

# THE AUSTIN SAVOYARD

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### G&S Where You'd Least Expect It by Diane Radin

There are times that I think the world of G&S fans is very narrow (and of course, very special). Like the time I was asking at my local Starbucks if I could put up a poster of an upcoming GSA show. When I asked the young barista if she knew Gilbert & Sullivan, she replied, "No, I'm new to town."

Then to my surprise, on February 21st, among the obituaries in the New York Times – which I read faithfully – what do I find featured in the obituary of Cindy Nemser (someone I admit that I never heard of) but a parody of "As some day it may happen," the "little list" song from *The Mikado*. More than 50 years ago, Ms. Nemser "began calling out sexism in the art world, decrying the way women artists were treated and how their work was evaluated." She was one of the founders of the Feminist Art Journal and wrote her parody for a 1973 issue, one of the examples of her "whimsical streak." Here is her parody for your enjoyment.

*As some day it may happen that a piggy must be found,  
I've got a little list – I've got a little list  
Of male chauvinist offenders who might well be underground,  
And who never would be missed – who never would be missed.  
There's the Kramers and the Canadys who write for the newspapers,  
All the silly sexist journalists who gloat about their capers,  
All the gallery dealers who are male and want to pinch your thigh,  
All curators who visit you but are looking for a guy,  
And all collectors who on men's work insist,  
They'd none of 'em be missed – they'd none of 'em be missed.*

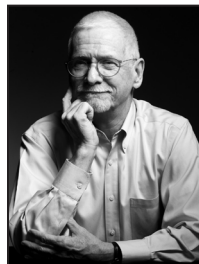
Where have you seen Gilbert and Sullivan pop up unexpectedly? Let me know and I will share it in future columns. You can reach me at [diane@gilbertsullivan.org](mailto:diane@gilbertsullivan.org).

I hope you all managed to keep warm and safe during our February freeze. Now that the power is back on, I hope you caught the **#DiscoverGSA Patience in Concert** – it is a different take with an Austin vibe.



## A Different Take on Gilbert & Sullivan

by Michael Meigs



The creative whimsy of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan is timeless. Their merry wit and comic caricature, aimed at familiar human foibles and sympathetic ever to budding romance, still amuse although their first successful collaboration, *Trial by Jury*, took place 145 years ago.

GSA believes that these works will never go out of style. In this lengthy intermission before our stage voyage to the mythical Scottish town of Balleydew to meet the McAdo, our production committee has approached directors and artists of other Central Texas companies to help prove that contention. This is also a way of reaching new audiences.

We've contracted rising opera stage director **Margaret Jumonville** ([margaretjumonville.com](http://margaretjumonville.com)) to re-imagine the opening scenes from Act II of *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

**Christie Jean-Jacques** of Creative Action ([tinyurl.com/CAStaffChristie](http://tinyurl.com/CAStaffChristie)), the GSA choreographer for *The Gondoliers* and *The McAdo*, will deliver the video frolics of "Three Little Girls from School."

**Rudy Ramirez** ([rudynamirez.net](http://rudynamirez.net)), Austin's busiest leading-edge director and a winner of six B. Iden Payne awards for excellence in theatre directing, will apply his Latinx inventiveness to *Ruddigore*'s encounter between demure Rose Maybud and valiant but shy Robin Oakapple.

**Joshua Denning**, the experienced and popular head of the theatre department at McCallum Fine Arts Academy ([joshuadenning.net](http://joshuadenning.net)), has confirmed his participation and is selecting the scenes.

Co-chair of the GSA production team **Michelle Haché** ([michellehachevoicestudio.com](http://michellehachevoicestudio.com)), who first proposed the 'different scenes' project, will also participate.

GSA has already made pitches to half a dozen more.

Music director Dr. **Jeffrey Jones-Ragona** will be available to the casts for coaching and rehearsals. Production manager **Bill Hatcher** is taking care of contracts as well as expenditures for staging and editing.

Our first program of 45 minutes to an hour will probably debut at the GSA website [www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org) in May. The rest of the schedule will be set according to the rhythm of production. All videos will be subtitled, and all artists will be credited. GSA's "Different Take" programs will be offered free of charge to the public and will remain available for streaming for several weeks after the premieres.

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## Meet Our New President by Mary Hendren

New GSA president **Diane Radin** recalls the first Gilbert & Sullivan production she attended. Diane's husband, **Charles**, took her to "see a D'Oyly Carte production, I think of ***The Pirates of Penzance***. From then on, we tried to catch G&S productions wherever we lived: productions in Rochester with **Reba Gillman**; a student group at Princeton; a professional group in NYC, Light Opera of Manhattan; and a G&S group in Philadelphia."

Charles and Diane moved to Texas in June 1976 and soon discovered Gilbert & Sullivan Austin. Diane remembers going to a "charming production of ***Ruddigore*** in 1977 at the Creek Theater – a theater that consisted of a stage and two rows of seats. We have been to almost every production since then, missing only when away on trips."

The Radins introduced their daughter, **Sarah**, to the joys of Gilbert & Sullivan in a production of ***Trial by Jury*** with Reba Gillman in the chorus and her husband **Len** at the piano. Diane said the one-act show was perfect for a four-year-old, especially since Sarah knew the Gillmans. The Radins attended a number of G&S musicales which "in those days were held in private homes, often in Pearl Amster's large music room."



*our well-traveled  
President in Paris ...*

Since joining the GSA Board in January 2013, Diane has "tried to attend all nine performances of our grand summer productions." When asked if she has a favorite G&S operetta, Diane replied, "I love them all!!! I love to see how the cast evolves, how the different audiences respond to the comedy, how the timing gets better and better."

Diane said the GSA Board of directors is "a very friendly group... everyone puts so much effort into the success of GSA. Without paid staff, the board (and other volunteers) do everything and do it so competently and tirelessly." She remarked, "My predecessor, **Libby Weed**, was president since before I joined the board. Libby is an exceptional leader and representative of GSA to the community."



*... and in Russia ...*

Diane has considerable leadership experience herself. She has served on many volunteer boards including Texas Hillel (VP/secretary), Shalom Austin (president), Jewish Women International (local chapter president, regional president, national VP, chair of three international conferences on domestic abuse) and is an active member of Congregation Agudas Achim. She has received several honors

for her volunteer work including the 2004 Hope Award from Austin Area Interreligious Ministries for creating the Prejudice Awareness Summit (now called the No Place for Hate Summit)



*... and in Big Bend ...*

hiking with Charles, especially in Big Bend National Park, where they have hiked many of the trails on more than twenty visits.

Diane grew up in New York City, attended Queens College, and met Charles in graduate school at the University of Rochester. After graduate school they lived in The Netherlands, Princeton, Manhattan, and Philadelphia before moving to Texas, where Charles continues to do research and teach in UT's Math Department. Diane retired from teaching math at UT three years ago.

Before the pandemic, Diane regularly visited their daughter, Sarah, her husband, and six children who live in Israel. She looks forward to making the trip again when conditions are more open. Over the years the Radins have traveled for work and for pleasure—for work in France, England, Russia, Germany, and Poland, and for pleasure in Portugal, Kyoto, and Corsica.



*... and in Israel*

Diane assumes her responsibilities as GSA president with enthusiasm. "I think that the video performances have been a success with our usual audience and have brought us fans from around the world. I spread the word to many of my relatives who live in other time zones and they appreciate the quality of the shows and enjoy an escape into frivolity from this fraught world." She looks forward to getting back to live performances and in-person GSA board meetings, too.

## Join Us!

We encourage you to join our Society to help GSA keep the joys of Gilbert & Sullivan alive. We offer many levels of membership, starting with basic member at \$30 per year. To join, renew, or donate, please visit [www.gilbertsullivan.org/join/](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org/join/).

You can also support GSA effortlessly by joining Amazon Smile. Once you sign up on Amazon.com, Amazon will rebate 0.5% of all eligible purchases to the charity of your choice. We hope you choose GSA! Sign up the next time you want to visit [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) by going to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). Sign in as usual and you will be prompted to select a charitable organization. You will find us listed as "Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Austin Texas Inc."



## In Memoriam: Jean Smootz by Libby Weed

Gilbert & Sullivan Austin lost a dear friend and an ardent supporter in the passing of **Jean Smootz** on February 24, 2021. Jean was an active force in our group for the last two decades, serving on our board for a time and volunteering in myriad ways through the years.



An IT genius, Jean moved to a career in information technology after earning a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and then spending some years as a research psychologist. She was a dynamic person, but she was also warm and charming, a lover of music and the arts, and a delightful conversationalist. Jean and her husband **Ed** both loved opera—Puccini, Verdi, Mozart, all the classics—but they were also captivated by the wit and lilting music of Gilbert & Sullivan. I'd say they had good taste, wouldn't you?

The final live watch party streaming our 2013 production of **Princess Ida** was dedicated to Jean's memory. That show featured her son, **Derek**, who has played many memorable roles in our productions over the past twenty years, as Florian. What a boon it was when he came to his first audition with GSA! He and his mom volunteered together in the GSA office in the days when it was located on Burnet Road. Derek and his wife **Rebecca** have both graced the GSA stage, with Jean handling the ticket table or assisting in some other way while they were performing. The Smootz family has been one of our true assets.

Derek said of his mom, "She loved that Austin had an organization like GSA and was passionate about its success." We will always be grateful for our association with Jean Smootz and will look forward to seeing Ed, Derek, Rebecca, and their children at future events—including on the stage, we hope!

## #DiscoverGSA by Leann Fryer

We hope everyone enjoyed our updated take on **Patience**. It's a great example of how Gilbert & Sullivan operas are timeless and can still work in modern times with only minor tweaks. Next up is the tale of a jilted lover demanding compensation -



**Trial by Jury**. The 2018 production starred some GSA favorites, including **Arthur DiBianca** as The Learned Judge, **Angela Irving** as The Plaintiff, **Andy Fleming** as The Defendant, **Janette Jones** as Counsel for the Plaintiff, and many others. The trial begins April 16 and runs through May 2. And as usual, there will be a live watch party on the first day of streaming at 7:30 pm.

For May, #DiscoverGSA is stepping aside to make room for **A Different Take on Gilbert & Sullivan**. To learn more about this new adventure, see the article on page 1. #DiscoverGSA may hop back in from time to time—notice will appear on our website, [www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org), and in our social media.

April 2021

## GSA Offers Scholarships

GSA intends to offer \$1,000 scholarships to four recipients for the 2021-2022 academic year. Payments will be made directly to the student's school of study or program.

For the first time this year, two of these scholarships will be specifically designated for members of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community.

GSA reserves the right to modify the amounts and number of recipients based on the recommendation of GSA Scholarship Committee.

Applicants must:

- Be pursuing a professional career in music or musical theater (preferably vocal performance)
- Be enrolled or enrolling in a professional course of study in the United States (university, college, or conservatory music degree program, apprenticeship program, Young Artist Program, etc.)
- Have an affiliation with Central Texas (resided, studied, or performed in the Central Texas area, defined as the counties of Travis, Williamson, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Blanco, and Burnet)
- Be at least a graduating high school senior

Preference will be given to applicants who have performed Gilbert & Sullivan.

To apply, please visit our website at [www.GilbertSullivan.org](http://www.GilbertSullivan.org), select About, then Scholarships. Applications must be submitted by **Monday, May 3, 2021**, to be considered.

## Trial By Jury



The Austin Savoyard

## D'Oyly Carte Inside Out by Roberta Morrell

Reviewed by Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

In the December 2016 issue, I reviewed Roberta Morrell's first book on the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, *D'Oyly Carte: The Inside Story*. Its reception has led to a sequel, *D'Oyly Carte: Inside Out*, and fans of the flagship Gilbert & Sullivan company that operated for over a century will delight in more tales of touring adventures, including adoring (and sometimes oppressive) fans, theatrical "digs," dealing with critics, and the nuts and bolts of touring 48 weeks every year. Roberta herself did so for the last decade of the Company's existence.

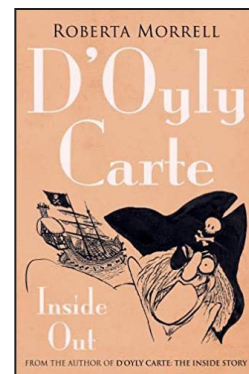
As a self-confessed "theatre nerd," I especially enjoyed Chapter 7, "FAQ," which responded to frequently asked questions



regarding recording royalty payments, dealing with sickness on the road, compensation, management vs. performers, and other matters relating to behind-the-scenes challenges, conflicts, and joys.

The book is filled with anecdotes from Roberta and her many "fellow alumni" that reinforce the usual perception of the Company's fans that being a part of this remarkable company was rather like being in a loving family. There were occasional spats, of course, but they were eclipsed by celebrations, regular work, and especially friendships, many of which last to this day.

Copies of both books are available from [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) and from Roberta herself ([robertamorrell@gmail.com](mailto:robertamorrell@gmail.com)), who will be pleased to inscribe books ordered directly from her.



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