



~UPCOMING MEETINGS ~

***Patience*, NEGASS/Longwood Opera Joint Performance, Sunday, August 29, 2010, 2 pm, Christ Episcopal Church, 1132 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA.**

NEGASS members and members of Longwood Opera present an unrehearsed joint semi-staged concert of *Patience*. The audience is the chorus, so bring your score! Music is free and dinner is potluck. Please bring something to share if you'd like to stay for dinner.

Roles to be cast:

- Colonel Calverley, *Officer of Dragoon Guards* (bass-baritone)
- Major Murgatroyd, *Officer of Dragoon Guards* (baritone)
- Lieut. The Duke of Dunstable, *Officer of Dragoon Guards* (tenor)
- Reginald Bunthorne, *a Fleshly Poet* (comic baritone)
- Archibald Grosvenor, *an Idyllic Poet* (lyric baritone/tenor)
- Mr. Bunthorne's Solicitor (Silent)
- The Lady Angela, *Rapturous Maiden* (mezzo-soprano)
- The Lady Saphir, *Rapturous Maiden* (mezzo-soprano)
- The Lady Ella, *Rapturous Maiden* (soprano)
- The Lady Jane, *Rapturous Maiden* (contralto)
- Patience, a Dairy Maid* (soprano)

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Please send your role interest to programchair@negass.org by July 20. Also, please be aware that, with the volume of role requests, we may be unable to cast all those who have expressed an interest in a specific role.

Directions:

<http://www.longwoodopera.org/directions.html#needham>

Take **Mass Pike** or **Rt. 9** west to **Rt. 128 (I-95)** south; take exit 19b, Highland Avenue, towards Needham. The church is about 1.1 mile from the exit, on the left, opposite the Public Library and just before Rosemary St.; its large **parking lot** is on the right.

~UPCOMING EVENTS & PRODUCTIONS ~

Gilbert & Sullivan and *The Gondoliers*, The Incarnation Center, Ivoryton, CT, September 12 – 17, 2010.

Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, Connecticut, continues its decades-old tradition of Gilbert & Sullivan conferences. "*Gilbert & Sullivan and The Gondoliers*" will run **September 12-17**, with long-serving instructors Ralph MacPhail, Jr. and Deborah Lyon. The program is no longer offered under the auspices of Elderhostel (Exploritas), Inc. (so it won't be listed in the catalog), but will be offered by Incarnation Center itself. This will allow more flexibility in programming and lower costs to attendees.

One of the highlights of the week *outside* the classroom will be a cruise on the Connecticut River, including a visit to Gillette Castle, home of American actor William Gillette of Sherlock Holmes fame. For information, including a day-by-day schedule, go to www.incarnationcenter.org, click on Conference



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SUBSCRIPTIONS Standard membership in NEGASS pays for a printed copy of each issue of the Bray, plus a password to the current issue of the online PDF version. NEGASS membership dues are \$20, \$30, \$50 and \$100. To join, please contact membership chair Janice Dallas, 63 Everett St. Arlington, MA, 02474-6921 or mail membership@negass.org.

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BETWEEN-BRAY ANNOUNCEMENTS Members can sign up to receive our special *Between-Bray emails* at <http://www.negass.org/join/email.html>

NEXT BRAY DEADLINE: August 11, 2010

WWW.NEGASS.ORG

Center, and then on G&S. Additional information and corroborative detail is available from RafeMacPhail@Yahoo.com

***Trial By Jury*, FOPAC, Sunday, September 26, 2010, 2 pm, 51 Walden St, Concord, MA.**

Calling all chorus/cast members of all the past FOPAC productions (Friends of the Performing Arts - Concord), and any other interested G&S choristers, to sing in a concert version of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Trial by Jury*. The performance will take place on Sunday September 26 at 2:00pm at 51 Walden St, Concord MA. Chorus rehearsals are at 51 Walden, Concord, as follows: Sunday afternoons August 29, September 5, plus one more date TBD, and with the orchestra on Sunday afternoon September 19, Friday and Saturday evenings September 24 and 25.

The cast:

Angelina - Sarah Telford
Edwin - Thom Kenney
Usher - Ben Clark
Counsel for the Plaintiff - Ray Bauwens
Foreman - Jeremie Hammond
Judge - Tom Frates

Many people have sung *Trial By Jury* before so it should be easy to put together and will give those of you that sing with Sudbury Savoyards a head start for next February!

Chorus Director is Robin Farnsley. This production will be the last work on a program of JS Bach and PDQ Bach. Please email robinfarnsley@yahoo.com to indicate your interest, and forward this notice to friends.

Directions:

<http://www.51walden.org/directions.htm>

☞ RECENT PRODUCTIONS ☞

☐ ***The Gondoliers*, MIT G&SP, April - May, 2010, La Sala de Puerto Rico, 2nd floor MIT Student Center, 48 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA**

I attended the second performance of MIT's *Gondoliers*, and found it delightful. Since I worked on the production as a rehearsal pianist, I shall not comment on musical matters.

The set design of **Paul Quimby** (an undergraduate), and the work of Scenic Artist **Ethan Tyndal** (an alum), with a bridge that became the throne dais, a mid-stage canal, complete with gondola, and a first act loggia that was covered with second act

eighteenth century boiserie were all astonishing in their beauty. Alum **Mike Bromberg's** lighting, with its reflecting waves, set the mood and changed the scene (as you must twice in Act 1) to perfection. Costume Designer **Kelsey Peterson** (Wellesley'05), despite having borrowed several costumes, made everything go with everything else, for an overall color control that is rare in an amateur production. Some of the women's blouses and the King's vests could have used a little more tailoring, though.

Except for the Duke of Plaza-Toro (Alum **Nick Bozard**), all the major leads were from off-campus. Casilda (**Ashley Kozak**), Gianetta (**Heather Finch**), Marco (**Michael Talerico**), and Luiz (**Adrian Packel**), opera singers all, displayed beautiful voices. The scene between Luiz and Casilda was very tenderly played. The Duke, the Duchess (**J. Deschene**, a hilarious counter-tenor), Tessa (the powerful **Erica Schultz**), Giuseppe (clever **David Duell**), and Don Alhambra (**Dan Solomon**) were strong in the acting department.

Of the smaller parts, I must single out Alum **Emily Hanna's** Inez for a strong voice, **Jessica Raine's** Vittoria for lively stage demeanor, and undergraduate **Betsy Flowers' Fiametta** for her superb diction. (I had nothing to do with this.)

Leads and chorus, under the joint direction (very appropriate for *Gondoliers*!) of Alum **Garry Zacheiss** and MIT Community member **Ky Lowenhaupt**, always looked like they knew what they were doing, and did it with great gusto. All in all, a very enjoyable evening.

-Juliet Cunningham

***The Gondoliers*, MIT G&SP, April - May, 2010,
La Sala de Puerto Rico, 2nd floor MIT Student
Center, 48 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA**

When watching performances, as in dating, one can usually tell within the first 15 minutes if the evening will be a success. Watching MITG&SP's *The Gondoliers*, I found my philosophy to be true. From the drop of Barratt Park's steady baton, I experienced a rollercoaster of emotions ranging from amusement to utter horror when I realized 5 minutes into the first scene that I wasn't able to understand most of the cast in solo or chorus roles due to the height of the stage and the singers' fuzzy diction.

First and foremost, it must be stated that for a cast heavy with area conservatory students, there was a dismaying lack of energy and motivation in both acting and singing. For example, **Michael Talerico's** (Marco) "Take a pair of sparkling eyes" was

beautiful to hear (glorious high notes!) but fell flat in its delivery. MITG&SP's previous performances of *Iolanthe* and *The Mikado* were a joy to watch but it simply wasn't so for *The Gondoliers*. The costumes and make-up were complimentary, the staging steeped in whimsy, the set and scenery inventive, but the total ensemble lacked the energy or stage presence needed to pull off 90 minutes of dialogue and music.

Let it be stated, for the record, that not all moments of the evening were a loss. Gilbert and Sullivan regulars **Nick Bozard** and **John Deschene** were charming as the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro. **Mr. Deschene** glided through his music as if he were a natural born mezzo rather than the gentleman he is. With his pomp and powdered wig, he and **Mr. Bozard** might as well have been real life lovers for all the charm they infused in their onstage bickering. When **Adrian Packel** as Luis and **Ashley Kozak** as Casilda were added as the secret lovers, scenes popped to life even if more than half the words were lost by the time I heard them from the third row.

It was good to see **Erica Schultz** (Tessa), **Emily Hanna** (Inez) and **Dan Solomon** (The Grand Inquisitor) on the stage again. They brought their usual candor to their roles and were often loud enough to understand. In particular, **Ms. Schultz** drew the eye with her physical comedy and engaging musicality. Her rendition of "When a merry maiden marries" was a high point of the show. Students of all ages should have taken note of her ability to bring life to Tessa, as she was often the most animated person on stage.

Emily Hanna made a dramatic Inez and it is a shame that she spent so much time in the chorus dressed as a man playing a sailor.

Alas, no matter how much work and energy is invested in a production, sometimes the pieces do not fall into place. I counted not one but two people who fell asleep to the right and left of me and a blonde in the second row who snapped her gum at the end of each phrase. Be it the height of the stage, La Sala de Puerto Rico's bathroom-like acoustics or fate, *The Gondoliers* was not a success this time around.

-Katie Drexel

The Pirates of Penzance, BUGS – Brown University Gilbert & Sullivan Society, April 10, 2010, Alumnae Hall, Brown University, Providence, RI.

Ron and I attended the April 10, evening performance of *Pirates* put on by the Brown University Gilbert and Sullivan Society (BUGS). I admired the beautifully spacious Alumnae Hall. The stage was high enough that everyone could see the action, even with performers lying down on the stage. Tall panels on the floor at the right of the stage separated the orchestra from the audience. Surtitles on the wall above the Proscenium were more helpful than a libretto for those who didn't know the show.

When the Music Director, **Zach Wilson**, appeared in Pirate costume, I knew that this would be a very interesting evening! After the overture, Frederic's birthday is being celebrated by the pirates and Ruth at a local pub. Samuel, **Bryan Tyler Parker**, has a glorious Bass voice, but tended to overpower the voice of the Pirate King, **Nate Stetson**. While the pirates are singing, Ruth, **Kenna Hawes**, distracted me with her drunken antics while behind the rest, ending up lying on the bar until her solo. Kenna plays her part with more sexuality than we usually see, and seems a younger than expected Ruth.

I knew that there were women pirates, but they blended in well. Frederic was played by **Kaitlyn Scott**, another woman. The costume make-up and voice were right for a male, but her actions were definitely feminine. I had to wonder if this was a Jack Sparrow take-off? Eight lively young women arrived, though I can't figure out how they did all that climbing in their skin-tight skirts with a bustle "bump" behind. Frederic arrives and soon finds Mabel, **Gabriel Trilling**. What a great name for a soprano! Their duet section of the "Weather" song was beautifully sung, but I found the passionate kiss at the end of the song a bit disconcerting, given Frederic's feminine arm movements.

After the pirates scoop up the maidens, Major General Stanley, played by NEGASS member **Ken McPherson**, arrives and saves his daughters. Unfortunately, his pale face blended into his white uniform. I'm not sure if this make-up was to convey age or illness, but he needed more color, either in his clothes or his face, for balance. Ken rose above it to give a healthy rendition of "I am the Very Model of a Modern Major General", with a double-time encore.

In Act 2, Ken, still in uniform, and his nightgown clad daughters sing a lovely "Oh, Dry the Glistening

Tear". The police appear to cheer from the audience, but continued vocal support was offered by one man in the audience who seemed to feel he was at a basketball game. True, the police seemed to be tall enough to be players. Unlike many groups, the police were not required to double as pirates in Act 1.

In Frederic's trio with the Pirate King and Ruth, I was delighted at how well the voices worked together. I just wish Ruth hadn't been clinging onto Frederic's leg and caressing his fingers and legs during that scene. I wanted to cry "Basingstoke" as it reminded me of Mad Margaret's antics in *Ruddigore*. When Mabel is told of Frederic's new situation, I could see in her face and actions that though devastated by the news, she was going to steel her will to stay single until he was free. These two performers sang well together in "Stay, Frederic, Stay."

The policemen reappear and then disappear behind some of the large rocks. The pirates appear, then hide behind other rocks as the Major General pops up from a trap door. He is now clad in his bathrobe for "Sighing Softly to the River". During the reprise of "With Cat-like Tread/Tarantara", the police and pirates give us a bit of chorus line high kicking. The pirates plus Ruth and Frederic are in the front line of rocks, and the police are behind them at a higher level.

Now the daughters arrive, the pirates seize the Major General, and the girls all cry, loudly. At this point, the police pop up from cover and are aided in their fight with the pirates by at least one girl armed with an umbrella. The pirates win, but I seem to remember a portrait of Queen Victoria being produced by a policeman to subdue them. Ruth saves the pirates by stating that all are peers who have gone wrong, to the amusement of some of the pirates who know better. All ends well, with the cast singing variants of "Hail, Poetry".

The Brown website offers maps for handicapped parking on campus and provides accessible entrance to Alumnae Hall.

-Janice Dallas

Hot Mikado, New Repertory Theater
May, 2010, Charles Mosesian Theater, Arsenal Center for the Arts, 321 Arsenal St., Watertown, MA.

Hot Mikado is a jazz version of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Mikado*, one of the most popular works in the G & S canon. The New Rep's production, set in the 1940's

and full of energetic, non-stop, truly sensational swing dancing and good singing, had the audience enthralled from the outset. Luckily, the artistic director's questionable rationale for the jazz concept did not intrude into the performances of the gifted players: "Changing the style of music..." is supposed to make the story "more relevant and accessible to a modern audience"...allowing the "satirical nature to have greater impact". Preaching a new "insight" misses the fact that generations have understood quite well, thank you, that *The Mikado* has nothing to do with Japan, and is instantly recognizable as social satire of British (and probably all) societies' bureaucracies and hypocrisies.

Aside from these thoughts, the show was wonderful. The performers without exception combined acrobatic and sparkling 40's swing dancing (**Kelli Edwards'** choreography was thrilling) with strong, resonant voices and good diction all around (thanks to **Todd C. Gordon's** musical direction). **Janie Howland's** sets were a colorful and pleasing blend of *Japanoiserie* and western stage requirements, and the theater itself is small, intimate, and wonderfully raked so that every seat is good.

Cheo Bourne was a charming yet hip Nanki-Poo, and **McCaela Donovan** a sweet soprano and not-so-naïve Yum-Yum. **Calvin Braxton's** Ko-Ko needed his strong and able tenor to balance the dynamic and loud dance numbers. **Kennedy Reilly-Pugh's** *Mikado* was vocally strong and dramatically hilarious. All other cast members gave good performances; the troupe was cohesive and the action flowed at a good pace.

One nit to pick: the characterization of Katisha was all wrong, although the actress, **Lisa Yuen**, was very good. While a G & S adaptation does not need to be true to the letter of the script, at least the spirit should peek through. *Hot Mikado's* Katisha was a small, elegantly slim actress dolled up as a 20's vamp, a la Mae West but without the heft. She was nasty enough, but her "circulation" was probably the smallest, not the "largest", of anyone on stage. Gilbert's droll lines praising Katisha's various exquisite body parts – a left shoulder blade, a right elbow – were missing. This Katisha had none of the self-doubts that make Gilbert's Katisha such an enigmatic character. For those who know the opera, this characterization was a disappointment. For those unfamiliar with the original, **Lisa** did a fine job.
-**Martha Birnbaum**

New Members

NEGASS welcomes new members **Catherine Lee Christie** of Arlington, **Philip Hyde** of Somerville, and **Rebecca Ufema** of Phillipston. All are singers. Rebecca is a soprano residing in Phillipston, MA (central Massachusetts) where she maintains a voice studio. She is Adjunct Professor of Music at Mount Wachusett Community College where she teaches music theory and voice. Her website: www.rebeccaufema.com

NEGASS Member Ric Wilson, 1947 - 2010

Longtime NEGASS member **Fredric Woodbridge ("Ric") Wilson** died May 15 at the age of 62. Ric was the Harvard Theatre Collection Curator and a resident of Watertown, MA.

The Harvard Gazette of July 7 noted, "In his 13 years at Harvard, Wilson curated more than 40 exhibitions, many of which explored his favorite corner of theatrical history, 19th century British theater, including theatrical caricatures, pantomime, Toy Theater, and Gilbert and Sullivan operas, a subject in which he was widely considered an expert.

"Wilson attended Lehigh University, ...where he developed a deep interest in choral music, and from there pursued a graduate degree in musicology at New York University, where he conducted several choirs. ...At the Morgan Library, Wilson curated several exhibitions – most importantly a show in 1989 on the Gilbert and Sullivan operas that was one of the library's largest exhibitions ever – before coming to Harvard. He was awarded a fellowship by the Guggenheim Foundation for research in the history of theatrical publishing.

"Wilson is the author of many books, including most recently, "The Theatrical World of Angus McBean" (2009). He lectured widely; was an active member of the Society of Printers, the Harvard Musical Association, the Old Cambridge Shakespeare Association, the Signet Society at Harvard, and the Senior Common Room of Lowell House; and was a proprietor of the Boston Athenaeum. ...His last (and largest) exhibition, which opened in April 2009, was a centenary celebration of Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes."



NEGASS Calendar

<p><i>Patience</i> NEGASS/Longwood Opera Sunday, August 29, 2010, 2 pm</p>	<p>Unrehearsed and free joint production. Audience is the chorus so bring your score and something culinary to share if you can. See page 1 for more details.</p>	<p>Christ Episcopal Church 1132 Highland Ave. Needham, MA</p>
<h3>Upcoming Productions</h3>		
<p><i>The Mikado</i> North Country Community Theater July 16, 17, 22-24, 7:30 pm July 18, 2010, 4 pm</p>	<p>Purchase tickets online at www.lebanonoperahouse.org or by calling 603-448-0400. Adults - \$18, Children and seniors (60 and older) - \$12.</p>	<p>Lebanon Opera House - On the Green 51 North Park Street Lebanon, NH http://lebanonoperahouse.org/directions.php</p>
<p><i>The Mikado</i> The Byfield G & S Group August 13-15, 20-22, 2010</p>	<p>For more information, contact Heidi Fram at shfram@gmail.com, or 978-463-3335</p>	<p>Byfield Community Arts Center 7 Central Street Byfield, MA</p>
<p><i>Patience</i> College Light Opera Company August 17 - 21, 2010, 8 pm</p>	<p>For more information see http://www.collegelightopera.com or call 508-548-0668</p>	<p>The Highfield Theater Highfield Drive Falmouth, MA</p>
<p><i>Connecticut G & S Conference</i> The Incarnation Center September 12-17, 2010</p>	<p>"Gilbert & Sullivan and <i>The Gondoliers</i>" conference; for more information visit www.incarnationcenter.org or email RafeMacPhail@yahoo.com.</p>	<p>Incarnation Center Ivoryton, CT</p>
<p><i>Trial By Jury</i> FOPAC Sunday, September 26, 2010, 2 pm</p>	<p>Concert version presented by Friends of the Performing Arts in Concord, MA. Chorus open to all. See page 1-2 for rehearsal schedule.</p>	<p>FOPAC 51 Walden St Concord, MA</p>
<p><i>Iolanthe</i> Mass Theatrica October 2, 2010, 8 pm October 3, 2010, 4 pm</p>	<p>See http://www.masstheatrica.org for details.</p>	<p>LynnArts, The Neal Rantoul Vault Theater 25 Exchange Street Lynn, MA</p>
<p><i>Iolanthe</i> Valley Light Opera November 6, 12, 14, 2010, 8 pm; November 7, 14, 2 pm</p>	<p>See http://www.vlo.org for details.</p>	<p>Amherst Regional High School Auditorium 21 Mattoon Street. Amherst, MA</p>
<p><i>Patience</i> MIT G&SP November 5 - 7, 11 - 13, 2010</p>	<p>MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players http://web.mit.edu/gsp/www For tickets, please email gsp-tickets@mit.edu.</p>	<p>La Sala de Puerto Rico, 2nd floor MIT Student Center 48 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA.</p>
<p><i>The Golden Legend</i> The Longfellow Chorus February 25 - 27, 2011</p>	<p>Sir Arthur Sullivan's <i>The Golden Legend</i> with soloists, chorus and full orchestra. http://www.longfellowchorus.com/Longfellow_Chorus_Events.html for details.</p>	<p>First Parish Church 425 Congress St. Portland, ME</p>