

THEATRE GROUP: THE MIKADO

Our party of 37 set off bright and early on 5th August for the National Gilbert & Sullivan Operatic Society's production of *The Mikado* in Buxton, arriving in plenty of time for a wander around the town and some lunch before the curtain went up.



There really couldn't be a more fitting venue for traditional G&S than the ornate Victorian splendour of the Opera House, although "traditional" was certainly not what we were treated to! Rather than the familiar pseudo-Japanese setting, this re-imagined production transported us to the world of high fashion. The opening scene found the "gentlemen of Japan" seated at sewing machines in a sweatshop somewhere in the north of England, with their "gaffer" Pish-Tush looking and sounding as though he had stepped out of a Tetley's Tea advert!

I have to admit I was rather dubious at first, but from the moment Simon Butteris as Ko-Ko bounced on to the stage I was won over and enjoyed every minute.

One highlight was his rendition of "*I Have a Little List*", which included topical references to Andy Burnham, DJT and even Count Binface! Another was the "*Here's a Pretty State of Things*" trio, which was both hilarious and pure nonsense!

Special mention must also go to the majestic baritone of Poo-Bah and the soprano voices of Yum-Yum and Katisha, along with the excellent orchestra and chorus.

To sum up this was a colourful, funny and thoroughly entertaining production which successfully modernised *The Mikado*, without losing its G&S character. Added to which we were able to enjoy a few hours in Buxton and were treated to some lovely views of the Derbyshire countryside en route.

Julie Guest