

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

presents



**VERY TRULY YOURS,
Gilbert & Sullivan**

Artistic & Stage Director: Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

Music Director: Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

First Presbyterian Church

Austin, Texas

February 21, 2016

Thank You!

We are particularly grateful to the following for their valued assistance with this production of *Very Truly Yours, Gilbert & Sullivan*:

Abiding Love Lutheran Church, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, and the Church of Christ in Hyde Park for lending the podia used on stage
Jane Bassett at First Presbyterian Church
Frances Barulich (The Pierpont Morgan Library), **David Mackie, David Stone, Stephen Turnbull** (Secretary, The Sir Arthur Sullivan Society) for help locating rare music
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Kendra Hiller at Genesis Presbyterian Church for help with rehearsal scheduling
Jeffrey Jones-Ragona of the Saint Mary Cathedral for help with rehearsal scheduling
Carleen Loveless, Town of Bridgewater Offices, for help with vintage props
David Treadwell, Bill Hatcher and **Libby Weed** for lending props to the production
David Treadwell for technical assistance during the performance

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin

Since 1976, we have been spreading the joys of G&S through

Annual Grand Productions

Educational/Community Outreach

Musicales

Musical Scholarships

Newsletters

Holiday Season Shows

The Society holds nonprofit status under 501(c)(3) of the IRS code.

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The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin
presents

*Very Truly Yours,
Gilbert & Sullivan*

First Presbyterian Church

February 21, 2016

3:00 PM

Written by

Gayden Wren

Lyrics by

W. S. Gilbert

Composed by

Arthur Sullivan

Artistic and Stage Director

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

Music Director

Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

Production Manager

Bill Hatcher

Stage Manager

Adam Gunderson

House Manager

David Treadwell

Playbill Cover Design

David Little

Playbill Editor

Sue Ricket Caldwell

Pianist

Karl Logue

Dramatis Personæ

Allan Longacre, Narrator

Tamsen Cohagan, Soprano

June Julian, Mezzo

Holton Johnson, Tenor

Patrick Wright, Baritone

David Fontenot, Bass

Very Truly Yours, Gilbert & Sullivan was presented for the first time in 1995,
by the Gilbert & Sullivan Light Opera Company of Long Island.

A New Play on an Old Subject

Very Truly Yours, Gilbert & Sullivan is the third in our series of “mid-season special productions”; it follows Gilbert & Sullivan’s *Trial by Jury* (2014) and Sullivan & Rowe’s *The Zoo* (2015). These “chamber” productions are a natural outgrowth of our long-standing custom of offering frequent “musicales” to the public, and they have multiple goals—sharing our love for Gilbert & Sullivan, learning more about their careers and collaboration, and providing our singer-actors another opportunity to perform, thus offering their talents and delighting our members—all during the “down time” between our annual June “grand” productions.

Unlike our first two special productions, each of which was first produced in 1875, *Very Truly Yours* is a new play—but on an old subject. Like the other two, all of the music was composed by Arthur Sullivan. Like *Trial by Jury*, all the words were written by W. S. Gilbert. The play was written by Gayden Wren with a big assist from the surviving correspondence, diaries, reviews, reminiscences, and other verbal material, ingeniously combined with musical delights from the 14 collaborations of Gilbert & Sullivan (plus one of the several songs written by the team but not for the stage).

This “old subject” was needing this new play. Gayden Wren has written elsewhere that too often the story of the Gilbert-Sullivan collaboration is defined in popular understanding by their quarrels; and while there is no denying their several quarrels had important influences on their joint work, there’s also no denying that these two geniuses, working together more harmoniously than not over a span of a quarter-century, produced a body of work for the light lyrical stage that has never been equaled.

Many of the selections are among Gilbert & Sullivan’s most popular, and we expect these will be so well-known by many that our audience will be singing along *in their minds*. We also hope that the lesser-known selections will prompt, for some, memories of our recent productions past. And we hope that there will be unfamiliar selections to remind many that there are still delights to be discovered in “G’n’S.”

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Musical Numbers

ACT I

Invocation: “Minerva! / Oh Goddess Wise” (<i>Princess Ida</i>)	Tamsen
“Little Maid of Arcadee” (<i>Thespis</i>)	Holton
“Sweethearts” (song separately published)	Tamsen, Holton
“Oh, gentlemen, listen, I pray” (<i>Trial by Jury</i>)	Holton (Tamsen, June)
“My name is John Wellington Wells” (<i>The Sorcerer</i>)	Patrick
“When I was a lad” (<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>)	David (<i>tutti</i>)
“When the foeman bares his steel” (<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>)	David (<i>tutti</i>)
“Prithee, pretty maiden” (<i>Patience</i>)	Holton, Tamsen
“When Britain really ruled the waves” (<i>Iolanthe</i>)	David (<i>tutti</i>)
“I am a maiden” (<i>Princess Ida</i>).....	Holton, Patrick, David
“Sir Rupert Murgatroyd” (<i>Ruddigore</i>)	June (<i>tutti</i>)
“I am so proud” (<i>The Mikado</i>)	David, Patrick, Holton

INTERMISSION

ACT II

“When maiden loves” (<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>)	June
“I have a song to sing, O” (<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>)	Tamsen, Patrick (<i>tutti</i>)
“In a contemplative fashion” (<i>The Gondoliers</i>)	Tamsen, June, Holton, Patrick
“I am a courtier grave and serious” (<i>The Gondoliers</i>)	<i>Tutti</i>
“Although of native maids the cream” (<i>Utopia Limited</i>)	Tamsen, June
“As o’er our penny roll we sing” (<i>The Grand Duke</i>)	June, David
“Is life a boon?” (<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>)	Patrick
“Try we life-long” (<i>The Gondoliers</i>)	<i>Tutti</i>

A New Play on an Old Subject *continued from preceding page*

Finally, a word about the words between the musical selections: most of them are from Gilbert and Sullivan themselves, with others by their friends and associates—and their critics. It is through these words that many will probably meet a Gilbert and a Sullivan they’ve not known through performances of their works. You will meet them as businessmen, as artists, and as friends with mutual admiration and, yes, at times when they were not so friendly. We hope that you will learn to know them as you’ve never known them before.

Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

The Author



Gayden Wren is a New York-based playwright, director, and country singer/songwriter who has been a member of the Gilbert & Sullivan Light Opera Company of Long Island since 1974. He is also the author of the critical work *A Most Ingenious Paradox: The Art of Gilbert & Sullivan* (Oxford University Press, 2001), and a number of plays, including *Swords & Frenchmen* (1981), *Tales from the Bible*, *A Night on the Tomb* (1982), *Moonlight and Midnight* (1983), *I.D.* (1986), *Two for the Show* (1988), *Baseball, Sex and Other Facts of Life* (1997)—not to mention his most popular work, *A Gilbert & Sullivan Christmas Carol* (1994), which has enjoyed more than 60 productions in five different countries, including Macedonia. For information on another aspect of his personality, visit TennesseeWalt.com.

The Production Team



Ralph MacPhail, Jr.

(Artistic & Stage Director) has directed 15 GSSA grand productions plus, the last two Februarys, *Trial by Jury* and *The Zoo*. Next Friday he will

speak on *Ruddigore* in Bryan, TX. In August, Rafe will teach a Road Scholar (Elderhostel) course on “Pira-Mika-fore” in Warwick, New York, and he is looking forward eagerly to returning to Austin in 2017 to direct *The Pirates of Penzance*. He and his wife Alice treasure their Austin friendships!



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.



Adam Gunderson

(Stage Manager) is excited to be working with GSSA again; he served as first assistant stage manager for *Princess Ida* (2013), *H.M.S. Pinafore*

(2014), and *The Sorcerer* (2015). He has also been working at the Vortex Repertory Company for the last dozen years doing anything technical that he can get his hands on. Some favorite shows include *Ghost from a Perfect Place*, both runs of *Sleeping Beauty*, *R.U.R.*, and *Princess Ida*.



Jeffrey Jones-Ragona

(Music Director) has served as the Music 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*, and was named to GSSA’s Hall of Fame in 2011. Jeffrey serves as Director for other notable ensembles, including The Capital City Men’s Chorus, and regularly performs with the Texas Early Music Project.



Karl Logue

(Pianist) has a master’s degree and over 20 years of training in piano performance, composition, and theory. His performance credits include 25

years as accompanist for the Capital City Men’s Chorus, including nearly 200 performances in the U.S. and Canada. He is a prolific composer of choral, orchestral, and piano works, including pieces commissioned by the Capital City Men’s Chorus as part of the Gala New Works program, Zachary Scott Theater Children’s Theater program, and commercially-released original compositions for piano and chorus.



W.S. Gilbert



Arthur Sullivan

The Cast



Tamsen Cohagan

is delighted to be performing in her second production with the GSSA. Her previous roles include Yum-Yum in *The Mikado*, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Manon in *Manon*,

Pamina and the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, Adina in *The Elixir of Love*, Lisette in *La Rondine*, Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, Anne in *A Little Night Music* and Jenny in *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. She is an active board member for the non-profit Kids in a New Groove, which serves to mentor children in the foster care system through free music lessons. She gives special thanks to her husband, family and friends for their love and support.



David Fontenot

has had the good fortune to have performed at least once in eleven of the fourteen canonical Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and, as new titles are not frequently added to the

repertory, is deeply honored to have been given this opportunity. Favorite roles (among those he has portrayed) include Wilfred Shadbolt in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, The Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Sir Roderic Murgatroyd in *Ruddigore*, and Dick Deadeye in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. David is the proud father of Katy, herself a veteran of the GSSA.



Holton Johnson

is honored to be performing once again with GSSA and most notably in this exciting work. Holton has performed extensively in Boston, as well as in Tucson, San Diego, and

Los Angeles, winning numerous awards for his singing and acting. Last seen as Alexis in last year's production of *The Sorcerer*, he won a B. Iden Payne Award for best actor in a musical for his portrayal of Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Some of his most memorable roles include Tobias in *Sweeney Todd*, Clifford in *Deathtrap*, and Tony in *West Side Story*. Holton is a graduate of the University of Arizona, where he studied with Charles Roe and Grayson Hirst.



June Julian

is thrilled to be a part of the *Very Truly Yours, Gilbert & Sullivan* cast. She recently performed with the Balcones Community Orchestra as the soprano soloist in *The*

Children's Crusade by Cy Young. Other GSSA performances include *Iolanthe*, Pitti-Sing in *The Mikado*, and Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance*. ZACH Theatre credits include the featured ensemble in *Evita*, and Lady Thiang in *The King & I*. In central Texas, she has also sung with Austin Opera, Austin Theatre Project, among others; and dabbles in voiceover and film projects. This "maid of all work" would like to thank her family and friends for all their love and support, and for keeping the arts alive in Austin!



Allan Longacre

is honored to be performing on the GSSA stage after serving as volunteer arts consultant and later board member since 1999. After earning undergraduate and

graduate degrees in Theatre at the Universities of Nebraska and Iowa, he spent 40 years directing and managing theatre and arts organizations across the country. After serving GSSA as advisor, wine pourer, house manager, grant and letter writer, he is honored to have another and new role on stage.



Patrick Wright

is performing in his fourth GSSA show and fifth G&S production. He grew up in Waco and graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches

with a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance. He has lived in Austin for 3 years. He has sung in Austin Opera's wonderful chorus in such shows as *Tosca*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Of Mice and Men*. Currently, he is also working with One Ounce Opera, a local group of professional singers who tour the city, and give a slightly "offbeat" view of traditional opera. Patrick is looking forward to singing with his colleagues, and is excited to bring this charming production to Austin.

Upcoming Events



The Gondoliers Auditions
February 27 & 28



The Gondoliers Preview Musicale
Sunday, May 15, 3 pm



Summer 2016 Grand Production



9 Performances
June 16–26

For more information on these and other GSSA activities, please visit

www.gilbertsullivan.org