

# Jubilaires explode in a volatile circus of life



—Dave Hebditch photo

**LITTLECHAP (CONRAD BOYCE) STRETCHES HIS SUSPENDERS** in joy and pours out "Once In A Lifetime" after winning an election in Jubilaires' production of "Stop the World—I Want To Get Off".

The Jubilaires Club have always functioned best when working with a small, sparse musical comedy, and has often failed when they attempted the lush costume epics that generally play Broadway. Last year's *The Fantasticks* was one such success. With little scenery, few costumes or characters, but many great songs and plenty of jokes and schmaltz, Jubilaires was able to encompass, control, and project their material with surprising professionalism.

*Stop the World—I Want To Get Off*, their first production of this term, is of much the same scale, and consequently Jubilaires have succeeded just as well in integrating their company into a beautifully functioning whole.

The scale of this musical comedy is small: only four characters are introduced, only two are individuated; the set just barely suggests the walls and center ring of a circus; the costumes are dancers' practice tights except for the two leads, who wore faintly clownish garb; the makeup is clown's whiteface. Within these restrictive bounds, Jubilaires was able to project the humor and music to maximum effect.

Conrad Boyce, a lower class Littlechap who marries the boss's daughter, rising to head the company and a titled Member of Parliament, was the foundation on which the musical is built. Onstage constantly throughout its two and a half hours, Boyce was required to mime, dance, perform comic monologues, and sing eleven musical numbers. His familiar use of stage space and perfect comic timing ensured the musical's success.

Kerry Hughes was less successful in her

demanding role as Littlechap's wife, Evie, and his mistresses, Anya, Ilse and Ginnie. She was obviously uncomfortable with the British, German and American accents she was required to use, and tended at times to lapse into a conglomerate jargon. At one point she produced an Anglo-Russo-German garble that proved unintelligible.

*Stop the World* is probably not Miss Hughes sort of musical. As Ilse the German maid and Anya the Russian tourist guide, she must sing with a deep, heavily-accented voice that seems foreign to her. Yet when she is allowed to use a microphone and sing in a normal voice as Ginnie Romaine, the inane American nightclub singer, we discover that her voice is pleasant enough.

The rest of the cast perform like a well-oiled machine—in fact, they perform a well-oiled machine in the Sludgepool factory to perfection. Throughout the production they provide a solidly effective background to the main action, and in "Family Fugue" and "Nag, Nag, Nag" show that they can work well in songs with difficult rhythm changes. This may be the best coordinated (and proportioned) chorus in Jubilaires history.

The musical contains a number of "show-stoppers" (a word I detest for no apparent reason): "Gonna Build A Mountain", "Once In A Lifetime", "What Kind of Fool Am I?" Boyce does a credible job of them, although his voice tends to splinter on the higher notes. Jubilaires have come up with a winner in *Stop the World—I Want To Get Off*, and deserve a sellout audience.

—Ron Dutton

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