

Devonport Choral Society's 2011 Production

An Overview

Urinetown: the Musical

Urinetown: the Musical is cheeky, controversial and challenging. Importantly, it is contemporary and forward looking in content and style. It is also the 2001 multi-Tony Award winning musical.

One of the most original musicals ever to hit the Broadway stage, ***Urinetown*** is a scathing satire of corporate greed and political corruption as well as a hilarious send-up of virtually every musical including *Les Misérables*, *Evita*, *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and even itself!

Social satire has a long tradition of startling audiences and shaking them loose from their traditional ways of thinking.

Urinetown: the Musical draws on that tradition.

Unlike so many other pieces of entertainment one encounters these days – movies, television, even some books and plays – ***Urinetown*** has something to say about the world we live in.

Not only that, it's both entertaining and educational.

Urinetown challenges expectations with a self-awareness that makes you think about what you're watching.

Most importantly: it's really funny.

Urinetown: the Musical has wit, and intelligence – and it also has an enjoyable surplus of vaudeville gags, physical comedy and low-brow humor.

The production is set in a not-too-distant future in a Gotham-like city where private toilets are outlawed on environmental grounds, and citizens must pay for the privilege of using the public toilets. Greed, power, desperation and revolution are in the air. So too are romance and idealism. Who or what will win out in the end? Indeed, what is ***Urinetown?*** A place? An experience? A musical?

The production will require a cast of approximately 25 males and females with several double-up parts. The character parts are roughly equal in gender and there is a very representative age range.

There are 16 songs varying in style and nature including some big, whole of cast numbers.

The show is a 'comedic romp' done seriously (isn't that the challenge of any comedy?) with a variety of character and singing roles to challenge the cast. Chorus work is varied, frequent and dynamic requiring solid character, song and dance skills. Our production will emphasise the comedy – both spoken and gesture-wise.

Musically, the score is challenging and varied as it calls on and parodies a full range of musical styles for musicians and cast.

There are a number of opportunities for small group and whole of cast choreography, including a couple of show-stoppers.

The multi-level set is relatively fixed yet flexible, relying on variable, zoned lighting to change atmospherics and 'locations'.

Costumes are contemporary ranging from down-and-outs to uptown suits and dresses to authentic police uniforms.

In 2001, *Urinetown* received 6 Tony Award Nominations and won 3 Tony Awards for best score (Mark Hollmann), book (Greg Kotis) and director – no easy feat for any musical.

If you like a good laugh, particularly at yourself, you will love *Urinetown* – the musical. Or is it an experience? Or indeed, is it the place? Or whatever!

Looking forward to working with you,

Sid Sidebottom – on behalf of the production team.