

Wing and Prayer's night on Wilde side

CHAPEL off Chapel is in party mode. Hot after the opening night of *Three Weill Men*, Wing and a Prayer productions has opened its own centenary celebration — *Tea with Oscar*.

It's 100 years since the death of Oscar Wilde, so the creative team of Paul Keelan and Gary Young have created *Tea with Oscar*, which takes four of his most popular stories and threads them with songs.

Actors Grant Smith, Jackie Reese, Toby Truscott and Darcy Bosner bring the characters to life in an elegant Victorian parlor setting.

The input of Victoria Rowell in



THEATRE

Tea with Oscar

Music: Paul Keelan

Adaptation, lyrics: Gary Young

Where and when: Chapel off Chapel, Wed-Sat until December 3

Reviewer: Xenia Hanusiak

the costumes and the set design of Robyn Frankhauser evoke an inviting atmosphere.

The rich brocades of this parlor are threaded by a sumptuous emerald green and the room is bathed in twilight. The mood is convivial, light-hearted and genial.

Tea with Oscar is a soiree. Songs are sung around the piano, tea is sipped and a young boy (Darcy Bosner) skips about innocently.

The four stories — *The Nightingale and the Rose*, *The Selfish Giant*, *The Remarkable Rocket* and *The Happy Prince* — are all delightful and well-known fables.

Absolutely brimming with energy and wit, they lend themselves to theatrical enactment.

From this inspiration, Keelan and Young have penned some enchanting songs.

Keelan's music and Young's lyrics are unashamedly romantic.

The chord progressions and vocal lines reflect the style of contemporary musical theatre.

They flirt with sentimentalism and fairytale dreams.

Tea with Oscar is not quite a musical and not quite a play: it is a delightful Victorian soiree with a performance style that mirrors this.

The challenge for Wing and Prayer is to envisage where such an entertainment can fit into the circuit.