

Imperial College Operatic Society

presents

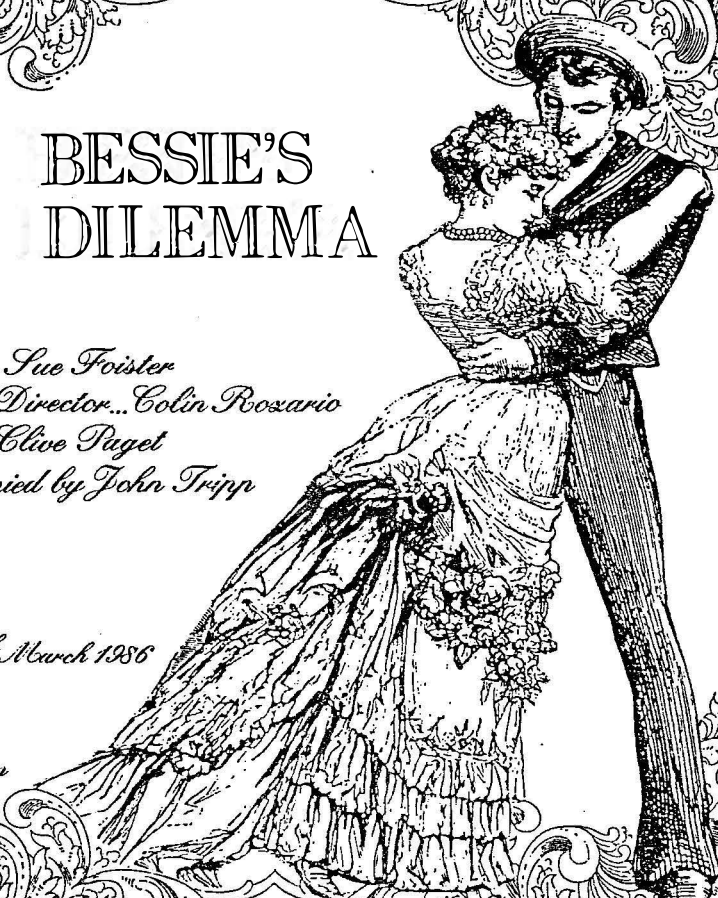
A VICTORIAN MELODRAMA

BESSIE'S DILEMMA

*Written by Sue Foister
Musical Director... Colin Rosario
Producer... Elvise Paget
Accompanied by John Tripp*

Tuesday 18th March 1986

7.30pm



Author's Notes

The story takes place within a seedy Victorian pub, somewhere on the south coast. A second-rate touring theatrical company are performing a melodrama called "Bessie's Dilemma", the plot of which goes somewhat as follows :-

Johnnie and Bessie are left penniless and alone with only their faithful family retainer, Bowels, to care for them. This sorry state was reached fifteen years ago when Latitia, their mother, died of grief at the supposed loss of her son (Johnnie, who had been temporarily kidnapped by wicked cousin Ebenezer). This tragedy caused their father to turn to drink and to desert them all, joining up in Her Majesty's Navy to try to forget.

Bessie and Johnnie are now renting what used to be the family home from Ebenezer and have got so far behind with their payments that Ebenezer threatens to evict them if they do not pay up forthwith. One way out is offered to them; if Bessie agrees to marry Ebenezer all will be well and they will be allowed to stay. Bessie's childhood sweetheart, Frank Lockjaw, in an effort to save her from this horrible fate, volunteers to go and find her father, in the hope that he can stop the marriage.

After Frank's departure, Ebenezer returns with a vicar whom he has bribed to perform the marriage ceremony. Bessie finally submits to Ebenezer's demands, in order to save them from being cast out into the snow. Just when all seems to be hopeless, Frank returns with Bessie's father, whom they find did not go to sea at all. Nevertheless, he has amassed a considerable fortune and has been employing a policeman (disguised as a vicar) to keep an eye on Ebenezer. It transpires that Ebenezer is wanted by the police in several countries and he is arrested as Bessie and Frank fall contentedly into each others arms. Needless to say, they all (except Ebenezer) live happily ever after.

Cast & Credits

Dramatis Personae, erm... Cast

Narrator - Sue Foister

Bessie - Anne Willie

Johnnie - Jonathan Sturgess

Ebenezer - Heiron Root

Mother - Kate Sturgess

Angel - Gillian Sturke

Father - Dave Tonnison

Bowels - Kevin Fleming

Frank - Ed Mulligan

Ticar - Paddy Davis

Chorus of Seedy Victorians

Many Thanks to:

*Mr. A C Newton
for his pathetic violin playing*

*Sue
for programme design*

*Anne
for organising everything*

*Ed
for printing it*

*Andy Woodger
for building the set*

*Alistair Wilcox
for lighting us*

*And Dransoo
for all their help*

Front of House Manager - Bill White

On Stage Manager - Phil Bailey

Off Stage Manager - Jonathan Sturgess



“Something lingering with boiling oil...”

Imperial College Operatic Society

ON TOUR!

THE MIKADO

to be performed in
Budleigh Salterton, Devon.

First rehearsal:

Tuesday 22nd April 7:30

Music Room, 53, Prince's Gate.