

Production Report for 'The Indian Queen', 15th-17th October, 2008.

Venues.

The Executive Committee decided to stage the production at three different venues on three consecutive nights. Individually each venue proved to be satisfactory in terms of facilities but there was a lot of work involved in transferring from each venue from one night to the next.

The hire of the van was not well planned; it turned out not to be large enough for all the equipment. It had been anticipated that it would be capable of carrying stage blocks, harpsichords and timpani, lighting and possibly bar supplies as well. The timpani had to be transported separately.

Also, with three venues, there was an increased possibility that something would be forgotten or mislaid. An extension cable from St. John's was packed up by mistake.

However, it was a useful experience to perform in venues other than Isleworth Public Hall and generally people coped, although travelling to Heston caused difficulties for some.

Comment: It was only possible to perform in three separate venues because there was no staging to manage. I would not recommend it in future.

Volunteers.

A recruitment drive for volunteers several weeks in advance through the website, newsletter and at rehearsals proved worthwhile. I received offers of help from members in person, by phone and by email.

By the week of the performance it looked as though there would be sufficient for all three evenings, although Heston received fewer offers than Richmond and Isleworth.

Fortunately the two ladies and one of their husbands who manage the Heston hall were on hand all evening and ran the bar without any IB volunteers.

Everyone was very efficient at their job and made overseeing the front of house largely unnecessary for me during the evenings' performances for which I was grateful (due to singing duties).

Comment: Thanks to Tom (stage management), Malcolm (tickets and programmes), Jeanette and Fay (raffle), Cedric, Neville, Steph, Carolyn, Caroline and Lawrence (bar).

Raffle.

Again, appeals and reminders for donations in advance lead to a good response; almost too good in respect of alcoholic donations, with bottles of red wine in particular proving popular amongst donors and winners alike. It was useful to have a number of other items for the tee total audience members!

Comment: Jeanette took charge on all three evenings for selling tickets and this resulted in nearly £200 being raised.

Invitations to Dignitaries.

The 'Producer's file', which was passed on to me by the EC, contained details of several dignitaries said to be invited regularly. I sent out 8 invitations and had replies from four, including Vicki Taylor, the Mayor of Hounslow and Catherine Bott.

I hesitated to invite the Mayor of Richmond as well in case the nightmare scenario occurred of both Mayors choosing to come to the same performance.

The Mayor of Hounslow accepted the invitation for IPH and Lawrence was to escort her for the evening. Unfortunately the Mayor arrived after the time agreed in the online invitation acceptance form issued on Hounslow's website, which meant that there was no one to meet and greet her, a breach of protocol.

Comment: I suggest the EC reviews and updates the list of invitees.

End of Run Party.

It was suggested that this year it would be simplest, especially in view of the complicated venue arrangements, to have the party in a pub near to IPH on the Friday evening after the performance.

The 'Swan' was recommended as somewhere suitable and the landlord took a provisional booking on the understanding that I would contact him further to let him know numbers and budget.

After asking members to give a deposit to confirm interest I agreed to pay £150 for a buffet which at £5 per head would prove sufficient for about 30 people. I did not actually sample the food, which with the benefit of hindsight was a mistake. The food provided was not very inspiring and did not appear to represent good value for money.

Comment: A bit more research would have helped. I would recommend making someone who is interested in catering responsible for this and giving them a budget figure so that they can investigate various options beforehand.

Role of Production Coordinator.

The hardest part was switching from 'production' to 'performance' and back again during the evening of the performances. Ideally this role belongs to somebody who understands theatre productions but who is not taking part in the performance.

Comment: Any offers?

Alison Sands. (Production Coordinator) 13th November, 2008.