

# THE TRUMPET BRAY

NEGASS

The New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society  
P.O. Box 367, Arlington, MA 02476-0004

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March/April 2004

~ *I go - it matters not with whom* ~

**LMLO SORCERER**

Sunday, March 21 at 2:00 PM

**LAST-MINUTE LIGHT OPERA / ORCHESTRA  
SORCERER SUNDAY, MARCH 21 AT 2 PM, Park  
Avenue Congregational Church, Arlington, MA.**  
Conductor: **David Larrick**. There are still a couple of  
roles open for this gala sing-through with orchestra: **Dr.  
Daly** and the **Notary** - while We remain willing to step aside  
for an eager young **Aline**. Email Program Chair **Dave  
Leigh** at preeta3@yahoo.com, or phone him at (781) 894-  
3009, if you want one of the roles. Here's the cast list, as it  
stands currently:

**Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre: Dave Leigh**

**Alexis: Lee Patterson**

**John Wellington Wells: Tony Parkes**

**Lady Sangazure: Allegra Martin**

**Aline: Marion Leeds Carroll.** (- *but We're willing to  
step aside for a hopeful young soprano*)

**Mrs. Partlet: Juliet Cunningham**

**Constance: Rebecca Burstein**

**Hercules: Carl Weggel**

**Still open:**

**Dr. Daly** (Vicar of Ploverleigh): Two solos, ensemble  
numbers, and dialogue. *Lyric Baritone or Tenor*

**Notary:** Some ensemble music. *Bass*

**HOW TO GET THERE:** The Park Avenue  
Congregational Church, 50 Paul Revere Road in  
Arlington is located at the corner of Park Avenue and  
Paul Revere Road, on Park Avenue one block south of  
Massachusetts Avenue in Arlington.



**Local route:** Drive or take the #77 Arlington Heights bus  
along Massachusetts Avenue to Park Avenue, at the far  
west end of town, and then travel one block south. **From  
a distance:** Take Route 2 to the Park Avenue-Arlington  
exit, and drive north along Park Avenue until  
Massachusetts Avenue is in sight. **Free parking** is  
available on both Park Avenue and Paul Revere Road.

## RECENT MEETINGS/GATHERINGS

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1 AT 2:00 PM: CARTOONS AT  
THE NEWTON FREE LIBRARY.** The G&S-related  
animated cartoons provided by NEGASS's **Don Smith**  
were once more an almost-unqualified hit. We hope to  
see most of these again - but all present agreed that it's  
time to find a replacement for **Gentlemen of Titipu**,  
despite **Anna Russell's** voice.

NEGASSers who were surprised to find the first cartoon  
half-over when they arrived at 2:00 learned later of the  
compromise that Program Chair **Dave Leigh** was forced  
to effect as a result of a miscommunication: the library  
had publicized 1:30, rather than 2, as the program start  
time.

Later we enjoyed The Great Raffle Game... as Dave tells  
the story: "We had three prizes: the greeting cards [**Tyson  
Vick's original G&S note cards, mentioned in last month's  
Bray**], a CD of the 60's **D'OC MIKADO**, and an **IDA** score  
[*Dave's own piano-vocal edition, no less!*]. We put the raffle  
tickets into one of **Allegra [Martin's]** great big mittens,



**TORONTO SINGOUT CANCELLED** *The organizers write:* Due to circumstances beyond our control, we will be unable to proceed with the planned **Toronto Gilbert and Sullivan Singout**. Many thanks to everyone who expressed interest in coming - we're sorry things didn't pan out 'cause we were looking forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

We're hoping that someone will pick up the ball and organize another Singout. They take a lot of work to organize but, in the long run, they're a lot of fun.



And so, from Ori, Len, Elspeth, Bill, and myself, we extend to you our heartfelt thanks for your support and understanding.

-- **HERSCHEL ROSEN**

**A NEGASS SINGOUT???** Shall NEGASS host a Singout? It would be a lot of work. It would take a lot of planning, and a chunk of cash up-front. It's not something that we could throw together in time for the summer of '04 - it's been estimated that if we started now it might be ready in time for the summer of 2006. Do we have people who'd be interested in taking on such a project? Do we have an individual with the strength to coordinate such a group? Let NEGASS know! - *mlc*



**AMERICAN G&S ACTIVITIES SURVEY** Hello, I am a researcher in American studies at the University of Nancy in France, where I am currently writing a paper about Gilbert and Sullivan's popularity in the USA. I am trying to gain a better understanding of the role of American Gilbert and Sullivan societies. The survey should take just 5 to 10 minutes to fill out. I would greatly appreciate any information you wish to give me. I would be happy to share my findings with you if you are interested once the paper is published.

-- **RACHEL HUTCHINS**

Visit <http://www.negass.org/bray/pdf/survey.pdf> or <http://www.negass.org/bray/pdf/survey.doc> to download this survey. The PDF will yield a printable version which you can fill out and mail. The Word document is printable, but it also gives you the option to fill it out on your computer and send it to Rachel as an email attachment. (*Sorry - We have not had time to turn this into a Web form, as We'd intended!*) We will also bring print-outs of this survey to the next NEGASS meeting.



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**D'OYLY CARTE TENOR'S PAGES:** Jeff Cresswell (D'Oyly Carte tenor) has a website ... if you care to click on his site you'll find a host of info about the realities of the profession and being in the old company: <http://www.jeffreycresswell.com/> Go to 'D'Oyly Days', follow the pics and you'll find some really interesting stuff.  
- **DON SMITH**

### REVIEWS

**THE (IN)COMPLETE WORKS OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN:** *New England Light Opera*, now in its second season, presented this G&S revue at the Tsai Performance Center of Boston University on February 20 and 21, and at Masconomet Regional School in Topsfield on the 22nd. I had resigned myself to non-attendance, as I was in a competing show that weekend; but to my great delight, the group added a Saturday matinee at the last minute.

The ticket price of \$30 originally seemed steep to me for a revue with piano accompaniment, but within the show's first five minutes I firmly repented. This is a thoroughly professional company: in addition to fine singing and acting, the players exhibit the kind of infectious energy that has saved many an amateur show, and that is sadly lacking in too many high-priced productions.

Artistic director **Mark Morgan** (who served as music director and collaborated with stage director **Peter A. Carey** on the adaptation) learned much of his G&S from **James Stuart** at **Ohio Light Opera**, including a fondness for the lesser-known works of the canon. Morgan and Carey set themselves the challenge of using material from all 14 operas and creating a storyline that would make the show more than simply a concert. I think they and their cast did themselves proud.

The principals included baritone **Richard Conrad**, who needs no introduction to Boston G&S audiences, and

contralto **Eugenia Hamilton**, who toured with **Opera a la Carte** and has worked with **Donald Adams**. Hamilton was in fine voice (her "Silvered Is the Raven Hair" was a highlight), and if the same could not be said for Conrad, at least he can still sell a comic song as well as anyone. There was a nicely contrasted pair of lead sopranos in **Sol Kim Bentley**, a petite charmer of Asian descent, and **Kaja Schuppert**, a tall Nordic beauty with an electrifying high E-flat. They were ably partnered, respectively, by local favorite **Daniel Kamalic** as lyric baritone and by **Jason McStoots**, the possessor of a creamy tenor voice and an impressive opera and concert resume.

The setting was a Victorian parlor, with a grand piano onstage and a rich Oriental rug underfoot (doubtless provided by Landry & Arcari, who took the program's only color advertisement). Schuppert and McStoots, acting as maid and butler, admitted a gaggle of party guests (the remaining soloists plus a dozen choristers) who each wrote on a slip of paper and dropped it in a hat. For the rest of the show, the guests took turns drawing slips and singing songs, which - wonder of wonders! - turned out to suit their voices perfectly. Scores were passed around as needed; the **THESPIS** scores (for "Climbing over Rocky Mountain," with the original lyrics) were a great sight gag.

None of the singing or acting seemed rushed, quite a feat when both the songs and the dialogue shifted from one opera to another at a split second's notice. I was so busy playing "name that opera" that I didn't realize until near the end that there was actually a kind of plot: through various impediments, the couples were working their way toward "happily ever after." (So that's why they kept calling each other "Young Soprano," "Lady Mezzo," etc., instead of using the original characters' names.) It was a bit like Anna Russell's "How to Write Your Own G&S," with the genuine article replacing Russell's pastiche.

Apart from a few fluffed lines and a couple of mispronounced words (in "Poor Wandering One," "lowers" ought to rhyme with "ours"), the show went off without a hitch. **Mark Morgan** served as party host, page turner, and discreet choral conductor, and **Karen Gahagan** at the piano managed to keep up with the dozens of quick segues (she also got one of the biggest laughs with her only vocal line, "My opinion doesn't matter"). **Ilyse Robbins** was credited as choreographer; the blocking ranged from graceful to deliberately chaotic but was so seamless that one couldn't tell where Carey's part left off and Robbins's began.

Seeing this show made me glad I'd decided to subscribe to NELO's season, which includes a Jerome Kern night and a new musical by Mark Morgan and **Ken Proctor**.

Quality obviously matters to these people. The bad news from a G&S viewpoint: Morgan is committed to reviving rarely heard works, and he has strongly implied in the past that G&S is not a priority. The good news: in this show's program he speaks of some G&S operas as being "largely unknown." Does that mean he might produce one? Time alone can tell. He includes **YEOMEN** in the least-known category, while admitting "some might quibble." Many NEGASSers certainly would; but if NELO were to give us a professional-quality **YEOMEN** (or **IDA**, with Ms. Schuppert in the title role), I wouldn't complain.

-- TONY PARKES



**MIKADO IN FRANCE:** Two seasons on from **PIRATES** in German in Vienna, I have just had the good fortune to see a rare professional production of **MIKADO** in French, at the **Opera-Theatre of Metz**, in north-eastern France. This was a production of the opera company of the city of Tours, that has played successfully in a few other French provincial cities since its premiere in 1992.

Thanks to the excellent programme notes, I learned that French and German **MIKADO**s had had some success early in the 20th century, but there had been little follow-up, other than a radio version in Paris in the 1960s. The artistic director of the Metz opera is the renowned British tenor **Laurence Dale**, who no doubt influenced the decision to put on the show there. The French translation was credited to **Tony Mayer**, with help on the lyrics from **Annick Minck** and the Tours opera head **Michel Jarry**.



As with the German **PIRATES**, some parts of the show remained in English, partly because of a perceived difficulty in making an adequate translation and partly to give some British flavor to the goings-on.

Overall, this was an excellent production, bursting with energy, but to my taste losing out occasionally when it became a little too Gallic. The costumes showed great imagination, as did the set to some extent (given that this was a touring production), and the singing and acting was of a good level, give or take the few specific points below. I'm not too sure how much the show actually appealed to the mainly elderly Metz audience; at the end, the cast milked the applause through various encores and other business, but the most enthusiastic response seemed to come from some of the very few youngsters present. On the Saturday night, the theater was about

two-thirds full, with the side aisles and top balcony only very sparsely filled.

And now for some corroborative detail, to give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative...

Costumes/make-up: the idea of Japan-ness was mainly conveyed by painting large red circles on both cheeks of all the cast, and also on the trousers of the chorus men - no other eastern-effect make-up, though the girls did have identical black wigs which made them rather anonymous. For the opening chorus, the Britishness was cleverly conveyed by the men all coming on sporting mini-bowlers, plus eye-catching green briefcases from which they extracted their fans, and - a nice touch - thin walking-sticks (rather than normal city-attire umbrellas) which they deftly used as oars to accompany the naval verses of "Wand'ring Minstrel". However (not having taken any notes), I seem to recall finding many of the principals' costumes rather off-putting, principally Ko-Ko's - of which more below. Looking back, I think the overall effect was somewhat reminiscent of a circus, with hints of Charlie Chaplin, but I'm not sure I thought that at the time.

Set/props: between Nanki-Poo's entrance on a penny-farthing and Katisha's on a Boadicean chariot, the palm for inventiveness went to Pooh-Bah's arrival in a gigantic tea-pot that had perhaps strayed from a forthcoming **SORCERER** production. The 3 maids' arrival inside large eggs was perhaps a trick too far, as they had some difficulty in extracting themselves. For the Mikado's entry, the back of the set opened up for the first time to reveal him atop an impressive Aztec-style pyramid, which was later adapted for staging a few other tricks in the rest of Act Two.

My main reservation about the show concerned the character of Ko-Ko, played as a rather effeminate member of a Viking motorcycle gang, if that sounds possible. As the actor concerned (**Jacques Duparc**) was also the stage director, I think he should have a quiet word with himself. Maybe this brought the role - and thus the production - more into line with current French operetta staging, and thus more to the presumed taste of the audience. At any rate, when he finally removed his headgear to serenade Katisha, I for one breathed a sigh of relief, even if his blonde crew-cut rather clashed with the Japanese (OK, Aztec) setting. But our Jacques



did give a spirited rendition of his role, for all that.

Of the others, I appreciated the performances of Katisha and Nanki-Poo, but found the other leading men perhaps a little too hammy - but then, French humour, like Katisha herself, is something of an acquired taste.

As noted above, about a quarter of the production was in English, mostly in various songs. For example, the opening and closing verses of "Wand'ring minstrel" were in French, but the middle part was all in English. Pooh-Bah's song "Young man, despair" was sung by him in French, but his colleagues' interjections were not! Several other songs were entirely in English, though surprisingly the "Big Black Block" song was all in French. (A thought - given that most Offenbach operettas are presented to Anglophones entirely in English, it must be some kind of tribute to Gilbert's lyrics that they are preserved even in these conditions.) A very competent sur-titles service ensured that the audience was able to follow all the language switches.

A word on the theater itself - as in many French provincial cities, the Metz municipal theater ("the oldest active theater in France") puts on a mixed bag of plays, operas and operettas through the nine-month season, giving about three performances of each show, playing every other weekend. The theater has the advantage of a mid-town setting in a spacious riverside site, gazing up at the vast bulk of one of France's most impressive medieval cathedrals.

And lastly a few words on the programme. I recall from my days in the States that these were included in the ticket cost - is this still so? [*in Our experience, yes - mlc*] - but in Europe they come at a price, generally an inflated one. The Metz programme cost 5 Euros (say \$ 6.40), quite reasonable by current standards, and was excellent value for money. It included, *inter alia*, quite a long plot description of every G&S work, picking out the more interesting musical items in each, except for **PATIENCE**, of which I was delighted to see that editor **Robert Pourvoyeur** stated that "connoisseurs consider this the best of the series, and it is impossible to pick out anything other than the entire work" - my own thoughts entirely!

-- **DAVID STIEBER**



**FOREIGN-LANGUAGE G&S CDS** - now, why didn't We think to ask **David Stieber**? - **Alan Combs**, the conductor of the Andover Choral Society and voice teacher at the Phillips Andover Academy, is looking for sources of CD's and other recordings of G&S productions sung in German, Swedish, and other foreign languages. **Don Smith replies**: The only ones which I know are (or have

been) commercially available are **MIKADO** in Spanish and Catalan; and **MIKADO, PIRATES** and **PINAFORE** in Yiddish; and **PIRATES** in Esperanto. Other items are strictly bootleg. **Dave Leigh** points out that the Esperanto **PIRATES** is out of print, and **Carl Weggel** adds that a Google search yields a review of **Die Piraten** written by **Marc Shepherd** and none other than **Don Smith!**

**MORE REVIEWS?!** Where are the reviews We've been promised for the **Sudbury Savoyards' PIRATES** (starring NEGASS VP **Tony Parkes** as the Major General) - or the **Carl Rosa MIKADO...?** We hope to be able to print them next month!

Did anyone catch the world premier of **A Perfect Plan**, composed by **Seymour Barab**, based on Gilbert's play **Tom Cobb**? According to the NY G&S Society's newsletter, **The Palace Peeper**, it was performed at **Symphony Space** (Broadway at 95th street) in NYC on February 26-27. We'd love a review!

Did anyone catch **Valley Light Opera's** concert version of **The Rose of Persia** on Feb 28? How did it go? Has anyone seen the updated G&S Archives web site at <http://diamond.boisestate.edu/gas/> - what do you think? **Tell Us, Tell Us All About it!** - *mlc*

**&&& REVIEWS SOUGHT: BROUDE BROTHERS CRITICAL EDITION PINAFORE.** *Elma Sanders of the Editorial Department of Broude Brothers writes: Broude Brothers has published a critical edition of H.M.S. Pinafore edited by Percy M. Young. We would like to send a copy to the New England Gilbert and Sullivan Society for review. [How lovely! We have already received one offer - but if anyone else would like to get in line to review this important work for the Bray, please let Us know and We'll pass the copy on to you! -mlc]*



**Ezra and Randi Kestin Peisach** backstage at **Sudbury's PIRATES** - photo by **Janice Dallas**

**SUDBURY SAVOYARDS NEWS** On February 28th, the **Sudbury Savoyards** held their Annual Meeting at Hawes Hall in the Sudbury [MA] United Methodist Church. Elections were held to fill four vacant positions on their Board of Trustees. Elected were **Dennis O'Brien, Patrick Kinney**, and incumbents **Tom Powers** and **Paula Moravek**. They join **Donna Roessler, Ed Fell, and Laurel Martin**.

Chosen for Sudbury's second annual "Yeomen of Regard" honors were **Nancy** and the late **Bill Burdine**, and **David Larrick**. They join David's former wife, the late **Sally Osborn, Betty Farmer**, the late **Priscilla Davis, Will Ford**, and **Lawrence Haworth**, who were the first group of Very Important People in Sudbury's past selected.

-- **JANICE DALLAS**

**SLOC NEWS New Board elected at SLOC's Annual Meeting:** **Ron & I**, being loyal "Ancestors" of the **Savoyard Light Opera Company**, attended their Annual Meeting on Feb. 8, 2004, in Carlisle [MA]. The major event of the meeting was the election of new Board members. **Patti Lopoulos, Bob Russell, Brian Harris**, and returning member **Susan Schmidt**, were elected to join present members, **Rollin Jeglum, Tedford Armstead**, and **Craig Howard**.

There was a discussion of this past Fall's show, **IOLANTHE**. Everything went well and they made a profit. The Co-producer idea worked out so well that they will continue having them for the next show, **The Secret Garden**, coming next November.

-- **JANICE DALLAS**

**COSTUMES** and other theatrical supplies provided by **The Performing Arts Supply Co.** are used by the **G&S Society of Houston, TX and other G&S groups** - and, based on the brochure they've sent Us, they are very effective. Visit <http://www.performingartssupply.com/> to see more.

#### CALENDAR

February 29, 2004: Frederic is 37 birthdays, or 148 years, old  
February 29, 2004: MITG&SP is 4 birthdays, or 16 years, old

☞ **Carl Rosa Opera** has announced two tours to the United States this year: **MIKADO**, Feb - March 04, repeated in rep with **PINAFORE**, Sept - Nov 04. However, their only stop in the Northeastern US will be **MIKADO** at the Merrill Auditorium in Portland, Maine on Thursday, March 4 at 7:30 pm. Other stops will be in New Jersey, upstate New York, Ontario, western

Pennsylvania, Michigan and northern Ohio. For more info visit their web site: [www.carlosaopera.co.uk/](http://www.carlosaopera.co.uk/)

March 7, 1896, *The Grand Duke* opens  
 March 14, 1885, *The Mikado* opens  
 March 25, 1875, *Trial by Jury* opens

☞☞ **New Hampshire Gilbert & Sullivan Society** will perform *RUDDIGORE* March 12-28, 2004. For more info, phone 603-679-2781, e-mail [nhgandsociety@leddycenter.org](mailto:nhgandsociety@leddycenter.org) or visit their new website at <http://leddycenter.org/nhgandsociety>

☞☞ **The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of New York** plans meetings this year on **March 15, April 17, May 14, and June 19** at CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57 St., NY. Doors open at 7:30; the meeting starts at 7:45, and the Inner Brotherhood go out for coffee afterwards. Visit <http://g-and-s.org/> for more details.

☞☞ **Simsbury Light Opera** of Simsbury, CT will produce *PINAFORE* on March 20, 21, 27, 28, Apr 3. Cast includes **Thom Griffin** Sir Joseph and **Linda Nadeau** as Buttercup. For more details, see the company web site at [www.SLOCO.org](http://www.SLOCO.org), or phone (860) 653-7558.

April 3, 1880, *The Pirates of Penzance* opens in London

**The MIT G&S Players'** spring production is *THESPIS*, directed by **David Jedlinsky** and **Todd Neal** (who also created the orchestration for this new setting), and produced by **Ruth Jedlinsky** and **Garry Zacheiss**. The show is cast, rehearsals and even set-building are in progress, and **performances** are set for the **weekends of April 9 and 16**. *The MITG&SP web site tells Us*: "This version of *THESPIS* will consist of two existing Sullivan tunes, "Climbing Over Rocky Mountain" and "Little Maid of Arcadée." All other music has been specially composed for this show by **Colin Johnson**, and the MIT G&S Players are pleased to be presenting the world premiere of this new work." For more info, contact the group via [savoyards-request@mit.edu](mailto:savoyards-request@mit.edu) or (617) 253-0190, or visit <http://web.mit.edu/gsp/www/>.

☞☞ **Harvard-Radcliffe G&S's** spring production is *IOLANTHE*. Directors: **Hector Garza** and **Matthew Corriel**. Dates: **April 8-10** at 8 pm; **April 10** matinee at 2 pm, **April 15-17** at 8 pm; **April 17** matinee at 2 pm.

Opening performance is, as usual, Black Tie. There will be no performance on Sunday, April 11

(Easter). As a result, the last evening will be normal, NOT the usual Hack Night.

Tickets go on sale March 18th, via the Harvard Box Office at (617) 496-2222. Visit <http://hcs.harvard.edu/~hrfsp/tix.html> for more info.

☞☞ **The University of Michigan G&S Society (UMGASS)** will perform *IDA* April 8-11. Note: They'll be using NEGASS Program Chair **Dave Leigh's** new edition of the piano/vocal score for rehearsals - glory, glory anyway! Call 734-764-2538 or visit <http://www.umgass.org> for more info.

☞☞ **The Yale G&S Society** plans *PIRATES* in late April. Visit <http://www.yale.edu/gs/> for more info.

☞☞ **Longwood Opera** will be holding auditions for Boston based singers only on April 24th and 25th, 1pm - 5pm for their 2004 season. The ever-popular **Gilbert and Sullivan Night** will take place this year on July 27 - and anyone accepted for the Longwood roster is welcome to take part in that or any other summer concert. For more info call 781-455-0960, or visit <http://home.earthlink.net/~brumit/index.html>

☞☞ **THEATER FOR A NEW AUDIENCE** plans Gilbert's *Engaged* at the Lucille Lortel Theater on Christopher Street in NYC April 20-May 16 - call (212) 229-2819 ext 0 or visit [www.tfana.org](http://www.tfana.org) for more info.

April 23, 1881, *Patience* opens  
 May 13, 1842, Arthur Sullivan is born  
 May 25, 1878, *H.M.S. Pinafore* opens  
 May 27, 1883, Sullivan is knighted  
 May 29, 1911, W.S. Gilbert dies  
 June 30, 1907, Gilbert is knighted

☞☞ **Glimmerglass Opera** of Cooperstown, NY presents *PATIENCE*, in repertory with other works, between July 2 and August 24, 2002. Visit <http://www.glimmerglass.org/> or phone (607) 547-2255 for more info



☞☞ **Ohio Light Opera** opens *MIKADO* in June and *PATIENCE* in July. We know it's not, but mavens might like to check out DeKoven's *Robin Hood* (the first major American operetta), opening in late June. These are all in repertoire with non-G&S operettas - quite a busy season! Visit <http://www.wooster.edu/ohiolightopera/> for more info.

