



# Adelaide Theatre Guide

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## LES MISERABLES

**Gilbert & Sullivan Society**

**Scott Theatre**

Until 31 May 2008

Review by Simon Slade

There are some shows which always appear to be staged in the same way - "Les Miserables" is one of them. Happily, this production by the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, throws off the shackles of the traditional presentation of the show, and does something new.

All credit must go to director, David Lampard, for his interpretation of the piece, his set design, and above all his casting.

The male ensemble is absolutely outstanding. Partly this is because the members of the male ensemble are performers who would, in any other show, be in lead roles. In particular, Andrew Crispe as Marius, and Paul Talbot as Enjolras give possibly the finest performances they have ever given. Indeed they are both better than the performers on most recordings.

None of that takes away from the work put in by the leads themselves. Mark Oates, as Jean Valjean, is a performer who gives so much, and the result is astounding. His delicately balanced rendition of "Bring Him Home" drew such a huge round of applause that the show was brought to a halt, and deservedly so.

Tom Millhouse, as Javert, is menacing and severe, if a little too physically rigid in Act 1. That seems to be deliberate, because his character alters in Act 2, and he handles all of that well.

Trish Spence, as Fantine, Rebecca Raymond as Cosette, and Rachel Rai as Eponine all bring beautiful voices and emotional depth to their performances. Rod Schultz and Megan Humphries, as the Thenardiers are rotten, mean and hilarious.

Tom Russell is possibly the smallest Gavroche you will ever see, but his performance packs a punch and was another show-stopper. Leah Harford, as Young Cosette, is delightful.

Ross Curtis has wonderful control over the generally excellent orchestra.

Technically, the show has achieved production values close to those you would see in a show produced by Cameron Mackintosh! As well as the performers on stage, there are microphones on the orchestra, providing a rich sound that fills the theatre, whilst allowing every line to be heard. A couple of microphone cues were a little late on opening night, but otherwise the radio microphones were almost trouble-free.

Laraine Wheeler's lighting complements the set beautifully, and uses follow-spots in the wings to produce fine highlights without over-lighting.

At the end of the day, this production takes "Les Miserables" beyond the barricade!