



≈ G&S EVENTS ≈

Sudbury Savoyards announces cast for Spring 2019 *Yeomen of the Guard*

The Sudbury Savoyards are thrilled to announce the cast of leads for their 2019 production of *The Yeomen of the Guard*. They offer their thanks to all who came out to audition. Those still interested in joining their open ensemble may still do so. See their website to advise them of your interest. The principals for their spring production will be:



Sir Richard Cholmondeley - **Randy Glidden**, Colonel Fairfax - **Michael Gonzalez**, Sergeant Meryll - **Randal Divinski**, Leonard Meryll - **Ed Fell**, Jack Point - **Brad Amidon**, Wilfred Shadbolt - **Matt Tragert**, Yeoman 1 - **Frank Harrigan**, Yeoman 2 - **Mike Lague**, Elsie Maynard - **Janet Pohli**, Phoebe Meryll - **Sara Haugland**, Dame Carruthers - **Carolyn Kelly Schwartz**, and Kate Carruthers - **Kaitlyn Robinson**.

Performances will be at the Lincoln-Sudbury High School, 390 Lincoln Road, Sudbury MA and are scheduled on February 22 and 23, and March 1 and 2 at 8 pm each night with matinees at 2 pm on February 24 and March 2. Stage director is **Tony Parkes**, music director is **Kathryn Denney**, and producer is **Graham Daley**.

GWO schedules January 2019 auditions for June production of *The Mikado*

Greater Worcester Opera announces their June production of *The Mikado*, with auditions to be held in January. Check their website for more details - www.greaterworcesteropera.org.

CLOC invites college students to apply for positions for their 2019 season

Are you or do you know of anyone who might be interested in spending the better part of the 2019 summer singing, playing in the orchestra or working in a summer stock environment? The College Light Opera Company presents a series of nine musicals or comic opera in as many weeks running from later June into August each year. Two shows are Gilbert and Sullivan light operas with the balance being a mix of Broadway musicals or other light operas such as *Romberg* or *Offenbach*.

Should you or someone you know be interested in the experience of a lifetime, now is the time to apply to the CLOC 2019 Company. Here is a quick run down of the process as well as links to the



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TAKING A BOW

Taking a bow in this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* is a new recurring feature called "Cast Spotlight" showcasing local principals. Read about **Michael O. Budnick** on page 6.



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

www.negass.org



application pages. (As a reference, we received 130 Soprano applications for 8 potential slots this year. This is assuming that no sopranos return from last summer. If they do, then the available slots are fewer. We take 8 performers from each voice type: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass/Baritone.)

VOCAL COMPANY applicants must submit by February 1st:

<http://www.collegelightoperacompany.com/apply-for-the-vocal-company.html>

1. An email of intent
2. A video audition including: a ballad, a classical/operetta piece, an upbeat song and a monologue
3. 2 letters of recommendation



A scene from a CLOC performance of *Yeomen of the Guard*.

Vocal Company members receive room and board for the summer. They typically have 3-5 roommates depending on which house they live in on campus. They are also required to participate in the co-op work program.

ORCHETRA <http://www.collegelightoperacompany.com/apply-for-the-orchestra.html>

The orchestra applicants follow a similar process and must submit:

1. An email of intent
2. A video (or audio) audition best illustrating their performance strengths
3. 2 letters of recommendation

Orchestra members receive room and board for the summer as well as a stipend. They are also required to participate in the co-op work program.

The co-op work program refers to chores that are assigned each week to the members of the vocal company and orchestra. This could be anything

from assisting to cook in the kitchen to sweeping the rehearsal and common spaces. It is our system for keeping things running smoothly on campus.

MUSIC STAFF, DESIGN AND PRODUCTION STAFF and BUSINESS STAFF

<http://www.collegelightoperacompany.com/apply-for-the-crews.html>

All have specific requirements and involve interviews as well. They all receive room and board as well as a stipend and are not required to participate in the co-op work program.

≈ G&S NEWS ≈

Harvard Radcliffe G&S Players performed *Patience* in November

The Harvard Radcliffe G&S Players performed *Patience* as their Fall offering this past November. The stage direction was provided by **Abraham Joyner-Meyers '21** and the musical director was **Jarod Stone '21**. Producers of the show were **Arianna Paz '19**, **Ned Sanger '19**, **Sabrina Richert '20**, and **Sunny Levine '20**. The show opened on Friday, November 2 and ran through Sunday, November 11.

The principal players were **Sydney Penny '22** (*Patience*), **Janiah Lockett '21** (Reginald Bunthorne), **Ross Simmons '21** (Archibald Grosvenor), **Amanda Gonzalez-Piloto '21** (Lady Jane), **Sarah Bui** (Lady Angela), **Liv Weinstein '21** (Lady Saphir), **Rena Cohen '22** (Lady Ella), **Sebastian Rojas '22** (Colonel Calverley), **Phiroze Parasnis '21** (Duke of Dunstable), and **Michael Shirek '20** (Major Murgatroyd).

Talented kids helped to keep the *Gondoliers* joyful and lively

By **Michael O. Budnick**

The involvement of children in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas dates back to the early days of their productions. Traditionally, the role of Midshipmite in *H.M.S. Pinafore* is played by a young boy. The Valley Light Opera has a history of casting children in its Savoy operas, and this year's *The Gondoliers* was no exception. The cast included seven kids between the ages of 10-13 who not only livened up the ensemble but also danced, tumbled and played important small roles that helped tell the story of the opera.

We asked some of our young cast members to speak with us about themselves, their involvement with theater and the VLO and their roles in *The Gondoliers*.

Amory and **Henry Maxey** are no strangers to the VLO stage, having played villagers and the ghosts of tragically young "ancestors" in 2016's *Ruddigore*. Their mother **Libby Maxey** plays Gianetta in *The Gondoliers* and has appeared in numerous VLO productions. Amory is 12 and Henry is 10. **Eli Dresser**, 13, and **Ripley Dresser**, 11, have also been in area productions. Their mother **Sue Dresser** is co-choreographer for *The Gondoliers*.



Photo left is Henry (left) and Amory Maxey. Photo right shows from left, Eli, Sue and Ripley Dresser.

I asked them to tell us about their involvement with theatre and the VLO

Amory: This is my fourth non-school production.

Henry: I've done three other productions-two with the VLO.

Ripley: This is my first show with VLO. I have done other shows like *Seussical*, *Annie* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

What brought you to audition for a VLO production?

Amory: My mom was involved.

Henry: Well, the fact that my mother does VLO shows...but I've had two other great experiences with the VLO cast, and I wanted to have the fun experience again.

Tell us about your role in the production

Amory: I have a minor role, but I do some fun things. (Amory also is the alternate for the role of Young Marco).

Henry: Setting aside the role that isn't as important

(as a normal gondolier child) my other role, as Young Giuseppe, is a great part. It's rather small, too, but I'm happy with the parts I've got.

Ripley: I am Young Gianetta and part of the Contadine (Italian peasant women and girls).

Eli: I am Young Marco and a child in the ensemble. (Eli and Ripley were also featured dancers.)

What are the things that are most fun about the production and what is most challenging?

Amory: Hanging out with people is the most fun; remembering things is the most challenging!

Henry: The part that's most fun is really just getting to be able to do the play and be with the cast. It's a really nice cast.

Eli: The thing that is most fun is riding the gondola and the harder thing is singing the song "Ducal Pomp."

Ripley: The most fun thing about the production is when I get to ride the gondola with Eli. The most challenging thing in the show is dancing on the platform.

Do you have any hobbies or other fun things you like to do?

Amory: I run, read, play baseball, and collect baseball cards.

Henry: I like to read, write, draw, and run around outside chasing my brother. I play the saxophone and the violin, and I may in the future want to pick up tap dancing.

Eli: I love to draw and I play soccer and dance in my spare time.

Where do you go to school?

Amory: I go to Frontier Regional, and I'm in seventh grade.

Henry: I go to Conway Grammar School; it's a very nice school with very nice teachers. I'm in the fourth grade.

Ripley: I am in 6th grade at Great Falls Middle School

Eli: I go to four rivers charter in 8th grade.

These four are joined onstage by **Talia Sadiq**, who's in the ensemble and plays young Tessa, and **Sophie Kawall**, also in the ensemble and playing young Gianetta (alternate.) Both Talia and Sophie are also featured dancers, and are in their first VLO production. The seventh young kid in the production is **McKenna Cambo**, who last appeared with the VLO in the ensemble of *My Fair Lady*. All three of these young contadine are also featured

tumblers. They are all in the 7th grade at Amherst Regional Middle School.



The seven kids of *The Gondoliers*.

Editor's note: Michael Budnick, artistic/stage director wanted very much for the show to appeal to all ages. He had this to say: "Casting so many children was a conscious decision to try to bring the G&S genre to a new generation. We have tried to give each kid in the cast some special moments and integrate them into the life of a Venice village as well as the court in Barataria. We do not ask our young kids to be little adults. Rather, we try to coax from them a performance that shows kids acting like kids. I asked them to draw from their experience as they react to events in the story, as they interact with one-another and with adults in the cast."

❧ A PUZZLEMENT ❧

Below are 12 patter-songs featured in 11 of the G&S comic operas. From the clues provided, name the opera and the character who sings it.

- 1 "In enterprise of martial kind"
- 2 "When I was a lad"
- 3 "When you're lying awake"
- 4 "As someday it may happen"
- 5 "If you want a receipt for that popular mystery"
- 6 "I am the very model of a...."
- 7 "If you give me your attention, I will tell you...."
- 8 "My boy, you may take it from me"
- 9 "My name is John Wellington Wells" (This is a freebie)
- 10 "When I, good friends, was called to the bar (another freebie)"
- 11 "I've jibe and joke"
- 12 "Oh, a private buffoon is a light hearted loon"

Answers on page 6

❧ RECENT PRODUCTIONS ❧

CTGANDS presented a fine performance of *The Mikado* thrilling to eye and ear

By Jonathan Strong

The Mikado is always delightful, but after as fine a performance as presented by the Connecticut Gilbert and Sullivan Society on Saturday evening, October 13, I fully appreciated what a brilliant piece it is: the perfectly timed revelations of the plot, the sharply defined characters, and one marvelous musical number after another. And when set as imaginatively (with giant unfolding fans and costumer **Pat Nurnberger's** panoply of color and choreographer **Marcia Miller's** splashy fan dances under subtly modulating lights) it was as thrilling to the eye as to the ear. **John Dreslin** kept the pace bouncing along from a fine 23-piece orchestra, and the voices were all splendid.



The ladies of the CTGANDS production of *The Mikado*. (Photo courtesy of John Dreslin.)

There was mostly well-balanced miking, but I did miss that fresh acoustic sound of unenhanced voices; still, what is gained in clarity is probably worth it. Purists (and I usually count myself as one) might object to some of the updating, but one has to consider the production as a cohesive piece of theater on its own terms, and this one managed to convey the spirit of the opera despite the often amusing intrusions from our era. To my mind, what made it work was the decision to present a diverse set of modern Americans costumed in traditional Japanese garb with no attempt in makeup to suggest their being Japanese. So the visual effect operated on two levels, just as does the libretto. It is, after all, not about the actual Japan but as much about our contemporary society as it is

about Victorian England. The total rewrite of the list song got plenty of laughs; director **Michael Loomis** (formerly of the Capitol Steps) proved an aptly Gilbertian lyricist. He also appeared as the huge stentorian Mikado who, threatening with a saber, delivered his final line with a dramatic pause: "Nothing could possibly be more . . . satisfactory!"



The entire cast of the recent CTGANDS *Mikado*. (Photo courtesy of John Dreslin.)

The lovely voices of **Tim Throckmorton** and **Renee Haines** gave us the two-verse setting of the kissing duet, which deserves to become standard practice. Dreslin also assigned to Peep-Bo (**Melissa Morton**) some of Pitti-Sing's lines, so at first I was unsure which was which--not a problem because they were both delicious. When eventually **Erin Aldrich** took center stage she nearly stole the show. **Cindy Silvernale** was alternately an appealing and appalling Katisha, but alas some well-meant applause filled the pause after "The hour of gladness" and threw her off for an awkward brain freeze; she recovered and resumed the show in full character, and her "Hearts do not break" was indeed touching. **David Schancupp** made a most effective dryly snobbish Englishman out of Pooh-Bah, and **Craig Martin's** Pish-Tush was equally solid in voice and diction. There was a droll bit when Pitti-Sing hogged the tea cups (i.e. Starbucks mugs) in the finely sung madrigal.

Which leaves **David Henderson's** energetic Ko-Ko, complete with measuring tape to check collar sizes just in case. He impersonated the dicky-bird in sound and neck bobs, the sweetest "Tit-Willow" I've seen in years. The schoolgirls ("eighteen in number" to avoid drawing attention to their age range!) were dazzling in dance and song, while half that many men held up their end respectably. Why is it so hard to field a male chorus these days? But one promising sign: there was a goodly number of high

schoolers on stage, including **Andrew Lemire** as Go-To, a Pish-Tush of the future, so seeing them all up there was as welcome as . . . you know what.

One final quibble: why was it necessary to convert "O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to" and "Miya Sama" into English? No one objects to the Gondoliers' phrase-book Italian or Julia Jellicoe's "crack-jaw" German accent. As John Dreslin notes in the program, *The Mikado* is decidedly no example of "orientalism" (as is *Madama Butterfly* or *Turandot*). It is a satirical work of high irony and wit, and if it condescends to anyone, it is to human nature itself.

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. Send copy of ticket stub for reimbursement. Contact editor@negass.org for more info. *The Trumpet Bray* welcomes reviews of recent G & S shows. The editor reserves the right to amend submissions to adhere to publication requirements.

The opinions of the reviewers are theirs alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the New England Gilbert & Sullivan Society or its newsletter, *The Trumpet Bray*.

❧ A PUZZLEMENT ❧

Answers

<u>Opera</u>	<u>Character</u>
1 <i>The Gondoliers</i>	Duke of Plaza-Toro
2 <i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	Sir Joseph Porter
3 <i>Iolanthe</i>	Lord Chancellor
4 <i>The Mikado</i>	Ko-Ko
5 <i>Patience</i>	Colonel Calverley
6 <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Major General Stanley
7 <i>Princess Ida</i>	King Gama
8 <i>Ruddigore</i>	Robin Oakapple
9 <i>The Sorcerer</i>	J. W. Wells
10 <i>Trial by Jury</i>	The Learned Judge
11 <i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Jack Point
12 <i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Jack Point

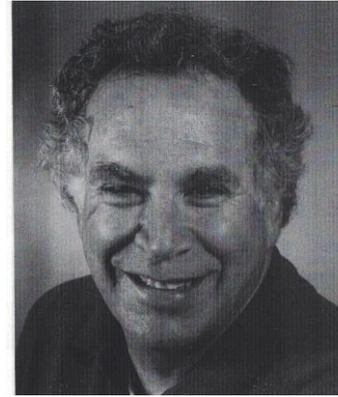
❧ CAST SPOTLIGHT ❧

A conversation with Michael O. Budnick

TTB: Tell us a little bit about your background in G&S.

MB: When I was a kid both my mother and father

would sing passages and snippets to us - like "Farewell my own, light of my life" (*Pinafore*) and Miyasama (*Mikado*) They also had records with Alan Sherman parodies of Gilbert and Sullivan which were popular among us and our friends. I always had a love for musical theater - also instilled early in me by my parents. My dad lived 10 minutes from NYC so we would often go into



Mr. Budnick

the city and see musicals. In my mid-teens when I was re-introduced to Gilbert and Sullivan via the infamous Broadway Papp production of *Pirates* - featuring Linda Rondstadt and Kevin Kline. I loved the campy send-ups, clever staging and enormous sense of fun. This production - while often maligned as over-the-top, brought so many people of my generation to the Canon as a formative experience. From that point on, I was hooked. As a young man I attended an International Gilbert and Sullivan festival in Philadelphia where I sang in my first chorus - ironically, a pub sing of *The Gondoliers* with Savoynet (co-founded by VLO founder Bill Venman!) I performed in my first lead role as Dick Deadeye with Valley Light Opera in 2013's *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and since have performed with VLO as Wilfred Shadbolt (*Yeomen*), Old Adam (*Ruddigore*) and with Simsbury Light Opera as Don Alhambra (*The Gondoliers*).

TTB: What do you love about G&S?

MB: I love Gilbert's clever lyrics and satire, and the way so much of what he pokes fun at is relevant to this day. I like that traditionally any companies are inclined to some a few updated lyrics and dialog - of which I believe Gilbert would have approved. I also love Sullivan's soaring music which does such an amazing job of defining and enhancing the mood on stage.

TTB: What drew you to directing *The Gondoliers* as your maiden voyage into stage directing?

MB: It is either my favorite or co-favorite Gilbert and Sullivan along with *The Mikado*. I remember the first time I heard the Overture - with its Spanish influences, followed by the 22 minutes of unbroken introductory music. I knew this one was special - and I think overall it has the most engaging, toe-tapping and beautiful music Sullivan ever wrote. Also, I had just come off of a production of *The Gondoliers* as Don Alhambra and it was very fresh in my mind - since I knew the show so well - pretty much every word and note, I felt it was a good start where I didn't have to think about it from scratch.

TTB: What was easy about directing this show? What is challenging?

MB: Knowing the plot points, characters, music and lyrics I was able to get right down to staging. VLO also makes it easier because Aldo (Fabrizi, the music director) is so incredibly talented as were many of the VLO regulars and newcomers in the cast. The production team were also incredible and professional: costumers, technical, choreographers, and stage managers - making a director's life so much simpler. You have a lot of help when everyone knows their jobs well.

TTB: Was the Valley Light Opera version of the show traditional or updated? Is there anything that either novices or aficionados should know about the production?

MB: It was traditional in the sense that it is staged and costumed in the original time period of 1750. However there were some updated references here and there, and some fun sight gags. The tone of the whole show was light, colorful, dancy, melodramatic and above all funny. It was decidedly unstuffy - the way I believe G&S light opera was intended to be.

🌀 We Have a Little List 🌀

We wish to thank those who contributed in any way to this issue of *The Trumpet Bray* including Michael O. Budnick,, Jonathan Strong, John Dreslin, and the websites of Valley Light Opera, and Sudbury Savoyards, Greater Worcester Opera, College Light Opera Company and the Harvard Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players. (Please forgive any omissions!)

🌀 SOLICITATIONS 🌀

Many of you may be very busy with a host of activities, but in the off-hand chance that you find yourself with a spare moment, you might consider writing an article to be published in *The Trumpet Bray*. Your most welcome submissions for the following columns may be sent to:
editor@negass.org

FIRST CONTACT

How did you first get introduced to the fun of Gilbert and Sullivan? Share your recollections with other readers of *The Trumpet Bray*. Send your story to editor@negass.org

REVIEWERS REWARDED

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TOPSY-TURVYNNESS

Dare to share with your friends your original stories of mis-takes, mis-steps, mis-cues or other on-stage (or otherwise) embarrassing or memorable moments.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

"Where Are They Now?" is an occasional feature spotlighting NEGASS members who have moved away but are still active G & S'ers on stages elsewhere.

COMMUNICATIONS

Letters to the editor are always welcome.

REMEMBRANCES - Obituaries of cast and crew members who have passed on.

The Trumpet Bray is published electronically on the NEGASS website six times a year in February, April, June, August, October, and December with the deadline on the 15th of the month prior to the issue date.

G&S Events Calendar

Pirates of Penzance
New York GASP

December 27-30, 2018
nygasp.org
see article on page

Kaye Playhouse
Hunter College
E 64th Street (Between Park &
Lexington Avenues, NYC, NY

The Yeomen of the Guard
The Sudbury Savoyards

February 22-24, 2019
March 1-2, 2019
sudburysavoyards.org

Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High
School
390 Lincoln Road
Sudbury, MA 01776

Patience
Simsbury Light Opera Co.

April 27-May 4, 2019
sloco.org

Eno Memorial Hall
754 Hopmeadow Street
Simsbury CT 06070

Ruddigore
Troupers Light Opera

April 6 & 13, 2019
trouperlightopera.org

Union Memorial Church
58 Church Street
Stamford CT 06906