

Review: Wives as they were, and Maids as They Are

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Felicity Hay

Brilliant scriptwriting and excellent acting combined to make this a powerful yet hilarious performance.

The cast captivated the audience's attention and shared with us their emotions. The play highlighted the everyday lives of Georgian lords, ladies, gentlemen, bachelors and victims of fashion who have become reckless with their spending in London.

As the cast enveloped themselves in mischievous love, the audience laughed with delight.

Although the play was first performed in 1797, it still holds its comedic value today and also poses the moral question to the audience regarding changes in lifestyle and relationships. Excellent monologues helped to begin and close the play but still left you wanting more.

The ending is different from the more traditional conclusions we would recognise in stories such as *Pride and Prejudice* – the leading lady is not swept away by her Mr Darcy – but this does not make it any less satisfying.

Elizabeth Inchbald, who was born near Bury St Edmunds, combined all the classic elements of a comedy to make this production a real success.