

Entertainment

The Importance of Being Earnest is worth the time spent

With last week's opening of Georgetown Little Theatre's *The Importance of Being Earnest* at John Elliott Theatre, theatre goers were given a glimpse of the pompous lifestyle of Victorian aristocracy—complete with British playwright Oscar Wilde's sarcastic commentary on the British class structure.

The Importance of Being Earnest is one of Wilde's best known plays about two snobbish English gentlemen, John Worthing and Algernon Montcrieff, who have created their own alter egos, both named Earnest, while they are wooing two ladies, also of aristocratic background.

Since they have both assumed false identities, they soon learn of the consequences of their actions when they fall in love with their ladies, and attempt to find an honourable (and explainable) way of getting around the fact they aren't exactly whom they claim to be.

As the deception deepens, the audience enjoys the quandary the two have created, with a most humorous outcome.

The acting in *Earnest* is quite balanced, with no one outshining any other actors.

David Brock is very effective as the pompous Algernon Montcrieff. He portrays his character as arrogant, knowing and full of

himself, and seemingly always hungry for cucumber sandwiches.

Playing equally well opposite Brock is Brian Jedan, who plays Jack Worthing. In spite of both characters being of similar backgrounds, Jedan plays Worthing a little more grounded, giving the audience a character they can relate to, and even like.

The snobbish Lady Bracknell is well played by Carol Beauchamp, while Kathy Santha plays Gwendolen Fairfax, a young lady who has a knack for getting her own way, by one means or another.

Governess Miss Prism is well cast with Margaret Brady handling her part, while Mark Tiller plays well opposite her as the Rev. Canon Chasuble, the local clergy who must deal with the whims of the aristocracy.

Julia Lederer is quite effective as the spoiled yet likeable Cecily Cardew, and the civilized spat between her and Gwendolen is one of the comic highlights of the play.

Unemotional near-robotic butlers Lane and Merriman are respectively unemotionally played by John Day and Gary McIlravey, while John Carter adds a comic interlude with his brief appearance as solicitor Mr. Gribbsby.

The highlight of the play is without a doubt the set, in which a painstaking attention to

detail is quite evident. When the lights illuminated the drawing room in Act Three, the audience applauded the set, which is so detailed, one can almost smell the dust on the books in the bookcase.

Costumes and lighting are also top-notch, nicely rounding out the production.

For those who aren't familiar with the works of Oscar Wilde, there is a great deal of dialogue. Wilde's depiction of 1894 Victorian aristocracy is of people with a passion for saying something in 30 words when five would suffice.

Consequently, the play tends to be a little slow moving in the first half, but the audience is well-rewarded as the plot comes together in the last half of the production, making it worth the wait.

The Importance of Being Earnest may not be for everyone. It's a long production, running beyond two and a half hours, and the dialogue is sometimes a bit wordy.

But for those who are willing to exercise some patience and enjoy the comic unfolding of the plot, they will be well-rewarded by the time the curtain closes.

The play continues its run at John Elliott Theatre this week.

—By Ted Brown, staff writer

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Choral Society performs this weekend

Georgetown Choral Society and Canadian Dutch Remembrance Committee's encore performance, *A Tribute in Song*, on Saturday, Nov. 12, will aid the Red Cross Relief Fund for the victims of the American hurricanes this summer. This concert was first performed last spring to two sold-out audiences commemorating the 60th Anniversary of VE (Victory in Europe) day.

The concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Georgetown Christian Reformed Church. Tickets are \$15 per person and available at Bergsma's Paint & Wallpaper or The Freckled Lion Children's Bookstore. Info: www.georgetownchoral.ca

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