

Excellent “Fiddler on the Roof”

By Pirate Productions.

The comedians[?] of the English language theatre group “Pirate Productions” are welcome guests at Esch where they count among the habitual users of the municipal theatre. Their latest visit has reaffirmed this [constat] once again.

In the context of Luxembourg, European City of Culture, conductors have undertaken the most popular musical works. In the Sixties, *Fiddler on the Roof* took Broadway and the West End by storm. Then, the hit song “*If I were a rich man*” went round the world and raised the Jewish actor Topol to the rank of an international star.

The musical created from Joseph Stein’s novel by Jerry Bock (music) and Sheldon Harnick (libretto) was presented for the first time at the theatre of the City of Esch in 1971 by the Marigny Theater of Paris. Ivan Revroff took the principal role in a production by Jérôme Robbins.

25 years later, “Pirate Productions” have taken up the challenge with great success. The four performances in the Esch auditorium were well attended. It is understood that the audience was composed principally of anglophones who did not fail to encourage their compatriots.

On the stage, the audience is introduced to the people of Anatevka, a small town in Russia with a Jewish community whose daily life is controlled by a host of traditions handed down from generation in generation. Unfortunately, these customs and usages will [have to] change in response to the wave of growing antisemitism that is overrunning the country. Tevye the town milkman and his five girls are squarely in the centre of this small changing world.

This brings us to the actors, all [pure] amateurs whose performance must be deemed excellent. The show needs the impressive number of 26 performers, who are required to be at one and the same time actors and singers. The actors will have been forgiven if the vocal parts were not always perfect! Without wishing to diminish the merits of the group as a whole, we would point out particularly the talent of John O’Sullivan. This experienced comedian has brought to life a truthful Tevye who as the action unfolds understands the world less and less. There are sublime dialogues between this poor town milkman and God in which he lays bare his problems. In the orchestra pit, Alan Carlisle knew well how to integrate the action on the boards with about twenty well-motivated young musicians.

The audience will have the happiest memories of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

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d'histoire locale : de

de consultation et d'ins-
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h à 12 h et de 14 h à 18 h
sud "Fraen an Nout"
en détresse) : de 9 h à
4 57 57.
g Familial : fermé.



endroits de la
rue de l'Alzette
les ouvriers
sont chargés
du finissage
autour des
fameux
poteaux, qui
garnissent
l'arrière
commerciale.

de personnes de passer à la fois.
Des embouteillages dans les
deux sens d'une longueur de
plusieurs dizaines de mètres et
des bousculades ne sont que la
conséquence logique de cette
situation désastreuse. Pour les
personnes âgées et les jeunes
mamans qui promènent leur
bébé en landau, il est pratique-
ment impossible de franchir cet
obstacle sans avoir de sérieux

pas depuis des mois à Esch-
sur-Alzette, est tout simple-
ment inouï. Dans ces condi-
tions, je préfère me promener
dans les rues de la ville de Du-
delange où je peux tranquille-
ment voir les magasins, sans
risquer à chaque instant de
faire une chute. Ces com-
mentaires sont sûrement parta-
gés par bon nombre d'autres
piétons.



Esch-sur-

Exposition
la Ville d'Esch
tion d'œuvres
artistes lu-
(Hôtel de Vi-
municipale, 10
tobre).

Dans le B
Minier

Buttembois
-Exposition
de sculpture
vage à travers
d'Art "Château
bourg, jusqu'à
Dudelange.
-Exposition
d'Yvette G.
(Galerie Ca-
octobre)
Schiffelange
-Exposition
Wenzel Profan
Duc Jean à 15
15 h à 18 h.

théâtre municipal

Républicain Lorrain 5/10/95

Excellent *Fiddler on the Roof* par les Pirate Productions

Les comédiens de l'ensemble théâtral de langue anglaise Pirate Productions sont des hôtes bienvenus à Esch où ils comptent parmi les habitués au théâtre municipal. Leur dernier passage a une nouvelle fois confirmé ce constat.

s l'art

Philippe Robert est né en
Maine-et-Loire en France.
Didacticien, il s'est spécia-
lisé dans les années dans les tech-
niques du crayon et gouache. Ses
travaux ont paru dans diverses revues
et les nombreuses expo-
sitions personnelles et collectives
de Philippe Robert a par-
ticipé à la France depuis 1974, ont
fait de l'artiste fait partie des
grands de son genre. Née en
Belgique, l'artiste Van Ass est la seule
présente ses œuvres aux
galerie d'art du châ-
teau de Buttembois. Sa spécia-
lité se situe dans le do-
maine des aquarelles, huiles et
dessins ayant comme motif la
vieillesse. Pour compléter
son œuvre, exceptionnelle dans
le monde, l'Allemand Hubert
manque pas de fasciner
le public de l'exposition par
ses œuvres d'une rare
étude de forestier et
de gibier, ont sûrement
peintre autodidacte de
motifs dans un secteur
qui pour le mieux,
sont en Chateau d'Esch.

Dans le cadre de Luxembourg, Ville
Européenne de la Culture les dirigeants
se sont attaqués à une oeuvre musicale
des plus populaires. Dans les années
soixante, *Fiddler on the Roof* (Un violon-
niste sur le toit) a fait fureur au Broad-
way à New York et au West End à
Londres. A l'époque le hit "If I were a
Rich Man" a fait le tour du monde tout
en élevant l'acteur juif Topol au rang de
star internationale.

Au Théâtre de la Ville d'Esch, le mu-
sical crée d'après le roman de Joseph
Stein par Jerry Bock (musique) et Shel-
don Harnick (textes) a été donné une
première fois en 1971 par le Théâtre
Marigny de Paris. Ivan Rebroff tenait le

rôle principal dans une mise en scène
signée Jérôme Robbins.

25 ans après, les "Pirate productions"
ont relevé le défi et avec un grand suc-
cès. Les quatre séances programmées
dans la salle de spectacle eschoise ont
été bien fréquentées. Il s'entend que le
public se composait essentiellement de
spectateurs de langue anglaise qui n'ont
pas manqué d'encourager leurs compa-
triotes.

Sur le plateau de la scène, l'assistance
allait faire connaissance avec les per-
sonnages d'Anatevka, petit village de
Russie rurale peuplé par une commu-
nauté juive. La vie journalière est régie
par une foule de traditions transmises de

génération en génération. Malheureuse-
ment les us et coutumes vont changer à
la vague croissante de l'antisémitisme
qui envahit le pays. Tevye le laitier du
village et ses cinq filles vont être au
centre de ce petit monde en pleine muta-
tion.

Ceci nous amène aux acteurs, tous de
purs amateurs dont la performance est à
qualifier d'excellente. La pièce fait
appel à l'impressionnant nombre de 26
interprètes dont on attend qu'ils sont à la
fois acteurs et chanteurs. Le public ne
leur en aura nullement voulu si les par-
ties vocales n'ont pas toujours été par-
faites. Sans vouloir porter atteinte aux
mérites de l'ensemble nous voudrions

relever plus particulièrement le talent de
John O'Sullivan. Le comédien che-
vronné a incarné un véridique Tevye qui
au fur et à mesure que l'action évolue ne
comprend plus le monde. Sublimes dia-
logues encore entre ce pauvre laitier de
village et Dieu auquel il expose ses pro-
blèmes à sa manière. Dans la fosse d'or-
chestre, Alan Carlisle a su intégrer dans
l'action sur les planches une vingtaine
de jeunes musiciens motivés par leur en-
gagement de bien faire.

L'ensemble "Pirate Productions"
nous a offert une agréable soirée théâ-
trale et musicale. Les spectateurs garde-
ront les meilleurs souvenirs du "*Fiddler
on the Roof*".

ROESER

Diplômes pour les jeunes musiciens

A l'occasion de la ker-
messe locale l'harmonie mu-
nicipale *Les Echos de l'Al-
zette* a donné, à la salle des
fêtes de la commune, un
beau concert placé sous la

lors des cours de solfège,
avant de faire remettre un
joli bouquet de fleurs à leur
chef.

Les élèves ci-après ont eu
droit à un diplôme : Benito

Cruchten, Yannick Foulon,
Danièle Pierre, Nathan Hei-
jermans, Line Scharpantgen,
Luc Scharpantgen, Sam
Schmit et Andrea Wirtz
(deuxième année). Finale-

SCHIFFLANGE

La société avicole recrute de nouveaux membres

Au café Germaine s'étaient
réunis les membres de la section
locale de la société avicole. Mar-
cel Frieseisen se réjouit particu-

ment applicable lors de l'exposi-
tion internationale du 12 au 14
janvier 1996. Marcel Frieseisen
a communiqué ses adresses

CAR

DECES

Esch-sur-Al-
Steffen, 63 ans
aura lieu en
service funé-
ce jeudi à 17 h
roissiale St. He-

Esch-sur-Al-
séphine Jung
rement aura
muté. Le servi-
célébré ce jour
l'égérie paroiss-
Esch.

Esch-sur-Al-
Stoffen, 62 ans
aura lieu en
service religie-
ce jeudi à 17 h
roissiale St. He-

Diffendange
rése Hausemer
L'enterreme-
nébre ont eu
dange.

Noertzange
76 ans. L'enté-
en toute intimité
Obercorn

THEATRE

Busy bee Pirates provide plenty of buzz - *Fiddler On the Roof* in Esch

This production, Pirates' contribution to the Year of Culture, has been notable all along for its buzz - the buzz of trepidation and hope aiming participants, for this was a musical many had looked forward to taking part in, and a consequent buzz of anticipation among the audience, most of whom knew at least one or two people on-stage, backstage or in the orchestra pit, not to mention having memories of the film or a previous production elsewhere. That a delight, then, that the buzz which was often audible during the show turned into honest applause for the three hours of very hard and efficient work.

'Fiddler' is a satisfying musical if played with a good balance of sweet and bitter, so that the wry and the rumbustious complement each other, and reflect that finely tuned survival-humour that we know as Jewish (largely because of the very stories, now a century old, by Mr Peace-Be-With-You Sholem Aleichem, from which the musical was written).

Daughters may become emancipated, even in the little village of Anatevka, and students in Kiev revolt, nay the full horror of the pogroms and columns of plodding refugees may appear in the wings, as it were, but the ordinary will survive somehow - so, if they will, they must find a means to do so, and

that's humour. "They're both so happy," says Tevye of his newly married daughter and her tailor husband, "that they don't know how miserable they are," and as a caption under this show that would be hard to better.

The director, Carrie O'Brien, chose a very plain stage with the simplest minimum of furniture and properties, but a jolly assortment of yellows, ochres and russets in the excellent costumes; this allowed the bustle of village life to alternate swiftly with Tevye's solitude as he asked God for advice (and as often as not proffers it himself instead). The orange cyclorama behind the silhouetted fiddler worked well, but some of the frontal lighting often sued during timefreeze was less successful. Otherwise the general teamwork and coordination was impressive - acting, choreography (after a shaky start) and music dovetailed well, and we could concentrate on the unfolding story.

'It's all done by music,' is frequently the cry from the pit at this point, and certainly the sensitive timing of Alan Carlisle and his 20-piece orchestra did much to keep the flow constant. (If there were moments which dragged they were usually the unpolished scene-changes and entrances of the first night, one of a length that very nearly broke the spell.) But the orchestra was also adept

at building confidence of the singers, many of whom needed, and got, tactful and accurate support - no mean feat, this, with the angular, melancholy and often deliberately discordant snatches of melody offered by the score.

The musical is not always kind to principals or chorus, either - the song "Tradition" is a slow start, for example, almost wooden in its stiff and methodical conservatism, and it was only slowly that the actors broke free of its stultifying influence, let their shoulders relax, their gestures go free and their personalities shine. But they did, and by "Sunrise, sunset" and "Do I love you?" the company was feeling good. John O'Sullivan as Tevye who led the way here, with "If I were a Rich man" and in every other way. His strong presence and good voice determined the moods, timed the humour and kept is reasonably close to the Yiddish even while surrounded by a variety of accents - the 'mere' milkman holding the strands together with very creditable toughness. He encompassed the emotions well, from the dry dialects of his decision-making 'on the other hand' to the poignant farewell scene with his Siberia-bound daughter Hodel; from the stubborn

rejection of his third daughter Chava, who marries a Russian, to the invented nightmare, craftily designed to persuade his wife to change her mind over the suitors to Tzeilel, their eldest daughter (they have five).

A classic scene, this one, a little marred in this production by inaudible voices, but well staged and a high point of the comedy, just as the destruction of the village wedding by the Russians is a chilling step towards the lonely trek away from Anatevka at the end, and all of it was conveyed by good ensemble playing.

Much praise to Carrie O'Brien and a splendid team for this; to single out a few more actors in a review of this length would do injustice to the others and to the general depth of quality acting and the level of concerted effort. None of the weaknesses spoiled the total effect, and at the splendid circling curtain call dance there was a strange moment of something like identification between the Luxembourg anglophone community and the Anatevka still on stage, as the buzz of enthusiasm on both sides of the proscenium arch rose again.

Geoff G.-T.

Francis Bacon choreographed



Francis Bacon is a choreographed work by Ismael Ivo and Johann Kresnik which explores the love and violence, ecstasy and destruction of the painter's work. It will play in Luxembourg on 24 October - more details next week



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