

Chorale spoof taps local legal talent

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The defendant showed no remorse, the judge showed no mercy and the jurors had decided the case before the trial began, but all ended well anyway.

"Trial by Jury," Gilbert and Sullivan's witty send-up of the British judicial system, played to an appreciative audience of Jackson County employees Thursday.

Review

With a cast that includes District Judge Ross Davis, Jackson County Sheriff C.W. Smith, former county counsel Roy Bashaw and a large assortment of local attorneys, the free noon performance was practically assured a full house. And the venerable courtroom on the third floor of the Jackson County Courthouse, with its polished wood paneling and faded leather armchairs, lent an air of authenticity.

The performance did not disappoint, either. Although some cast members have stronger legal resumes than voices, they did a creditable job with the demanding music.

In period costumes and powdered wigs, the performers displayed impressive stage presence and a flair for comedy. The few rough spots should smooth out in subsequent performances Saturday at 12:10 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 4:30 p.m.

Tickets for the remaining performances, which are available at the Britt ticket office in Medford Center or at the door, are \$10. The show is a production of the Rogue Valley Chorale.

"Trial by Jury" tells the story

of the trial of Edwin (John E. Ferris), who has wooed his sweetheart, Angelina (Kimberley deMoss), but has tired of her and fallen for another. She has sued him for breach of promise.

As the play begins, the Bailiff (Roy Bashaw) admonishes the all-male jury on the importance of impartiality, all the while betraying his own bias for the fair Angelina.

As the bewigged Judge (Ross Davis) enters from the rear of the courtroom, a chuckle runs through the audience. Davis makes the most of his role, explaining his own less-than-honorable romantic history.

Although both jury and judge reveal infidelity in their pasts, they show little sympathy for poor Edwin, who spends the trial flirting with Angelina's bridesmaids, who make up the trial audience.

Edwin, who appears without benefit of legal counsel, offers to marry Angelina if he can marry his other sweetheart later, but her lawyer (Robert G. Casey) objects, citing the law against bigamy. The defendant then tries to discourage Angelina from marrying him, saying he drinks too much and would beat her when drunk.

The judge suggests getting Edwin drunk to test the threat, but her lawyer objects again.

Finally, the judge decides to marry Angelina himself, bringing a swift end to the proceedings to the satisfaction of all the participants.

The show is short — little more than half an hour — for those who like their Gilbert and Sullivan in small doses. But it delivers a timeless spoof of legal proceedings, directed with panache by the able Lynn Sjolund.