
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome once again to Gosforth Musical Society's Spring show which this year is Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*. The last twelve months have been a funny old time in the world of politics, with the established norms both in the UK and worldwide being overthrown. As this may have been unsettling for some of our patrons, we at GMS decided to take your mind off it all with Gilbert's charming tale of a loose cannon achieving political power through undue influence and keeping it by the use of threats and supernatural forces. While we may not have reached that stage yet, it may just be a matter of time!

I hope you will agree with me that the Society is in a strong position at the moment with the welcome addition of Rachel Bowie, Niamh Carr, Jim Dearden, and Naomi Paige to our ranks. It's also good to have Mark Buckley and Terry Aspray back treading the boards with us after a lengthy sabbatical and to see some of our younger members graduate to major principal roles (I won't name them to spare their blushes, but you'll know who I mean). The old firm of Phil Hall as Musical Director and Laurence Scott as Stage Director are still in business this year, with the addition of Elizabeth Hamer as Assistant Director. As Laurence is starring as Lord Chancellor this year, Elizabeth's talents have been put to good use, both in staging several of the ensemble numbers and identifying those members of the male chorus guilty of making ribald signs behind Laurence's back.

Before I leave you in peace to enjoy the show, may I make my now traditional invitation to all you would-be Thespians out there to come and join us. It doesn't matter if you are experienced or not, if you can hold a tune, have a sense of humour and are free on Monday nights why not come along and give it a go. You'll be made most welcome. Lastly, may I thank you all for your support. Without you we wouldn't be able to carry on performing these wonderful operettas and having such fun along the way.

PAUL MURPHY

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Iolanthe was the seventh collaboration between Arthur Sullivan and W S Gilbert and was first performed at the Savoy Theatre on 25th November 1882, and ran for 385 performances. It was the first new work to be performed at the Savoy (Patience had earlier transferred there from Opera Comique), and can thus be considered as the first true 'Savoy Opera' as well as being the first new theatrical production in the world to be lit by electricity.

By the time *Iolanthe* was written, Gilbert and Sullivan had really hit their stride and were at the peak of their creative powers. Sullivan's style in particular had evolved considerably since their first collaborations, and produced a particularly fine score, with even a nod to Wagner in the use of leitmotifs, whereby distinct musical themes are associated with particular characters. The Wagnerian influence was even reflected in the design of the original Fairy Queen's 'Brunnhilde Valkyrie' inspired costume.

Gilbert provided one of his most whimsical and satirical librettos targeting the aristocracy and the political establishment. His earliest ideas for *Iolanthe* had appeared in one of his 'Bab Ballads', called 'The Fairy Curate' and it contained the theme of Fairies marrying mortals, which makes its appearance in the Opera.

Gilbert ensured that his direction provided high production values, with a lavish staging, incorporating special lighting effects that had been impossible in the era of gas stage lighting.

The Band of the Grenadier Guards even appeared at the first performance heralding the March of the Peers.

Unbelievably, following the first performance, there was hostile criticism in the papers, for Gilbert for ridiculing the House of Lords, and for Sullivan for writing 'unmelodious music'! However, critical opinion has rightly changed since then, and Iolanthe is regarded by many as a masterpiece. Indeed the extended Act One finale has been described by one commentator as one of the finest pieces of sustained musical theatre writing ever by a British composer.

LAURENCE SCOTT

CAST

<i>The Lord Chancellor</i>	Laurence Scott
<i>Earl of Mountararat</i>	Jonathan Wood
<i>Earl Tolloller</i>	Gareth Jones
<i>Private Willis (of the Grenadier Guards)</i>	Jim Dearden
<i>Strephon (an Arcadian shepherd)</i>	Steven
<i>Aitchison</i>	
<i>Queen of the Fairies</i>	Julia Neale
<i>Iolanthe (A Fairy, Strephon's mother)</i>	Rachel Alpin
<i>Celia</i> }	Hannah
<i>Fletcher</i>	
<i>Leila</i> }	Elizabeth Hamer
<i>Fleta</i> }	Glynda
<i>Blackburn</i>	
<i>Phyllis (an Arcadian Shepherdess and Ward in Chancery)</i>	Grace Ridley

Chorus of Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Barons and Fairies:

Terry Aspray, Rachel Bowie, Mark Buckley, Niamh Carr, Esther Cohen-Tovée, Mark Hinitt, Sandra Hopper, Paul Leach, Isabel Moloney, Paul Murphy, Naomi Paige, Laura Reed, Vivien Scott, Liz Shaw, Tim Simmons, Brenda Wallace

ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS: Mike Smith (leader), Barry Walker, Dennis Grieve, Ruth Pickles

VIOLA: Simon Collier, 'CELLO: Paul Hutchinson

DOUBLE BASS: Brian Tanner/Jim Poyer, FLUTE: Hazel Nelson, Andrew Martin

OBOE: Kirsty Pearson, CLARINETS: Lucy Beckmann, Lindsey Cassidy

BASSOON: Tony Hedley, HORN: Dave Milner,

TRUMPET: Phil Sheard/ Mike Graham, Ben Channery TROMBONE: Laura Davison,

PERCUSSION: Michael Mather

SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE: An Arcadian Landscape

Strephon, an Arcadian shepherd who loves Phyllis, a ward in Chancery, is delighted to learn that his mother Iolanthe, a fairy, has eventually been pardoned by the Queen of the fairies after more than twenty years penal servitude for committing the ultimate sin (for a fairy!) of marrying a mortal and he meets his aunts for the first time. They are determined to help him, though he is just half a fairy, to convince the Lord Chancellor to consent to his marriage to Phyllis. All the Lords are also in love with Phyllis and have followed her to the country.

Sadly Strephon's plan goes awry, especially so when he is seen being comforted by his mother- as a fairy – she looks young enough to be mistaken as- well 'double-dealing' by Strephon! Phyllis is furious and promises to marry a Lord. Strephon calls for help from the Fairy Queen.

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INTERVAL – 20 MINUTES

ACT TWO: Palace Yard, Westminster

Strephon has entered parliament and caused havoc there. The fairies have followed to help but have fallen in love with the Lords themselves! They are admonished by the Queen who has to admit a little pang herself for Private Willis of the Grenadier Guards, on sentry duty in Palace Yard.

She urges them to subdue their feelings.

The Lord Chancellor finally admits to his own desire to marry Phyllis and decides he can give his own consent to this marriage. However Phyllis and Strephon have put aside their differences. Iolanthe has to take a drastic step to save her son's happiness- risking death for an old sin. The fairies stave off her fate with an admission of their own. The Lord Chancellor saves the day with help to reform a Fairy law with a simple word. As ever the happy couples unite, or reunite- but are not content to stay here any longer.

OFFICIALS

DIRECTOR..... LAURENCE SCOTT
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR..... ELIZABETH HAMER
MUSICAL DIRECTOR..... PHILIP HALL
ACCOMPANIST..... JULIAN DAWSON
PRESIDENT..... PAUL MURPHY
CHAIR..... ROSEMARY MENZIES
TREASURER..... LAURENCE SCOTT
COMMITTEE MEMBERS..... CHARLES FLEMING, MONICA GOLDFINCH, ELIZABETH HAMER,
...LAURA REED, JENNY PARKIN, TIM SIMMONS, ESTHER COHEN-TOVÉE, & BRENDA WALLACE
STAGE MANAGEMENT, LIGHTING & SOUND..... NEATT & STUART BAGNALL
WOMEN'S COSTUMES MADE BY..... MARGARET GILLON
OTHER COSTUMES SUPPLIED BY..... ALAN GRAHAM
SCENERY CONSTRUCTED BY..... JIM DEARDEN AND TIM SIMMONS
CHOREOGRAPHY..... GLYNDA BLACKBURN
WARDROBE..... MARGARET GILLON
PROPS..... MONICA GOLDFINCH & CHARLES FLEMING
TICKET SECRETARY..... ROSEMARY MENZIES
POSTER..... FRASER CHARLTON
PROGRAMME JENNY PARKIN
MUSICAL PRODUCERS..... ELIZABETH WOOD, JONATHAN WOOD & PHILIP HALL
PUBLICITY..... LAURA REED, TIM SIMMONS & ESTHER COHEN-TOVÉE
CATERING TERRY PIRNIE

SOCIETY NEWS

In June 2016, a very happy evening was had by all who attended the Songs and Snatches Singalong. These events are a great opportunity for friends from other Societies and potential new members to try out singing along with us! Look out for our next sing-along, which will be on Friday 27 30 June at Trinity Church. This will comprise some of the best-loved G&S chorus numbers for everyone to sing, plus performances by society members.

In November 2016 the Society produced two one act performances: 'The Zoo' music by Sir Arthur Sullivan and libretto by Bolton Rowe and 'Happy Arcadia' words by W.S. Gilbert with some Sullivan music. Our performances were warmly received by audiences at Trinity Church, Gosforth and great fun was had by the all cast for both shows. No animals were harmed in either production despite flying sheep and misappropriated buns for the bears!

DIARY DATES

Gosforth Musical Society presents:

'Sing-along,

7.30pm Friday 30th June 2017

7.30pm Friday 30 June 2017

Trinity Church, Gosforth

'Humbug' (returning due to popular acclaim)

24th – 25th November 2017

24 - 25 November 2017:

Trinity Church, Gosforth

'Quaker Girl', Jubilee Theatre, Gosforth

April 2018

PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

1929 HMS Pinafore	1963 Ruddigore	1990 Ruddigore
1930 The Mikado	1964 Patience	1991 The Yeomen of the Guard
1931 The Yeomen of the Guard	1965 Trial by Jury & HMS Pinafore	1992 The Gondoliers
1932 The Gondoliers	1966 The Mikado	1993 Princess Ida
1933 Iolanthe	1967 Iolanthe	1994 Trial by Jury & HMS Pinafore
1934 Patience	1968 The Yeomen of the Guard	1995 The Sorcerer
1935 Ruddigore	1969 Trial by Jury & Pirates of Penzance	1996 Iolanthe
1936 Princess Ida	1970 The Gondoliers	1997 Patience
1937 Trial by Jury & HMS Pinafore	1971 Patience	1998 The Arcadians
1938 Pirates of Penzance	1972 Ruddigore	1999 The Pirates of Penzance
1939 Utopia Limited	1973 Trial by Jury & HMS Pinafore	2000 The Geisha
1945 The Yeomen of the Guard	1974 Princess Ida	2001 The Mikado
1946 The Gondoliers	1975 The Yeomen of the Guard	2002 The Grand Duke
1947 The Sorcerer	1976 The Mikado	2003 The Quaker Girl
1948 Ruddigore	1977 Iolanthe	2004 HMS Pinafore
1949 The Grand Duke	1978 Patience	2005 Iolanthe
1950 The Mikado	1979 Trial by Jury & Pirates of Penzance	2006 Orpheus in the Underworld
1951 The Rose of Persia	1980 HMS Pinafore	2007 Ruddigore
1952 Utopia Limited	1981 Ruddigore	2008 The Sorcerer
1953 Trial by Jury & HMS Pinafore	1982 The Gondoliers	2009 The Pirates of Penzance
1954 Merrie England	1983 The Yeomen of the Guard	2010 Princess Ida
1955 Princess Ida	1984 Utopia Limited	2011 The Yeomen of the Guard
1956 The Yeomen of the Guard	1985 Iolanthe	2012 The Gondoliers
1957 The Sorcerer	1986 The Sorcerer	2013 Patience
1958 Trial by Jury & Pirates of Penzance	1987 The Mikado	2014 The Mikado
1959 The Nautch Girl	1988 Patience	2015 The Arcadians
1960 Iolanthe	1989 Pirates of Penzance	2016 Utopia Limited
1961 The Gondoliers		
1962 The Mikado		

PATRONS

Mrs A. Baker, Dr E. Cohen-Tovee, Mr C Fleming, Miss M. Goldfinch,

Mr and Mrs A Grummett, Miss R. Menzies, Miss S More, Mr and Mrs I Morton,
Mr J Nelson, Mrs M. Place, Mrs N. Seymour, Dr M Smith, Mrs E Smith,
Mr L. Scott, Mrs V. Scott, Mr & Mrs G Tye, Mr G Wallace, Mr & Mrs I Ward,
Mrs A Whiteoak

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

Mrs A M Baker, Mrs M Clark, Mr H Crozier, Miss M Goldfinch,
Mr D McKay, Mrs M McKay, Mrs A Morton, Mr I Morton, Mrs J Parkin, Mrs M
Place,
Mr L Scott, Mrs J Tait, Mrs B Wallace, Mrs V Ward

The Society welcomes new members aged 16 and over. Rehearsals are from 7.30pm-
9.30pm at the Trinity Christian Community Centre, Freeman Road, South Gosforth,
on Monday nights from September – April, with a break over the summer. We put on
a smaller-scale show in the autumn and a fully-staged show with orchestra in late
spring. Come along to a rehearsal, or for further details contact
monica.goldfinch@btinternet.com
