Princess Ida

LET’S STUDY A PLAY TOGETHER

Summer 2012
Princess Ida

COURSE OBJECTIVES

– Read a play together – a fun group exercise
– Learn about the history of the play, the genre, the playwrights, the background, etc. as time permits
– Discuss the play, e.g., the humor, the stage effects, the characters
– Enjoy the reading, the class and our analysis of the play
CLASS LOGISTICS

– Instructor will assign roles weekly in an e-mail attachment
– Each person will have one or more roles to read each week – please try to read in advance
– Roles will shift before each class, depending on class absences – we need to cover all characters
– We will read an act or more per week
– Each week the roles will rotate among class members – equal reading times for everyone
– Please let the instructor know ASAP of any planned or unplanned absences
CLASS LOGISTICS (CONT.)

• We will have a short lecture to start each class
• Class members will read the assigned act or acts
• Class members will view video clips, as appropriate
• We (all of us) will discuss what we see/read/hear and ask or answer questions
COURSE CONTENT

• We will read the play in each class, but we will (time permitting) also learn about:
  – The uniqueness of *Princess Ida*
  – Origin of the *Princess Ida* characters
  – The collaboration of Gilbert and Sullivan
  – Satire and parody
DISCLAIMER

• This class is not Readers Theater, because:
  – We read, rather than act (no British accents required)
  – Everyone reads at every class meeting
  – We don’t rehearse
  – We don’t critique the readers’ technique
  – We read an entire play from start to finish
  – We study the play in context
  – We are multi-media, e.g., we watch video clips, listen to music, etc.
Princess Ida

HOUSEKEEPING & INTRODUCTION

• Does everyone have the text? (Different editions may have different text.)
• How many are familiar with the operetta?
• Have you seen any G&S productions? Live in DC (Savoyards productions)? On TV/movies?
• Why does British satire endure?
Princess Ida

• Why was Princess Ida chosen for this class?
• What is unique to Princess Ida?
  – The only G&S play with three acts
  – Beautiful music, some think the best of the G&S opus
  – Written in blank verse
  – Infrequently performed, due to the need for so many strong tenors and baritones
Let’s introduce the characters in our play.
Princess Ida - Characters

ACT ONE
Princess Ida

• In King Hildebrand’s kingdom:

  King
  Hildebrand
Princess Ida

• In King Hildebrand’s kingdom:

Prince Hilarion, King Hildebrand’s son
Princess Ida

- In King Hildebrand’s kingdom:

  Prince Hilarion’s friends, Florian and Cyril
Princess Ida

• Visitor to Hildebrand’s kingdom:

King Gama
Visitors to Hildebrand’s kingdom:

King Gama’s 3 sons: Arac, Guron, Scynthius
Princess Ida

ACT TWO

In Castle Adamant:
Princess Ida

In Castle Adamant:

Princess Ida, headmistress of the school Adamant
Princess Ida

In Castle Adamant:

Lady Psyche, professor of Humanities
Princess Ida

In Castle Adamant:

Lady Blanche, professor of Abstract Science
Princess Ida

In Castle Adamant:

Melissa, daughter of Lady Blanche
Princess Ida

In Castle Adamant:

Sacharissa, Chloe, Ada - students
Princess Ida

Let’s Begin Our Reading
Princess Ida

• Act I Clips:
  • Today we meet, my baby bride and I-
  • King Gama's Entrance
  • Perhaps if you address the lady (Gama)
• Misc. Clips
• Act II Clips:
  • Gently, Gently
  • A Lady Fair (Psyche)
  • Wouldn’t You Like to Rule the Roost?