



SLOC Spotlight

The Newsletter of the
Schenectady Light Opera Company
Volume 37-4
January 2004

The Mystery of Edwin Drood Cast Announced

The cast of SLOC's third production of the season, Rupert Holmes' Tony-winning *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, has been announced following auditions before Christmas - although as this newsletter goes to press, several roles remain to be filled for the production, set to begin rehearsals in January with performances slated for March 5-7 and 11-14.

Actually, there is little "mystery" to "Drood" at all — for it is not really about solving Charles Dickens' fabled unfinished murder mystery, but about the atmosphere of the Victorian-era English music hall, a rowdy, entertaining form of theater not unlike American turn-of-the-century vaudeville. The cast portray members of The Music Hall Royale company, performing its loose-limbed version of Dickens' tale, with a twist — theatergoers are asked to determine several elements of the show's conclusion, including identifying a mysterious stranger who unravels the titular "mystery"; the identity of the would-be "killer" of young Edwin, and even a pair of lovebirds to warble a final duet!

The original cast of the Broadway production, which snagged several Tony awards including Best Musical, featured star turns by Betty Buckley, George Rose and Cleo Laine — and included our own Michele Pigliavento in its ensemble cast! SLOC's rendition will feature Heather D'Arcy in the "title" role as a celebrated "trouser actress" who tackles the role of the arrogant young Edwin. "His" love interest, the fair Rosa Budd, will be played by Christina Nicotina, a returnee from the *Jane Eyre* cast. Edwin's chief rival for Rosa's affections is the secretive choirmaster John Jasper, to be played by Dave Dixon.

Also among the players in the play-within-the-play are the exotic Landless "twins," Helena [Christine Vermilyea] and Neville Landless [Matt Harvey]; the kindly but confused Rev. Mr. Crisparkle [Joe Malone] and his underappreciated assistant, Bazzard [Brian Sheldon]; the wicked but lovable Princess Puffer [Paula Ginder]; and the inebriated stonemason Durdles [Adam Coons].

Among the supporting ensemble are Christine Bendorf, Meighan Carivan-Esmond, Sue Culver, Casey Dinkin, Jillian M. Dion, Deb May and Margot Phillips.

Still to be cast are the role of the Chairman, the Music Hall Royale's master of ceremonies, and several male ensemble roles. [Anyone interested should contact Joe Phillips at 464-2698].

The show will be directed by Joe Phillips, and produced by Madeline and Peter Codella. Stephen Sanborn makes his SLOC debut as musical director. Lee Ryan will assist as choreographer, and Donna Baxter will stage-manage the production [marking her onstage debut as well!].

Other key members of the production staff include Bob Farquharson overseeing construction of a set conceived by Joe Phillips; Ken Zarnoch as lighting designer; Lois LaBounty designing costumes; David Wilkinson supervising sound, and Carolyn Mills, props and prompter.

826 State St.
Schenectady, NY 12307
393-5732

Web Site:
www.sloctheater.com



2003-2004 Season

Jane Eyre
October 17-19, 23-26
Babes in Arms
December 5-7, 11-14
Drood
March 5-7, 11-14
Victor/Victoria
April 30, May 1-2, 6-9



Tom Heckert
President

Board of Directors
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Mary Kozlowski
Richard Lenehan
Brett Putnam
Michelle Sausa-Gatta
Ted Vickery
Deb Weiskopf
Bonnie Williams
Ken Zarnoch



Next Newsletter
Deadline:
February 11

Spotlight on...

Semi-annual Meeting
Saturday, January 24,
6 p.m.
at the Opera House



President's Notes...by Tom Heckert



Pot Luck Dinner

I urge everyone to attend the Pot Luck Supper at the Opera House on January 24 [see box on page four]. We will be updating everyone on the many events so far this year as well as improvements made to the Opera house. We will also announce the 2004 – 2005 season as well as present the Etta Moore Award, given each year to a member who has made a significant contribution to SLOC over a sustained time period. Also, back by popular demand is “open mike night”! Bring your favorite sheet music and come entertain your friends—it is assured to be a fun night for all! I hope to see everyone there.

Ask Not What SLOC Can Do for You; Ask What You Can Do for SLOC!

One focus for the Pot Luck is stimulating volunteerism from the membership. There are more jobs that need to be done at the Opera House and shrinking numbers of people to perform the tasks. Of most urgent need at this time are volunteers for houseman [or person] and head bartender. These jobs require a one-night commitment during the run of a production. Also needed are people to hear or serve on various committees, such as the Proctor's Tree Decorating Committee, Nominating Committee, and the recently formed Membership Committee [headed by Ken Zarnoch and Bonnie Williams]. Committee membership requires a slightly larger time commitment. During the Pot Luck, there will be lists available for people interested in helping out to sign up. I challenge everyone to sign up to do at least one volunteer event this season.

Babes in Arms

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Babes in Arms* for a terrific run. Plagued with two snowstorms and one cancelled show, the cast and crew persevered and entertained the audiences with those gorgeous Rogers and Hart melodies. First-time director Jennifer Depew kept the cast and crew on the right side of the tracks and brought a quality production to our stage. Kudos to Casey Dinkin, winner of a gift certificate to Petta's for being the top ticket seller from the cast and crew. Remember, if you are involved with a production, make sure your friends and family mention your name when reserving tickets. You could be the winner of the next gift certificate!

Drood Arrives in Town

Director Joe Phillips and his production staff have assembled most of their cast for our next production, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Based on the unfinished novel by Charles Dickens, the mystery is unraveled throughout the night with the audience voting on whom the murderer will be each evening. If anyone is interested in helping with the production, please give Producers Peter and Madeline Codella [346-5461] a call to volunteer.

Preparations for the June Annual Meeting

It is hard to believe, but we are starting to prepare for the annual meeting. The nominating committee will be formed next month and I would like to remind you that in order to vote at the annual meeting in June, you must meet membership requirements and pay your dues by February 1st. For your convenience, a membership form is included on the back page of this newsletter. I also urge anyone who is interested in serving on the board of directors, please let me or another board member know. There are four two-year terms up for election in June.

Drood Factoids

* *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* began life in New York as part of the New York Shakespeare Festival, a series of free performances held each summer at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park.

*The official title was shortened to *Drood* on November 13, 1986. The reason was the hope that a shorter title would be easier to remember [and fit on the marquee!!] and attract a larger audience.

*The show ran a total of 608 performances following its transfer to Broadway.

SLOC Spotlight

SLOC Spotlight is a newsletter of the Schenectady Light Opera Company, P. O. Box 1006, Schenectady, NY 12301. SLOC is a community volunteer musical and theatre arts incorporated, nonprofit organization. Governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership, SLOC's purpose is to foster light opera and related arts for the people in and around Schenectady County, NY.

Newsletter Staff: Jill Coloney, Tom Heckert, Jackie Mosher, and Greg Rucinski.

Subscription Rates: \$5 per year, check payable to SLOC. Send subscription inquiries and address changes to the address listed above.

DEADLINE for submissions to **Vol. 37 Issue No. 5** of the SLOC SPOTLIGHT is **Tuesday, February 11, 2004**. Issue No. 5 will be mailed by February 24.

Please submit articles to Jill Coloney at jac12661@aol.com or 92 Cooks Court, Waterford, NY 12188.

Victor/Victoria Audition Dates Set

Auditions for SLOC's fourth production of the season, Blake Edwards' *Victor/Victoria*, are scheduled for Feb. 3 and 5 (sign-in at 7 p.m.), with a probable callback on Feb. 7. The show will be directed by Laura W. Andruski, and produced by Melinda Zarnoch and Michelle Sausa-Gatta with David Cash as Music Director and Heather D'Arcy as Choreographer. Performances are April 30, May 1, 2, and 5-9, with rehearsals beginning the week of February 9.

Auditioners should prepare at least 16 bars of any Broadway song; please bring sheet music. Music on hand for those who come unprepared will be extremely limited, and a cappella and self-accompanied auditions will be frowned upon. Actors may also be taught a brief selection from the show or asked to bring something contrasting. Approximate vocal ranges are listed with the characters below. There will be readings of selected scenes, and a brief movement audition. Please wear clothing in which you can easily move. Women are encouraged to bring tap shoes if they have them. No accents will be required at auditions, but plausible ones will be needed in performance.

Set in Paris during the 1930's, *Victor/Victoria* is the story of Victoria Grant, a singer down on her luck, who is persuaded by Carroll Todd, a kind but struggling cabaret emcee, to let him present her in his club as Victor, a man performing as a woman! Desperate for work, she agrees, and soon Victor/Victoria becomes the toast of the Paris nightclub circuit. Then she falls in love with King Marchan, a handsome Chicago club-owner visiting Paris. Much to the dismay of his floozie girlfriend, Norma, King is likewise attracted to the gender-challenged Parisian star. Hilarious antics ensue as jealous Parisian club owners attempt to unmask Toddy's new star, and the Chicago underworld attempts to trap King in a compromising relationship.

Music for *Victor/Victoria* was composed by the late, great film composer, Henry Mancini, with lyrics by Leslie Bricusse. The show includes songs, "Le Jazz Hot", "You & Me", "Crazy World" and "Chicago Illinois" from the 1982 motion picture of the same name. Additional music is by Frank Wildhorn, Bricusse's collaborator on the hit, *Jekyll & Hyde*. A stylish, sophisticated, and often hilarious comedy.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

TODDY [Carroll Todd], the nightly singer at the club Chez Lui, Lyric Baritone.

VICTOR/VICTORIA Grant, a British singer, Alto to Mezzo range. Should have a very strong head voice for the upper register.

KING Marchan, a nightclub owner/gangster from Chicago, Lyric Baritone/Tenor.

NORMA Cassidy, King's girlfriend, Mezzo-Soprano.

SQUASH Bernstein, King's bodyguard, Tenor (must hit a G above middle C).

Henri LABISSE, proprietor of Chez Lui; non-singing role.

André CASSELL, agent/producer and nightclub owner, Non-singing role.

SAL Andretti, King's partner of the Chicago Speakeasy, Non-singing role.

JAZZ SINGER at Cassell's Paris nightclub, Baritone/2nd Tenor.

FLOWER LADY [Street Singer] in a Paris square, Mezzo-Soprano.

CHORUS:

Up to 8 men and 8 women, various ages; solid singers and dancers (non-singing roles too!), to portray STREET PASSERBYS, NIGHTCLUB PATRONS, PARTY GUESTS, and CHICAGO HENCHMEN. Also need 4-6 men willing to cross-dress and showcase as performers in a gay men's club in Paris. Please note: *Victor/Victoria* deals with adult situations and humor.

Any questions contact Laura Andruski at 383-8277 or email LWAndruski@aol.com.

2004 MEMBERSHIP LIST

(as of December 29, 2003)

(58 members)* designates a new member

Joe Agostine	Debbie May
Barbara Aldershoff	Joanne Mensching
Laura Andruski*	Michael Mensching
Alan Angelo	Jo-Ann Menzer
	Judi Merriam
Eileen Bush	Drew Mills
	Ginny Mills
Jean Clarke	Jackie Mosher
Varro Clarke	Mary-Ann Muth
Joe Concra	
MaryAnn Concra	Gioia Ottaviano
Paul Croteau	
Rita Croteau	Chris Pedersen
	Larry Pedersen
Tom DellaSala	Brett Putnam
Johnna DiScipio*	
Ferne Dutkin*	Walter Raab
	John W. Ryan
Sally Farrell	
Linda Fetherston	Ruth Salter
Allan Foster	Michelle Sausa-Gatta
Marion Foster	Argie Serras
	Jane Stewart
Art Gauvreau	Peter Stewart
Paige Gauvreau	Joan Sticher
Della Gilman	
Jodi Gilman	Elisa Verb
	Allan Villeneuve*
Tom Heckert	
Charlie Hepburn	Debra Weiskopf
Grace Hepburn	Eric Weiskopf
Alicia Hermance	Bonnie Williams
Myron Hermance	
	Ken Zarnoch
Bill Kornrumpf	Melinda Zarnoch
Gina Kornrumpf	Thelma Zeh
Richard Lenihan	

Zombie Prom

wins TANYS Awards!

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Zombie Prom* for their

Award

8 TANYS Awards! Awards were for: Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Overall Production, Outstanding Musical Direction, Excellence in Musical Scene Execution for "Easy To Say", Meritorious Achievement in Characterization awarded to Colin McCarty and Gwen Fraser, Excellence in Musical Accompaniment, and Excellence in Set Design and Special Effects.



P.O. Box 1006
Schenectady, NY 12301-1006

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Drood

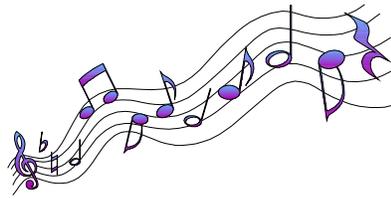
March 5-7, 11-14

Thursday, Friday, and
Saturday at 8:00 PM
Sunday at 2:00 PM

TICKETS: 399-9359

Adults: \$18; Children under 13: \$9
Group rates available! Call for information.

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2003 - 2004 New Membership/Membership Renewal Form

Please return by **February 1, 2004** to:

Della Gilman • 125 Glen Eddy Drive, Schenectady, NY 12309

PLEASE PRINT Name[s] _____

Address, incl. 9-digit zip _____

Phone _____ Today's Date _____

My/Our last show involvement was _____
[Membership requires participation in some aspect of a recent production.]

I/We have enclosed my/our \$10 membership fee *per person*.
Dues paid now will make me/us a member **through June 2004**.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____ Check # _____ payable to **SLOC**.
Credit Card number _____ MC/Visa Exp.date _____

Signature [Charges only] _____

Save the Date!!!



The semi-annual potluck dinner and Board meeting will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2004 at 6:00 pm.

There will be a potluck dinner, followed by the Board meeting, and then we will move upstairs to the theater for an open mic night.

Please RSVP by 1/17/04 to Michelle Sausa-Gatta with the number attending and the food item you would like to bring to share. She can be reached at 377-1905 or by e-mail at gattat4@aol.com.

As always, this promises to be a deliciously entertaining evening so mark your calendar and RSVP ASAP!