

## NATIONAL OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION LONDON REGION

Society: Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead Theatre Company  
Production: **"Children of Eden"**  
Date: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008  
Venue: Desborough Suite, Maidenhead  
Report by: Henry Hawes - NODA Representative - Area 13

On Thursday 27th November 2008, I was delighted to deputise for your regular NODA Representative in reviewing your latest presentation, **"Children of Eden"** at the Desborough Suite, Maidenhead. This musical has not that long been released for amateur productions and it is fast gaining in popularity and Slough did it full justice relating vividly the story of the Creation. Singing was of an exceptionally high standard, showing balance and control, the staging was effective as was the choreography. It had been very well cast with each and every performer portraying brilliantly their individual characters,

**RAY SIBERINI** (Father) - Ray was brilliantly cast in the role of 'God'. Musically this was a very difficult part to play but Ray had mastered the complexity of the music, using his excellent singing voice to the full with good tonal quality, phrasing and projection. Acting wise, he was 'God' in every movement, expression, feeling and emotion. A superb performance.

**RYAN STEVENS** (Adam) - Ryan got right inside this character. Here is a member who can both sing and act to a high standard and his portrayal of 'Adam' could not be faulted. Movement, expression, feeling was all portrayed in abundance - Super.

**STEPHANIE DUNLEAVY** (Eve) - This attractive young lady was well cast as 'Eve'. She has an expressive face and an excellent singing voice. Her acting ability is of a high order expressing well her feelings when tempted by the 'Snake' and her search for the meaning of life. Her rapport with 'Adam' was well portrayed. These two certainly had impact - Congratulations.

**JORDAN RAMROOP** (Cain, Eve's Son), **ALEX MOORE** (Abel, Eve's Son), **MICHAEL EDMONDS** (Seth, Eve's Son) - I have combined these three characters together as there was nothing to choose between them and I would only be repeating myself. All three gave excellent interpretations of their characters of the sons of 'Adam' and 'Eve', with Alex portraying 'Abel' the son who wanted to improve the lot of the family and Jordan portraying 'Cain', the son who was not content with his lot and wanted to break away from the family unit - Excellent portrayals from these three.

**LAURENCE COX** (Noah) - Laurence has an excellent singing voice which suited the character, and came across well in his numbers. His acting was of a high standard with controlled movement about the stage area - All I can say is 'a great performance'.

**ANDREA TUSHINGHAM** (Mama Noah) - Andrea really immersed herself into the part of 'Mama Noah' making her a most believable character. We were presented with some fine acting, coupled with a superb singing voice which came to the fore in the number 'Ain't it Good', sung with feeling and precision, to me, this number was a "showstopper" - Congratulations.

**RICHARD CAMPBELL** (Japheth, Noah's youngest Son), **MICHAEL EDMONDS** - (Ham, Noah's Son), **GEORGE FURNEY** (Shem, Noah's Son), **NEALA HOLLAND** (Yonah, a servant girl and Japheth's girlfriend), **SARAH PINKNEY** (Ayesha, Shem's girlfriend), **SARAH CLARKE** (Aphra, Ham's girlfriend) - Again I have combined these six performers as there was nothing to choose between them, with each and every one presenting superb characterisations either as the sons of 'Noah' or the potential and eventual wives of the sons. The acting and movement about the stage was of a very high order and the interplay between them was outstanding. The singing by this group was also exceptional with good projection, diction, phrasing and intonation - Superb.

**DANIEL GODDARD** - (The Snake) - This was an admirable presentation of 'The Snake' by Daniel who moved about the stage area with a lovely movement and his hissing, wheedling voice as he tempted 'Adam' and 'Eve' to taste the forbidden fruit was faultless.

**EVE MACDONALD, JOANNA GODSMARK, VIVIANA HORWOOD** - (Principal Storytellers) - This group who acted as storytellers, linked the various scenes together with narrative ensuring that the performance had a good flow to it.

**ANIMALS** - This group of young people who portrayed the animals entering the 'Ark', two by two, were superb, each and every one presented the individual animals with all the authentic movement one expects, which combined with the masks had quite an impact. The choreography for this scene had been well devised and danced with precision by this young group - Well done.

**CHORUS OF ADULTS** - This group did full justice to the musical numbers, although difficult music, it was precise with a good balance of voices and spot-on entries. Movement about the stage area presented excellent pictures and the involvement by this chorus was complete.

**SIMON WOODBRIDGE** - (Director/Choreographer) -I could not fault the direction of this show in any way. The stage was well balanced at all times with good entries and exits. Positioning and movement of the cast was outstanding so that one was presented with a wealth of pictures which had impact. The many and varied characterisations had been well brought out with every member presenting a believable character. I was also impressed with the way the dramatic content was presented. Choreographically this show was very well served with some well devised routines, well danced. You must be well pleased with the end result Simon.

**JAMES CHURCH** (Musical Director), **EVE MACDONALD** (Chorus Mistress) - James had gathered round him some excellent musicians who played the music most sensitively, achieving a superb balance between the music and the singing so that it was an integral part of the performance. James and Eve obviously make a good team and it was obvious that a lot of rehearsal had gone into the music with musical entries spot-on and the chorus numbers were well balanced vocally making a magnificent sound - Congratulations.

Stage Manager & Crew - This was a well managed stage with no visible hitches.

Props -A good selection of props was used, all pertinent to the story

Scenery - Scenery was minimalistic and consisted of, basically, rising rostra's. This worked extremely well giving the maximum space on stage but at the same time giving several visual levels.

Lighting Design and Operation - A first-class lighting plot which generated the right atmosphere in the various scenes. Cues were very well picked up, I did not see a late cue all evening - Super.

Sound - The balance and control of the sound system, particularly the radio mikes' was of a very high standard with no distortion of the voices and all at the correct level. All cues on the night of my visit were spot-on - Well done.

Make-up - Nobody was credited in the programme for the make-up, but it had been well devised and applied and stood up well under the strong stage lights.

Programme - An excellent programme of the right size containing all the necessary information and items of interest. It was printed on good quality paper with well produced photographs.

Front of House - Front of House staff were smart, easily identifiable and welcoming to their audience. It is good to see that standards are still being maintained in this day and age

Thank you for inviting me to deputise for your normal NODA Representative, and for your excellent hospitality, their loss was my gain as this was an enjoyable theatrical experience May I wish you all success with your future productions.

Henry Hawes