



≈ SPECIAL EDITION ≈

Owing to an unusually productive season (last month) we found *The Trumpet Bray* in such a condition that putting all that material in the December issue impracticable thus making this unusual - and special - January edition possible. *Happy New Year!*

≈ NEGASS EVENTS ≈

**NEGASS to be featured on National Public Radio's quiz show *Says You!***

By Angela Jajko

Members of the New England Gilbert & Sullivan Society will be performing on the national radio show *Says You!*, a radio game show of "bluff and bluster, words and whimsy" taped before a live audience for broadcast nationwide. The program airs on Sundays at 2 p.m. on WGBH 89.7 FM.

The shows will be recorded on January 2 and 3, 2016 in Weston, MA, and tickets are available to be a part of the studio audience. Follow the link to get tickets (<http://www.saysyou.net/get-tickets/>) and come join me, **Rebecca Hains, Tom Frates, Elaine B. Crane, Christine Petkus, Susan Craft Larson, Shannon Lebron, Steve Lebron, Tony Parkes, Randy Glidden, Martha Birnbaum, Lonnie Powell, David Bell, Brad Amidon, Connell Benn, Kaori Emery, Lisa Pierce-Goldstein, Larry Millner, Katherine Engel Meifert** with the baton and the incomparable **Thomas Dawkins** at the piano for some amazing shows!



≈ G&S EVENTS ≈

***The Sorcerer* is to be the winter 2016 production of the Sudbury Savoyards**

By Andrea Roessler

The Sudbury Savoyards are pleased to announce their winter 2016 production will be Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Sorcerer*, with stage director **Tony Parkes** and music director **Craig Tata**, produced by **Susan Elberger** and **John Gorgone**. Performances will be February, 20, 21, 26, and 27, 2016 at the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School.



**Craig Tata**



**Tony Parkes**

(Courtesy of Sudbury Savoyards)

The group welcomes two new directors with complementary skills and experience. While this is Tony's first time in a director's role, he is a long-time Savoyard (and NEGASS member) who has performed in all 13 extant G&S shows. New to

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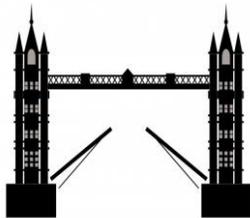
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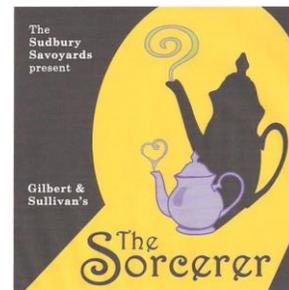
DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL: 15<sup>th</sup> of the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

[www.negass.org](http://www.negass.org)



the company is Craig Tata. Mr. Tata has many years of experience as both stage and music director for school and community productions and has a Master of Music in conducting from the University of Florida.

According to stage director Tony Parkes, “*The Sorcerer* is a show whose time has come again. Thanks to TV series such as *Downton Abbey*, Americans are familiar with the English class system that is at the heart of the opera’s plot. It’s basically ‘*Downton Abbey* meets *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*’ – an upper-class young man hires a sorcerer to put a love potion in the tea at his wedding breakfast, and everyone falls in love with someone ‘unsuitable.’ We will be emphasizing the class distinctions in several ways, some of which I haven’t seen done before.”



The Sudbury Savoyards is an all-volunteer community theater company with all of its net proceeds donated to the relief of world hunger. Almost \$230,000 has been donated to date. For more information please call the new message line at 781-369-5992 (781-DOYLY-92) or visit the website: [www.sudburysavoyards.org](http://www.sudburysavoyards.org).

### MIT G&S Players to host *Iolanthe* Sing

The MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players are hosting a “no-pressure” sing-through of *Iolanthe* on January 10 at 2 p.m. Soloists choristers, musicians are needed. Please email [rebecca.s.graber@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.s.graber@gmail.com) by Monday, January 4, with your interest to participate.

Available roles are: **Strephon** (baritone), **Phyllis** (soprano), **Iolanthe** (mezzo-soprano), **The Lord Chancellor** (comic baritone), **Queen of the Fairies** (contralto) **George, Earl of Mountarat** (baritone), **Thomas, Earl Tolloller** (tenor), **Celia, a Fairy** (soprano), **Leila, a Fairy** (mezzo-soprano), **Private Willis** (bass), and **Fleta, a Fairy** (speaking role and chorus).

## The genesis of Valley Light Opera's *Pineapple Poll* production of June '15

By Bill Venman

Since 1975 the Valley Light Opera has produced all fourteen Gilbert and Sullivan operas, all of the Sullivan-without-Gilbert operas, and a few other works. But one work eluded us until last summer. This is the story of how *Pineapple Poll* made it onto our life list.

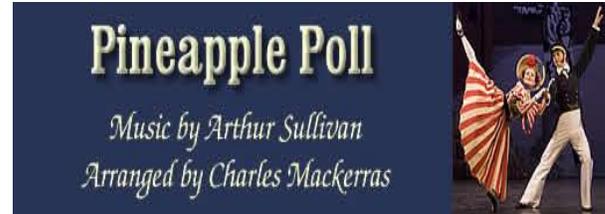
Some thirty years ago my wife Sally and I were at the Rand Theater at the University of Massachusetts Amherst to see a play, the name of which I have long forgotten. What makes the memory stand out, however, was the familiar music the Theater Department played before the performance. "Ah, that's *The Mikado*," we said to each other. But twenty or so bars further on it was another G&S opera, and then another, again and again. Being familiar with yet not knowing what we were listening to was driving us both nuts. The next day I called the Theater Department and asked them what they were playing. The person I spoke to said that she didn't know, but that they had gotten the piece from John Montanari, the music host at our local NPR station, WFCR.



Charles Mackerras

I called John and learned that the music was *Pineapple Poll*, which immediately jumped to my bucket list alongside *Ivanhoe* (another story), where it lay for about twenty-five years. The story of the creation of *Pineapple Poll* is, in brief, that Charles Mackerras (then assistant conductor and repetiteur for [Sadler's Wells Opera](#) and a fan of Gilbert and Sullivan) undertook a project based on his belief that the music from the G&S operas was well suited for dancing. In 1951, the year after the copyright on the

works expired, he was introduced to choreographer John Cranko. They chose Gilbert's Bab Ballad *The Bumboat Woman's Story* as a framework to construct the ballet, but they gave it a happy ending. (The same story, incidentally, is incorporated into *H.M.S. Pinafore*.) Mackerras reorchestrated Sullivan's music into a two act, forty-five minute ballet. It ran in England for many performances, but is largely unknown in the United States, even to those well versed in Gilbert and Sullivan.



(The Gilbert and Sullivan Archive.)

About five years ago I learned that the Seattle Gilbert and Sullivan Society had performed *Poll* and that their music director, working with Mackerras, had reduced the orchestration from its original form to a pit orchestra. After lengthy negotiation with the managing director of the Society, I bought their score and parts and began to put our production together.

My greatest success in putting together the production team was finding a ballet company, Amherst Ballet Theatre, and its managing director and choreographer, Sueann Townsend. I could not have found a more enthusiastic or creative partner. Sueann's company, with two exceptions, was made up entirely high school students. Sueann created new choreography for *Poll* which highlights the tenderness and folly of the plot. Amherst Ballet's annual spring program was in May, after which we jumped in and began rehearsing two and more frequently three times a week.

The first real issue I came across was in the form of a personal challenge. I've conducted all of the operas, many several times, but I had never conducted a ballet. The change in performers' attention took me quite a while to adapt to. In opera, the singers watch the conductor. In ballet, the dancers listen to the music and learn the choreography at certain tempi. That took a lot of work to get used to.

The second issue (which turned out to be a non-issue) was the orchestration. All of our players have been with us for some time, in one case since our

very first production in 1975. They were used to playing Sullivan’s orchestrations. Mackerras’s orchestrations are much more challenging. The melodies are the same, but the underlying orchestration is original. There were some within the VLO who had serious doubts about the orchestra’s ability to pull it off successfully. I knew it could be done and indeed our orchestra performed the difficult piece brilliantly.

So we went to work, and by the end of June, 2015, we were ready. We opened at the Academy of Music in Northampton, Massachusetts with the delightful Sullivan and Rowe’s *The Zoo*, which we have done numerous times. But the highlight of the performances was *Poll*. We believe that this was the first time that *Poll* had been produced in New England.

The performance marked the end of the VLO’s year-long celebration of our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and on a personal note, Saturday’s performance also coincided with my 84<sup>th</sup> birthday. (Were I Frederic I could now leave my apprenticeship.) My point is this: *Pineapple Poll* is worth any G&S company’s time to consider doing. It is thoroughly Gilbert and Sullivan, but with a completely new twist. Try it. You’ll like it. *Pineapple Poll* was the highlight of my forty-year career with the Valley Light Opera. As a final note, Sueann’s videographer produced a marvelous DVD of the production which she can make available to anyone who might be interested. If you’re interested, contact me at [wcvnman@gmail.com](mailto:wcvnman@gmail.com).



Bill Venman

## ≈ RECENT PRODUCTIONS ≈

**The Trumpet Bray welcomes reviews of recent G & S shows. The editor reserves the right to amend submissions to adhere to publication requirements.**

## Producing *Princess Ida* and accommodating present day attitudes posed challenges

By David Oyer

When the curtain is lifted on Brown University Gilbert and Sullivan’s (BUGS) new production, *Princess Ida* on November 13, the ensemble cast are assembled onstage as members of King Hildebrand’s (Ahmed Ahour ‘19) court, gazing out into the audience with telescopes. They are looking for the eponymous heroine, whose failure to arrive breaks a marriage vow to Hildebrand’s son, Hilarion (Nicholas Renton ‘19), made during her infancy by her father, King Gama (Reilly Hayes URI ‘17). Gama comes instead with his three sons, buffoonish knights who are quickly imprisoned, along with their father, until Ida can be summoned. Achieving this goal turns out to be more difficult than expected, however, as a liberated Ida has sworn off men entirely and founded her own women’s college, of which she is president. The only remaining option, Hildebrand’s court concludes, is to send Hilarion—along with his two trusty companions (Harlan Epstein ‘19 and Jacob Laden-Guidnon ‘18)—off to the college to reclaim Ida.

If all this set-up sounds like a lot, fear not: it is all taken care of in a breezy first act. The meat of the work is the second act, set at Ida’s college, in which the three young heroes dress in drag and attempt to infiltrate the women’s-only community to comedic effect. Naturally, of course, this premise is merely a foundation for a deeper exploration of gender roles and stereotypes. Unsurprisingly, Gilbert and Sullivan, writing in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, did not share all-too-similar views on such issues as Brown students in the early 21<sup>st</sup>.

This is to say that *Princess Ida*, as written, is a remarkably sexist work, and producing it in a style accommodating of present-day attitudes is a challenge. The crux of Gilbert and Sullivan’s intent is that a spoiled and ungrateful Ida has unnecessarily disrupted a perfectly good status quo manufactured by her father and his peers, and consequently must be mocked and eventually put in her place. As director Paul Martino ‘17 points out in his Director’s Note, however, Ida is conceived as “a threat to patriarchal conventions, male domination, and heteronormativity.” In 1884, these traits were grounds for mockery, but in 2015,



The women of the college at Castle Adamant, with Meg Martinez '15.5 (top middle) as Princess Ida. (Images via Yuri Lee RISD '17.)

with a changed tone and the same words, Ida can function, as Martino puts it, as “a genuine saint.”

It helps that Ida, in this iteration, is interpreted by a performer as mature and self-assured as **Meg Martinez '15.5**. Martinez, aside from being the clear musical standout (it should be noted for those unfamiliar that Gilbert and Sullivan were a comic opera-writing super-team), plays Ida in a register perfectly suited to Martino’s progressive approach. Martinez reads Ida’s lines, meant to be shrill and insolent, so that they feel confident, justified, and—as Hilarion’s quest grows closer to success—tragically earnest.

A good deal of credit for the production’s success in transforming such an ideologically tone-deaf work should belong, as well, to Martino. He plays up the oafishness of the young male characters—Hilarion and friends, King Gama’s sons—and gives even the more minor female parts a chance to develop into three-dimensional characters. Notable in particular is Lady Blanche (**Isabella Creatura '18**), Princess Ida’s number two at the university, who must have surely been written as an incarnation of the archetypal jealous woman but here is converted into a sympathetic mother whose career motives are easily understood.

Still, it should be noted that a relatively unchanged production of the original book can only go so far. The ending, which we will refrain from divulging

here, is more or less irremediable, and Martino’s choice to play it semi-tragically jars with the otherwise jaunty and upbeat tone of the forerunning performance. Nonetheless, his *Princess Ida* as a whole is unexpectedly delightful, and fully recommended to past BUGS attendees and, especially, to those looking for a new student performative experience.

### ❧ REVIEWERS REWARDED ❧

Have you ever wanted to comment on your colleagues’ hard work somewhere other than Facebook? Now is your chance! *The Trumpet Bray* seeks peer reviewers for local G&S productions. Plus, write a review that goes to publication, and we’ll refund up to \$25 towards your ticket cost. Contact [editor@negass.org](mailto:editor@negass.org) for more information.

### ❧ COMMUNICATIONS ❧

To the editor,  
If you think readers of *The Trumpet Bray* will be interested in the attachment, please feel free to reproduce it. It’s OK with OSU! With thanks--we want our collections *used*.

#### **Ralph MacPhail, Jr.**

Artistic Director, The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin [www.gilbertsullivan.org](http://www.gilbertsullivan.org)

Editor, *Benford's Gilbert and Sullivan*

*Lexicon* [www.gsopera.com/lexicon](http://www.gsopera.com/lexicon)

Professor of Theatre *emeritus*, Bridgewater (VA) College [www.bridgewater.edu](http://www.bridgewater.edu)  
Contact: [RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com](mailto:RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com)

The attachment follows:

#### **Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute has acquired two world-class G&S collections**

The Ralph MacPhail, Jr., Gilbert & Sullivan Collection highlights include:

- The Mikado’s costume and other costume pieces designed by Charles Ricketts for the 1926 D’Oyly Carte Opera Company production.
- Manuscript orchestral material from the Western Music Library and the Tracy Music Library.
- Conductor’s scores for several G&S comic operas.

To come: sheet music, newsletters and other publications, recordings, autograph material,

inscribed books, correspondence, working papers, production documentation, and more.

The Jesse and Rochelle Shereff Gilbert & Sullivan Collection highlights include:

- A scrapbook containing 64 original drawings by W. Russell Flint used to create the color plates that appeared in early editions of some G&S libretti.
- Over 600 books and serials about G&S.
- Hundreds of figurines, plates, and other ceramic collectibles relating to G&S.
- The Mikado: Sketches Behind the Scenes [of] R D'Oyly Carte's Company - a portfolio of a touring company in Germany by C. W. Allers.

The collections also contain American and English ephemera dating from the earliest G&S collaborations, photographs, posters, programs, libretti, published music, prompt books, manuscript orchestrations, and promotional materials. The collections are available for use by students, faculty and researchers worldwide. For those interested accessing them, please contact the TRI staff at 614-292-6614 or visit [go.osu.edu/tri](http://go.osu.edu/tri) for more information.



## ∞ G&S TRIVIA ∞

### Overtures

Being a somewhat G&S neophyte, I was brushing up recently by reading some biographical material on line in Wikipedia and stumbled upon information about overtures to their comic operas. Much to my surprise (Oh, horror!) many of these overtures were orchestrated by others from Sullivan's music. In fact, Sullivan is credited only with *Thespis*, *Iolanthe*, *The Yeoman of the Guard*, *The Gondoliers*, and *The Grand Duke*.

While the arranger of *Utopia, Limited* cannot be identified with any degree of certainty, Wikipedia claims that Sullivan was probably the arranger as well as the composer. The same is asserted about *Thespis*. With respect to the former, the autographed score is missing while the complete score of the latter has been completely lost. Other

overtures that were arranged were done so under Sullivan's guidance.

Early performances of *The Sorcerer* were preceded by Sullivan's incidental music to *Henry the VIII*. In 1884, Hamilton Clarke provided the overture we know today. Clarke is also responsible for *The Mikado* and the original *Ruddigore*. The overture we hear today of *Ruddigore* was done in 1920 by Geoffrey Toye who also did one for *Pirates* which was short-lived and presumed lost. Alfred Cellier is credited with *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. *Patience* was done by Eugene d'Albert. Sir Malcolm Sargent altered the overture to *The Gondoliers* by adding the "cachucha" from Act II.

Each of these arrangers (excepting Sargent and Toye) enjoyed a working relationship with Sullivan. Two had been D'Oyly Carte music directors - Hamilton Clarke in 1878 and Alfred Cellier from 1887-1885. Eugene (nee Eugen) d'Albert was a 17 year old protégé of Sullivan when he arranged *Patience* in 1881. Sargent had been a D'Oyly Carte conductor off and on from 1926-1964. Toye was music director from 1919-1924. Safe to say that each of these gentlemen preserved the essence of Sullivan's music in the works they arranged and they did "a good job, too!"

-David DeVries

Source materials, Wikipedia, Who's Who in the D'Oyly Carte (see NEGASS website link)



A scene from *Trial by Jury* as illustrated in the magazine *Illustrated* of 1 May 1875

### ∞ We Have a Little List ∞

We wish to thank those who contributed in any way to this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* including Angela Jajko, Andrea Roessler, Bill Venman, David Oyer and Ra;ph MacPhail, Jr. (Please forgive any omissions!)

## NEGASS Events

*Says Who!*  
NPR and NEGASS

**January 2-3, 2016**  
Programs taped on Saturday and Sunday  
at 1:30 p.m.  
See article on page 1

Eleanor Welch Casey Theatre  
Regis College  
235 Wellesley Street  
Weston MA 02493

## Other G&S Events

*Iolanthe Sing-Through*  
MIT G&S Players

**January 10, 2016**  
[rebecca.s.graber@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.s.graber@gmail.com)  
See article on Page 2

Location to be determined

*The Sorcerer*  
Sudbury Savoyards

**February 20-27, 2016**  
[sudburysavoyards.org](http://sudburysavoyards.org)  
See article on page 1

Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High  
School  
390 Lincoln Rd.  
Sudbury MA

*The Sorcerer*  
Troupers Light Opera

**April 16 & 23, 2016**  
[trouperlightopera.org](http://trouperlightopera.org)

Norwalk Concert Hall  
125 East Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851

*The Sorcerer*  
Simsbury Light Opera Co.

**April 9-17, 2016**  
[sloco.org](http://sloco.org)

Basingstoke  
5 Herman Drive  
Simsbury CT 06070

*Princess Ida*  
New York GASP

**May 21-22, 2016**  
[nygasp.org](http://nygasp.org)

NYU Skirbal Center  
566 LaGuardia Place  
New York, NY 10012

Check individual websites for greater  
details.