Jenny Jesson

Christmas Concert (tba)

Buddy - the Buddy Holly Story

May 2007, Lichfield Garrick Theatre, dates to be finalised

NOTES is the periodic newsletter of SCMTC. Archived copies can be found at www.scmtc.co.uk If you wish to submit a news item or an article that is of interest to members and our patrons please forward to Matt Greenhill, at mg@scmtc.co.uk.

