

## All Aboard HMS Pinafore for a fun night out at The Lighthouse.

Gilbert and Sullivan's operatic masterpiece came to The Lighthouse Theatre in Poole recently, performed by the UK touring company, Opera della Luna. The show has delighted audiences worldwide since it first opened in London in 1878 and this shortened, hour long version of the operetta was first performed on the QE2 in 1997. The plot revolves around a middle-class naval captain's daughter Josephine, who is in love with a common sailor, Ralph Rackstraw, even though she is betrothed to the First Lord of the Admiralty, a high-class government official in charge of the Royal Navy.

In the opening scene, HMS Pinafore is in Portsmouth harbour being prepared for the imminent arrival of the First Lord, Sir Joseph Porter, and we find the Captain urging his daughter to graciously accept the offer of marriage thus bringing her joy and an upper class way of life. Josephine however, deeply in love with a low class sailor, is beside herself and cannot bring herself to express her feelings to one so far below her in rank. The resulting comedy is a humorous observation of the English class system. Middle class can so quickly be elevated to the luxury and elegance of the upper class on one hand and rapidly reduced to penury and abject misery on the other. As with most Gilbert and Sullivan operas, there is a surprise twist near the end of the story that dramatically changes everything and they all lived happily ever after, as they say.

The Opera della Luna's production was beautifully sung and played for every laugh it could raise, full of magical melodrama and carefully crafted caricature. The talented singers were backed by five musicians, who as part of the crew stationed on the quarter deck, kept the pace going smoothly throughout the performance. The stage set was remarkable in that it was built from nothing in front of the audience's eyes, no mere feat when the cast were dancing and singing "We sail the ocean blue" throughout the assembly. All in all, a great night out once again at The Lighthouse.

For more details, contact the Box Office direct on 0870 0668701



The terrific cast in action on HMS Pinafore.

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