

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin



The Zoo



Artistic & Stage Director: Ralph MacPhail, Jr. • Music Director: Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School
Austin, Texas

February 15, 2015

Thank You!

We are particularly grateful to the following for their valued assistance with this production of *The Zoo*:

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The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

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The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

presents

The Zoo A Musical Folly

Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School

February 15, 2015

2:30 PM and 4:00 PM

Written by
B. C. Stephenson (Bolton Rowe)

Artistic and Stage Director
Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

Production Manager
Stage Manager
Costumer
Costume Coordinator
Set Construction
House Manager
Playbill Cover Design
Playbill Editor

Pianist

Oboist

Composed by
Arthur Sullivan

Music Director and Conductor
Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

Bill Hatcher
Monica Kurtz
Janette Jones
Pam Fowler
Ann Marie Gordon
Allan Longacre
David Little
Sue Ricket Caldwell

Jeanne Sasaki

Allison Welch

Dramatis Personæ

Æsculapius Carboy (*A chemist in love with Lætitia*) **Andy Fleming**

Eliza Smith (*A perfectly virtuous and highly principled young lady,
in charge of the Refreshment Stall*) **Katherine Wiggins**

Thomas Brown (*but really, The Duke of Islington, a nobleman disguised,
in search of virtue, which he finds in Eliza*) **Bruno Barbosa**

Lætitia (*loved by Carboy*) **Angela Irving**

Mr. Grinder (*Lætitia's father, a retired grocer*) **Patrick Wright**

Chorus

(*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Great British Public*)

Lisa Alexander

Daniel Brookshire

Leann Fryer

Janette Jones

Mark Long

Alexandra Reilman

Tim Shelburne

Jay Young

The Zoo

The Story

We meet the chorus (*The British public here you see*) and Æsculapius Carboy, an apothecary who attempts suicide because his love's father doesn't approve of him (*I loved her fondly*). He'd been communicating with Lætitia through prescriptions; he also sent her peppermint, but the label got mixed up with that for her father's prescription (not to be taken internally). As Carboy returns to his noose (*And now let's go back*), Eliza Smith tries to stop his suicide (which wouldn't help her refreshment business). Thomas Brown enters, wooing Eliza. Lætitia then arrives, looking for Æsculapius (*I miss my Æsculapius*), and inquires after him (*Where is he?*). The four lovers then sing a quartet: Lætitia and Carboy express their love (*Once more the face I loved so well*) in counterpoint to Eliza and Thomas's list of the food he's been eating. *Help! Ah! Help!* sings Thomas, and in a splendid operatic parody, everyone sings about Thomas's need of medical aid but nobody moves! Thomas revives (*Ho— guards! Minions!*) and reveals his noble birth. He then attempts a speech (*Ladies and gentlemen!*) to proclaim his love for Eliza, which the crowd interprets (*We gather from what you have said*). Thomas, Lætitia, and Carboy exit, just as Lætitia's irate father appears, asking *Where is my daughter?* Meanwhile, Eliza is assured by everyone that Thomas will return, and all then leave her alone to sing about the innocent (?) little life she's led (*I'm a simple little child*). All reenter (*My father!*) and Grinder again expresses his antipathy toward Carboy, who attempts suicide again by climbing into the bear-pit. Suddenly Thomas Brown returns as his true self, the Duke of Islington (*What do I see in this disguise?*). Eliza, reluctant to leave her beloved zoo animals, is assured by the Duke that he's purchased them all for her. Everyone then realizes that Carboy is in the bear-pit being devoured. But he reappears! We learn that "in consequence of some repairs," "they've moved the bears"! The Duke makes a financial arrangement with Grinder leading the way to a happy ending for Æsculapius and Lætitia. So the chorus was right, earlier on, when they sang that "it will all end pleasantly."

The Story Behind the Story

This "musical folly," with words by "Bolton Rowe" (B. C. Stephenson) was originally staged at the St. James's Theatre, London, in 1875, shortly after the incredible success of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*. *The Zoo* resembles *Trial by Jury* in several ways: it is through-composed (there is no dialogue), it lasts about 45 minutes—and it was composed by Arthur Sullivan.

It was not, however, produced by Richard D'Oyly Carte, and it closed after a five-week run in mid-1875. After two brief revivals later that year and in 1879, the score, never published, began to gather dust; the published but ephemeral libretto was a rarity; and *The Zoo* became but an interesting and tantalizing footnote to the composer's career—and to the history of "G&S." . . .

Until 1966, when Dr. Terence Rees purchased Sullivan's autograph score at auction, and commissioned a piano reduction. This led to a production in London by an amateur group in 1971.

The work was recorded in 1978 on LP by the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company (though they never presented it onstage), and since then it has entered into the standard "G&S

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Musical Numbers

“The British public here you see”	Carboy and Chorus
“I loved her fondly”	Carboy and Chorus
“And now let’s go back”	Eliza, Carboy, Thomas, and Chorus
“I miss my Æsculapius?” (<i>lyric by Francis Lynch</i>)	Lætitia
“Where is he?”	Lætitia, Eliza, Carboy, and Thomas
“Once more the face I loved so well”	Lætitia, Eliza, Carboy, and Thomas
“Help! Ah! Help!”	Lætitia, Eliza, Carboy, Thomas, and Chorus
“Ho— guards! Minions!”	Lætitia, Carboy, Thomas, and Chorus
“Ladies and gentlemen!”	Thomas and Chorus
“We gather from what you have said”	Thomas and Chorus
“Where is my daughter?”	Eliza, Grinder, and Chorus
“I’m a simple little child”	Eliza
“My father!”	Lætitia, Eliza, Carboy, Grinder, and Chorus
“What do I see in this disguise?”	Lætitia, Eliza, Carboy, Thomas, and Chorus

The Production Team



Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

(Artistic & Stage Director) has directed 14 GSSA grand productions. Next Friday he will speak on G&S in Bryan, TX, then return to Austin for auditions for *The Sorcerer*. In August, Rafe will teach a Road Scholar (Elderhostel) Course on “Pira-Mika-Fore” in Warwick, New York.



Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

(Music Director/Conductor) has served as the Musical Director for GSSA since 2003. He has been associated with the Society since 1993.

In 2003 he was awarded the B. Iden Payne award for Outstanding Musical Direction for his work on *The Pirates of Penzance*.



Bill Hatcher

(Production Manager)

joined GSSA in 1985 and has served as Production Manager since 2009. He enjoys the excitement, challenges and rewards of managing these shows. Bill has also served as President and Treasurer, acted on stage, and played in the orchestra.



Jeanne Sasaki

(Pianist) has played for many GSSA Musicales. In addition to performing with singers and instrumentalists, she maintains a private piano teaching and vocal coaching studio in Austin.

In 2006-14, she served as Lecturer and Staff Accompanist/Vocal Coach at UT Austin.



Monica Kurtz

(Stage Manager) has over 25 years’ experience in stage managing, in Austin and around the world. This is her eleventh GSSA production.

She also enjoys archery, knife-throwing, and volunteering for the Fusebox Festival.



Allison Welch

(Oboist) has had the pleasure of performing in GSSA’s orchestra since 2003. She has performed with several ensembles throughout Texas,

including Texas Early Music Project, the Capital City Men’s Chorus, Texas Bach Choir and Collegium, and Ars Lyrica Houston.

The Cast

Principals



Andy Fleming

(Æsculapius Carboy) has performed with GSSA for the last dozen years. Andy also performs with Spotlight on Opera in such roles as Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*), and is a stalwart of the Austin Opera Chorus. Andy is currently attending UT for a Masters in Vocal Performance.



Katherine Wiggins

(Eliza Smith) has sung professionally throughout the U.S. and has been lauded as “fiery” and “vocally and dramatically outstanding.” Ms. Wiggins’ 2014/15 season highlights include: the world premiere of Franklin Piland’s *Rose Made Man* (Cohen New Works Festival), and Meg in *Little Women* as a Guest Artist (Southwestern University).



Bruno Barbosa

(Thomas Brown) is a student at UT Austin, where he is procuring a BM in Voice Performance and BA in English with a German minor. He studies with Donnie Ray Albert and has performed with the Butler Opera Center Young Artist Program and Spotlight on Opera.



Angela Irving

(Lætitia Grinder) is excited to perform in her seventh GSSA production! By day, she teaches voice lessons at various Austin-area high schools, where she generates fresh batches of G&S enthusiasts. By evening/weekend, she performs, appearing often with Austin Opera, One Ounce Opera, Opera Pals, and Frontera Fest. Her latest GSSA role was Melissa in *Princess Ida*.



Patrick Wright

(Mr. Grinder) is in his second GSSA foray, and he could not be more excited. After getting his degree in Vocal Performance at SFA, he has had the pleasure of singing with Austin Opera, including *Don Carlos*, *Tosca*, *Un Ballo*, and *Romeo et Juliette*.

Chorus



Lisa Alexander

has appeared with the GSSA as Kate in *The Pirates of Penzance* (2008) and as Queen of the Fairies in *Iolanthe* (2009). She played Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro* with Austin Opera (2013), and in 2014 played Colline in *La Femme Bohème*, an all female version of Puccini’s *La Bohème*.



Daniel Brookshire

has appeared in GSSA’s *The Mikado* in 2005, *Trial By Jury* in 2005 and 2014, *Ruddigore* in 2007, *Patience* in 2012, and *Princess Ida* in 2013. He also sings with the Capital City Men’s Chorus (15 years) and the Trinity United Methodist Church Choir.



Leann R. Fryer

has appeared in GSSA choruses for *Patience* in 2012, *Princess Ida* in 2013, and both *Trial by Jury* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* in 2014. She performs with Spotlight on Opera and has been in many shows with the Georgetown Palace Theater.



Chorus (continued)



Janette Jones

is a native Austinite who learned to love G&S while performing with the Light Opera of Manhattan, where she played many lyric mezzo roles. She has been nominated four times for a B. Iden Payne Award, most recently in 2012 for her portrayal of Lady Jane in *Patience*.



Tim Shelburne

started his musical career in his early teens when he picked up his first bass guitar. Since moving to Austin, Tim toured all over the east coast, but recently decided to pursue theater. *H.M.S. Pinafore* was his first foray into opera – he’s excited for his second show with GSSA.



Mark Long

first performed with GSSA in 1997 (*The Yeomen of the Guard*), and last year’s *H.M.S. Pinafore* was his twelfth production with that company. He has also sung with the Austin Choral Union, the Austin Opera Chorus, the Texas Choral Consort, and Chorus Austin.



Jay Young

is thrilled to be a public spectator at this Zoo. He has lived in Austin for 23 years, and is happy to call it home. When not frequenting zoos, he works in the State Capitol, performs in the chorus for operas and musicals, and frequents theatrical productions in the Austin area.



Alexandra Reilman

is an up-and-coming opera singer, stage director and arts administrator. She regularly performs with local companies such as the Austin Opera, the GSSA, and Spotlight on Opera, and is the Executive Director of SMART Opera, a non-profit organization that conducts youth outreach programs for opera.



The Story Behind the Story *continued from page 4*

repertory,” frequently as a curtain-raiser for a shorter two-act work or combined with other one-acts for a full evening’s entertainment. We believe this production to be an Austin première.

The Zoo is a high-spirited comic work with strong parody of melodramatic and grand operatic conventions—conventions that Gilbert & Sullivan were to exploit in several of their earliest works (notably *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*).

I’m not the first to suspect that *The Zoo* was hastily written following the overwhelming success of *Trial by Jury* to “cash in on” the success of Sullivan’s other “opera.” However, while preparing for this production I was reminded of evidence that work had begun on a two-act version of what became *The Zoo* before *Trial by Jury* opened, and it’s likely that following the success of *Trial by Jury*, the work was rewritten in the format we know it today—and rushed to the stage.

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

Upcoming Events



The Sorcerer Auditions

Brentwood Christian School - 11908 N. Lamar

February 21 & 22



The Sorcerer Preview Musicale

Sunday, May 17 - 3pm



Summer 2015 Grand Production

The Sorcerer

9 Performances

June 18-28



For more information on these and other GSSA activities please visit
www.gilbertsullivan.org