HOT MIKADO

September 29 · October 15, 2017

Book & Lyrics Adapted by DAVID H BELL • Music Adapted & Arranged by ROB BOWMAN

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In the performing arts community, nothing is more important than celebrating the hard work and accomplishments of all artists involved. In 1947, a group of people came up with the Tony Awards to celebrate the performing arts in New York. In 1976, a group of people came up with the Olivier Awards on the West End. And in 2017, we came up with the Footlights Performing Arts Awards to celebrate the illustrious performing arts scene right here in Milwaukee.

On June 22nd, 2017, we had the pleasure of gathering a group of artists and art lovers from all levels and all corners to celebrate with us at the Footlights Performing Arts Awards. As Footlights President/Publisher Steve Marcus put it, we “[brought] local artists together for one night, under the same roof, to celebrate and recognize the massive amount of talent our mid-size city contains.” We presented 32 awards in 16 categories, celebrating the victories of both professional and non-professional theatre companies.

The night, which began with the ceremony at the Milwaukee Rep’s Quadracci Powerhouse, and ended at an after party at the InterContinental Milwaukee Hotel, was a huge success. There was laughter and tears. There was networking and socializing. Old friends reconnecting and new friends sharing a passion for the performing arts. The cheers we heard all night long were a sure sign that Milwaukee was just as ready to celebrate as we were.

In our first year hosting the Footlights Performing Arts Awards, we decided to keep them as a people’s choice award. Audiences were encouraged to submit nominations throughout the beginning of the year. Once those were all compiled, visitors to Footlights.com were given the chance to vote for their favorite performances. As we continue to
grow and expand this event, we’ve invited artists from a variety of performing arts organization to help us fine-tune this process, and the awards as a whole. “We realize that there is no perfect way to hold an awards event, be it through people’s choice or by committee. And, I must admit, we embarked on this awards journey feet-first,” noted Steve Marcus at the ceremony. “And so, I ask for your forgiveness if this is not perfect. Most things are not the first time around. There’s always room for improvement, right? I also ask for your blessing, and that you get on the bandwagon and join us in making this event bigger and better for next year and the years to come.”

We couldn’t have asked for a better show. From the hilarious presence of host John McGivern, to the variety of presenters from all over Milwaukee, to the incredible performances by local performing arts groups, it was truly a remarkable evening. And, if one thing is for certain, next year will only be bigger and better.

A full list of nominees and winners, as well as other information, photos, and more can be found on Footlights.com.
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You can’t blame Skylight Music Theatre subscribers and regular patrons for associating Ray Jivoff with the many onstage roles he has played over the years. There’s the flamboyant Zaza from *La Cage Aux Folles*, the Harpo Marx character he has played numerous times, or the faithful, but boring Amos (Mr. Cellophane) in the musical, *Chicago*.

But this season puts Jivoff in an entirely new role: as Skylight’s artistic director. He had been the interim director for months, and his permanent position was announced in March. Looking back, one could say it was a role Jivoff was always meant to fill. Starting at Skylight in 1999 as its education director, he has directed and appeared in many Skylight productions (as well as for other theatre companies in town). Although known for his comic roles, he has shown impressive dramatic depth in shows such as Skylight’s groundbreaking *The Adding Machine*.

Still, there is something undeniably impish in his persona. So, it’s no surprise that this season promises to offer an extra dollop of fun in every production — even those with more thoughtful themes.

The season opens this month with a riotous comedy, *Hot Mikado*. Based on Gilbert and Sullivan’s Opera, *The Mikado*, this version is set in a 1940s Harlem nightclub. It combines jazz, blues, big band and gospel music in a riotous upheaval of the show’s traditional staging. Jivoff hints that audiences will catch references to important people of those times, such as President Roosevelt and Duke Ellington. “Skylight’s (core audience base of) theater-goers familiar with that era are going to love this one,” Jivoff promises.

Still, there should be plenty of theatrical riches to attract new and younger patrons as well, starting with the popular musical *Annie*. It’s the first time Skylight has staged this show. *Annie* tells the story of a spunky, red-haired orphan girl who finds her home in the unlikeliest of places. Two young performers will trade off performances in the role of Annie. Of course, both girls can sing a heart-melting rendition of the show’s signature song, “The Sun Will Come Up, Tomorrow.” The show arrives just in time for the holidays (November 17-December 23).

Relishing his days as a Skylight educator, Jivoff is looking forward to a show that captures the unique talents of two children, one of whom is a regular performer at Milwaukee’s First Stage.

Later in the season is a hilarious science-fiction spoof, *Zombies from the Beyond* (February 2-18). The Off-Broadway show was written by Milwaukee native James Valcq. “It has nothing to do with actual ‘zombies’ as they are thought of today,” Jivoff says while being interviewed in his Skylight office. The show is set in mid-1950s Milwaukee. Older theatergoers (and sci-fi fans) will understand some of the intentionally hokey special effects that were a part of early films from this black-and-white 1950s era. The visual effects alone should have the audience laughing, Jivoff promises.
New Season

He notes that “fun” has always been part of the Skylight equation. “Our company was founded almost 60 years ago out of energy, passion and a real joy in presenting musical theatre in a way that is innovative, intimate and engaging”, Ray said in a news release. Jivoff adds that fun and exuberance is evident in every one of the five shows on the Skylight roster this season. Interestingly, these shows have never been produced at Skylight, so that adds an element of surprise to the equation.

Expect more fun in Skylight’s The Tales of Hoffman (March 16-29, 2018) which combines beautiful music with the acoustical antics of Michael (Ding) Lorenz, the percussion whiz who has appeared in his own show, Things That Go Ding.

Skylight always closes its season with a big musical. This year’s offering is Urinetown, playing May 18 through June 10. It’s an outrageous satire about government regulations that give (or refuse) individuals the right to pee. The edgy comedy is also intended to attract younger theatergoers.

Whether Jivoff has concocted the perfect blend of comedy and tragedy remains to be seen. And if you have ideas about the shows Skylight should consider producing, don’t be shy about sharing them with Jivoff as he strolls through the lobby at intermission. “People give me their opinions all the time, and I love that,” he says.
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**Audience Guides** are free through Enlighten, Skylight’s education program, with the help of volunteer Justine Leonard. The guide is available on our website and in the lobby of the theatre.

**Skylight Insights** Skylight artists and staff lead free pre-performance talks one hour before curtain for every Wednesday and Sunday performance.

**Ushering** for information, current opportunities and to sign up to become a volunteer usher, visit www.skylightmusictheatre.volunteerhub.com.

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Skylight Music Theatre 2017-2018 Season

Ray Jivoff  
Artistic Director

Jack R. Lemmon  
Executive Director

PRESENTS

HOT MIKADO

Book and Lyrics Adapted by  
DAVID H BELL
Music Adapted and Arranged by  
ROB BOWMAN

September 29 – October 15, 2017
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COSTUME DESIGNER Brian C. Hemesath  
SOUND DESIGNER Zach Berinstein
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER Daniel J. Hanson*

Season Sponsored by

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Based on The Mikado by W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan  
Originally Produced at Ford’s Theatre, Washington, D.C.  
Frankie Hewitt, Producing Director

Hot Mikado is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).  
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* Appearing through an agreement between this theatre, Skylight Music Theatre,  
and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Costume designer is represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829
On the first day of rehearsal, I told the cast, “I want joy in the room.” For 20 years, that has been my approach as a director. That joy is why I have been involved with theatre since I was five years old.

I invite you to let that sense of joy wash over you at Hot Mikado. Let yourself be transported by the show’s blues, jazz, gospel, swing and Big Band music. Experience the liberation and wild abandon of a fast jitterbug that feels as free as flying. Join us at Hot House, our 1940’s nightclub, as the performers who work there prepare to present Gilbert & Sullivan’s masterful music and intricate harmonies with a hot, new swinging sound.

In Harlem’s famous Cotton Club, African-American culture was embraced by audiences, while at the same time things were hidden from them. You’ll see there is much hidden at Hot House as well, just as there are political and cultural messages hidden in Gilbert & Sullivan’s original version of The Mikado, which is the basis for this reimagining of that 19th century operetta. You’ll see how the actors respond to a script that has some questionable text and references to a time when the world was swept up in a craze for all things Japanese.

These are all part of the world of Hot Mikado, a funny and outrageous story of a love triangle, madcap power struggles, and outlandish laws that are followed to illogical ends. It is a place where even the threat of death will not stand in the way of star-crossed lovers being together. A place where love and tolerance triumph over political agendas, pomp and circumstance and stale traditions. A place where you can feel. Where you can love who you love. Where you can laugh. And most of all, where you can feel the joy in the room.
Welcome to the first show of our 2017-18 season, Hot Mikado! As I write these notes, the cast is down the hall rehearsing. The sound of joyful celebration and hard work confirms that this production will kick off our season with great singing, energetic dancing and hysterically funny characters. Skylight has a long history with the works of “G & S,” starting with our first production in 1959, An Evening with Gilbert and Sullivan and ten productions of The Mikado. We are excited to present one of Gilbert and Sullivan’s masterworks in this Americanized, re-orchestrated version. By shifting the period to the 1940s, Americanizing the characters, diversifying the cast and adapting the score into a swing, jazz, blues and gospel extravaganza, we have an opportunity to appreciate this work in a new way. This adaptation allows us to point out and make fun of the stereotypes inherent in the original work. As Americans, we celebrate our diversity and can enjoy the very British, topsy turvy world of Gilbert and Sullivan being reset in classic, American style.

I hope you will join us for the rest of our season. For the holidays, we look forward to the great family classic, Annie, directed by Skylight favorite Molly Rhode, who also directed our productions of Les Miserables and Sound of Music. In February, we present Milwaukee native James Valcq’s unique, quirky and funny tribute to ‘50s space alien movies Zombies From the Beyond. In March, we will present a production of The Tales of Hoffmann, in collaboration with Milwaukee Opera Theatre directed by the visionary Jill Anna Ponasik, who just joined our staff as Artistic Associate. We close our season with the satirical, Tony Award-winning musical, Urinetown.

Thank you and enjoy the shows!
Ray Jivoff (Artistic Director) is an actor, educator and director who has been working at Skylight since 1990, when he appeared in Girl Crazy back at the “old space” on Jefferson Street. In 1999, he joined Skylight staff as Education Director and started Enlighten, Skylight’s education program, which includes the Partner School Program, which offers in-depth, curriculum based music theatre education to students in eight MPS schools; two touring shows—The Standard Songbook and KidsWrites; Insights, our pre-show talk series and The High School Musical Celebration. As an actor, shows at Skylight include La Cage Aux Folles, Animal Crackers, Adding Machine, Guys and Dolls, The Mikado, Pirates of Penzance, HMS Pinafore and The Producers. He directed Hair, Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris and Sing Me a Story at Skylight; The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged, Revised and The Sum of Us at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; West Side Story at UW Milwaukee and Anything Goes, Little Shop of Horrors and Into the Woods at Marquette University.

Jack R. Lemmon (Executive Director) joined Skylight two seasons ago having worked in the performing arts for over 30 years. He has served as Executive Director of the Joffrey Ballet, Louisville Ballet and Colorado Ballet to name a few. He also worked at the National Endowment for the Arts. He has served as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts and the Michigan Arts and Cultural Affairs. He served on the board and executive committee of Dance/USA and was a board member of the Partnership for Creative Economies (KY). He also chaired the board of the Arts and Cultural Attractions Council in Louisville, KY, and the Chicago Dance Alliance. Lemmon currently is president of board of the Historic Third Ward Association. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Coe College in Cedar Rapids (Iowa) and an M.F.A. in Theatre from the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.
CAST OF HOT MIKADO

Ko-Ko ................................................................................................. Michael Klopatek*
Nanki-Poo .......................................................................................... Michael Penick
Yum-Yum.............................................................................................. Râna Roman*
Pooh-Bah ............................................................................................. Ryan Cappleman
Pish-Tush ............................................................................................. Kevin James Sievert
Pitti-Sing ................................................................................................. Alexis J. Roston*
Peep-Bo .............................................................................................. Christie Burgess
Katisha .................................................................................................. Jamecia Bennett
The Mikado ............................................................................................ Peter Sipla

Ensemble:
James Carrington, Shawn Holmes, Sean Jackson, Carmen Risi, Ava Thomann

Swing:
F. Marvin Hannah, Jr.

Dance Captain:
Ryan Cappleman

* Appearing through an agreement between this theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, and Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

BAND

Trumpet ............................................................................................... Tom Schuleter
Trombone .............................................................................................. Kyle Samuelson
Alto Sax, Flute and Clarinet ................................................................. Curt Hanrahan
Bass ....................................................................................................... Tom McGirr
Drums and Percussion ........................................................................ Michael (Ding) Lorenz

PRODUCTION SUPPORT

Assistant Stage Manager ........................................................................ Julia Xiong
Stage Management Apprentice ............................................................. Nicholas Bader
Properties Lead, Run Crew .................................................................. Chrissy Piontek
Properties Artisans ................................................................................ Meghan Savagian, Maddy Yee
Scenic Carpenters .............................................................................. Calissa Houtler-McCoy, Joe Janswig, Jessie Wesley
Wig Designer .......................................................................................... Dana Rochester
Wardrobe ............................................................................................... Molly Mason, Jeanne Schrank
Stitchers ................................................................................................. Carie Bronson, Jeanne Schrank, Lisa Quinn, Patricia Risser
Costume Crafts .................................................................................... Haley Jaeger
Electricians .......................................................................................... Marisa Abbott, Ashley Devos, Anna Janicek, Colin Kovarik, Elizabeth Pagenkoff, Adam Seaman, Doug Vance
Light Board Operator ........................................................................... Steve Tonar
Followspot Operators .......................................................................... Doug Vance, Anna Janicek
Sound Operator ................................................................................... Justin Ryan
Production Photos ................................................................................. Mark Frohna
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The play is performed in a Harlem nightclub in 1945.

**ACT I**

The gentlemen of Titipu introduce themselves *(If you want to know who we are)*. Nanki-Poo arrives *(A wand’ring minstrel I)* and asks about his beloved, Yum-Yum, a ward of Ko-Ko, a cheap tailor. Pish-Tush explains that when the Mikado decreed that flirting was a crime punishable by death, the Titipu authorities, hoping to avoid having any executions, appoint Ko-Ko, condemned to death for flirting, to the post of Lord High Executioner. Since Ko-Ko was not going to execute himself, no executions could take place. However, the town officials refused to serve under an ex-tailor, and resigned and Pooh-Bah now holds all their posts. Pooh-Bah reports that Yum-Yum will marry Ko-Ko that day *(And the drums will crash)*.

Ko-Ko enters *(Behold the Lord High Executioner)* and shares his list of people who could be executed *(I’ve got a little list)*. Yum-Yum appears with Ko-Ko’s other two wards, Peep-Bo and Pitti-Sing *(Three little maids from school)*. Nanki-Poo tells Yum-Yum that he is the son of the Mikado travelling in disguise to avoid Katisha, an elderly lady of his father’s court. They lament that the law forbids them to flirt *(This is what I’ll never do)*.

Pish-Tush tells Ko-Ko that the Mikado has just decreed that unless there is an execution in Titipu within a month, the town will be ruined. Pooh-Bah and Pish-Tush suggest that Ko-Ko is the obvious choice for beheading, since he is already sentenced to die *(I am so proud)*. Nanki-Poo, in despair over losing Yum-Yum, prepares to commit suicide. Ko-Ko convinces him to marry Yum-Yum if, at the end of the month, he agrees to be executed. Ko-Ko would then marry the young widow.

Everyone arrives for Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum’s marriage *(Let the throng our joy advance)*, but the festivities are interrupted by Katisha, who claims Nanki-Poo as her husband. Her attempts to reveal Nanki-Poo’s secret are drowned out by the crowd. *(For he’s gonna marry Yum-Yum)* Katisha makes it clear that she intends to get vengeance.

**INTERMISSION**

**ACT II**

Yum-Yum prepares for her wedding *(Braid the raven hair)* and muses on her own beauty *(The sun whose rays)*. Reminded of the shortness of their impending marriage, Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo, with Pitti-Sing, Peep-Bo and Pish-Tush try to keep their spirits up *(Swing a merry madrigal)*. Ko-Ko then tells them that the law also states that when a married man is beheaded for flirting, his wife must be buried alive *(Here’s a how-de-do)*. Yum-Yum is unwilling to marry under these circumstances, and Ko-Ko, who is too soft-hearted to execute anyone sends Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum away to be wed.

The Mikado arrives and describes his system of justice *(The Mikado Song)*. Ko-Ko assumes that he has come to see whether an execution has been carried out and hands the Mikado the false certificate of Nanki-Poo’s death. The Mikado has actually come in search of his son. Katisha reads the death certificate and is horrified that Nanki-Poo was executed. The Mikado plans their punishment “for executing the heir apparent.” Ko-Ko begs Nanki-Poo to reveal himself to his father. Nanki-Poo suggests that if Katisha could be persuaded to marry Ko-Ko, then Nanki-Poo could safely “come to life again,” as Katisha would have no claim on him. Ko-Ko has no choice but to marry Katisha.

Ko-Ko finds Katisha mourning her loss *(Alone, and yet alive)* and begs her to marry him. Katisha is soon moved by his story of a bird who died of heartbreak *(Tit-willow)*. She agrees *(There is beauty in the bellow of the blast)* and after the ceremony is performed, she begs for the Mikado’s mercy for him. The Mikado is astonished when Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum appear. Ko-Ko explains that when a royal command for an execution is given, the victim is, legally speaking, as good as dead, “and if he is dead, why not say so?” The Mikado deems that “Nothing could possibly be more satisfactory,” and everyone celebrates *(For he’s gone and married Yum-Yum)*.
WHO’S WHO IN THE CAST

Jamecia Bennett  

Christie Burgess  
*(Peep-Bo)* is making her Skylight debut! She has performed with regional theatres in the Milwaukee and Chicago areas. Favorite roles include: Fantine in *Les Miserables*, Demeter in *CATS*, Christine Colgate in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, Elizabeth Benning in *Young Frankenstein*, Cinderella in *Into the Woods*, Rona Peretti in *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, Swing for *Shout!* at Marriott Lincolnshire, Hope Cladwell in *Urinetown*, Regina Giddens in *The Little Foxes*, June Talley in *Fifth of July*, and both Diana and Maggie Saunders in *Lend Me a Tenor*. A BFA Acting graduate from UW-Stevens Point, she thanks the best hubby ever, Dan, the family and friends that support her, and their glorious baby boy, Hugh.

Ryan Cappleman  
*(Pooh-Bah, Dance Captain)* is a performer, choreographer, music director, director, and teacher from Milwaukee. At Skylight, he has been seen as Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*, Woof in *Hair*, Steward/Cinderella’s Father in *Into The Woods*, Clo-Clo in *La Cage Aux Folles*, and in ensemble in *My Fair Lady*. Ryan also choreographed *Sweeney Todd* last year, and took home an inaugural Footlights Award for *Pirates of Penzance*. Ryan just wrapped up music directing *A Chorus Line*, as well as playing Larry for Milwaukee Opera Theater and Theater Red. He has worn many hats at Danceworks, Children’s Theater of Madison, Northbrook Theater for Young Audiences, First Stage, In Tandem, Milwaukee Chamber Theater, Windfall Theater, Musical Mainstage, Sunset Playhouse, Northern Sky Theater, Overture Center for the Arts, Marcus Center, and Off Broadway at the Cherry Lane Theater. Lots of upcoming stuff, including joining the staff of the Skylight Education Department assistant music directing *Annie* and choreographing *Urinetown* later this season! All my love to husband, Gio.

James Carrington  
*(Ensemble)* is making his Skylight debut. Some favorite roles include: Matt in *Mr Burns: A Post Electric Play* at Luminous Theater, Donner in *Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer The Musical*, Man 3 in *The Ballad of Emmett Till*, and Francis Flute in *A Midsummer Nights Dream*. James has worked with First Stage, Renaissance Theaterworks, Milwaukee Repertory Theater and In Tandem. Regional work includes: The Ordway Center for the Arts, Children’s Theater of Madison and Door Shakespeare. Up next, James will be appearing in *Annie* with Skylight Music Theatre. Thank you for coming! Support the arts!
F. Marvin Hannah, Jr., *(Swing)* is from Milwaukee, WI. During the mid 1980s thru 2011, he lived, worked, and also performed as a singer, in Washington D.C. A member of Patrick Lundy and the Ministers of Music, he began performing with and for a host of dignitaries/celebrities, including Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama; Bruce Springsteen, Joshua Bell, and B. B. King. With numerous chorus performances at Fords, Warner, and The Kennedy Center to fall back on, he now embraces his new role as stage actor.

Lundy and the Ministers of Music, he began performing with and for a host of dignitaries/celebrities, including Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Obama; Bruce Springsteen, Joshua Bell, and B. B. King. With numerous chorus performances at Fords, Warner, and The Kennedy Center to fall back on, he now embraces his new role as stage actor.

Shawn Holmes *(Ensemble, Pooh-Bah u/s)* Shawn is extremely excited to be back with his “theatre home” Skylight for *Hot Mikado*. Some of his favorite roles at Skylight were Jacob in *La Cage Aux Folles*, Agwe in *Once On This Island*, and a Tribe Member for *Hair*. Shawn would like to thank his family and friends for their ever-lasting support. Lastly, to the cast and crew, Shawn would like to say, “LET’S GET IT!” -Crocs

Sean Anthony Jackson *(Ensemble)* is a local performer, born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. After completing his degree in Musical Theater at Cardinal Stritch University, Sean has been enjoying participating in the Milwaukee theatre community. Sean has appeared on Milwaukee stages such as In Tandem Theater, Skylight Music Theatre, and a few more. Sean's previous shows include *Carnival, My Fair Lady, Beauty and the Beast, Tartuffe* and *La Cage Aux Folles*.

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Chris Klopatek (Ko-Ko) is a Milwaukee born and raised actor who is excited to return to Skylight Music Theatre in another Gilbert and Sullivan show. At Skylight, he has been in *Pirates of Penzance*, and hammed it up next to Ray Jivoff as Carmen Ghia in *The Producers*. Most recently, he was playing Boyet in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* at Lake Tahoe Shakespeare and Guildenstern in *Hamlet* at Idaho Shakespeare. Last season, Chris was seen as Jeff in *Lobby Hero* at Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Emile in the world premiere of *Goosebumps: The Musical - Phantom of the Auditorium* at First Stage and Robert in *Boeing, Boeing* at Indiana Repertory. He has his Master of Fine Arts from the University of California - Irvine and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater.

Michael Penick (Nanki-Poo) hails from the booming metropolis of Iowa City and is excited to be making his Skylight debut as Nanki-Poo in *Hot Mikado*. Credits include Nanki-Poo in *The Mikado* with Theatre 20/20; the title role in *Candide* with Third Avenue Playhouse; Adam and Noah in *Children of Eden* with Revival Theatre Co.; Anthony in *Sweeney Todd* and Dr. Madden in *Next to Normal* with City Circle Acting Co.; and of course, as a native Iowan, Harold Hill in *The Music Man* with Theatre Cedar Rapids. For more, please visit www.michaelpenick.com

Carmen Risi (Ensemble) is thrilled to make her Skylight debut. She was last seen as Sonia in the Jeff Award recommended *They’re Playing Our Song* at Chicago’s Brown Paper Box Co. Other credits include Allison in *First Date* at Williams St. Rep, *44 Plays for 44 Presidents* at Oil Lamp Theater, Pancea in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Citadel Theater, Patience in *The Incarnation of the Full Gospel Unified Christmas Choir* at Morning Star Productions, and the Teachers in Jason Powell’s *The Search for Suzie Surreal* at Milwaukee Metro Voices. She appeared in *And the World Goes Round*, *West Side Story* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie* at Madison’s Four Seasons Theater. A former school music teacher, Carmen also recently music directed *Little Women* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at UW-Parkside. Thanks to Rob for his support.

Rána Roman (Yum-Yum) is a Milwaukee native and proud graduate of the Milwaukee H.S. of the Arts. She was last seen at Skylight as Nina in *In the Heights* and previously as Alexi Darling in *RENT*. Some of Rána’s recent work includes, *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre), *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre), *Mr. Burns* (Forward Theater) and *Agnes of God* (Renaissance Theaterworks). This season you can catch her in *A Christmas Carol*, and *Our Town* at the Milwaukee Rep. Rána owes everything to her parents and teachers who encouraged her to push harder and never get discouraged. She is so grateful to the Milwaukee theatre community for continuing to let her grow and be challenged. -“I pray, make no mistake, we are not shy. We’re very wide awake.”

Alexis J. Roston (Pitti-Sing) is a seasoned triple threat out of Chicago, IL. She is excited to be making her Skylight debut. She is an award winner (Jeff Award, Black Excellence Award and Black Theatre Alliance Award), most recently for her performance as Billie Holiday in *Lady
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Day At Emerson’s Bar And Grill (Porchlight). Other Chicago credits: Jesus Christ Superstar, Hair (Paramount Theatre), Crowns, Ain’t Misbehavin’ (Goodman), Porgy and Bess, Spunk, Piano Lesson (Court), Shrek (Chicago Shakespeare), What I Learned In Paris, Black Nativity, Seven Guitars (Congo Square), and Company, The Old Settler (Writer’s). She was also in The Color Purple and Lady Day and Emerson’s Bar and Grill (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre). Mrs. Roston is a proud ensemble member of Congo Square Theatre Company and holds a BFA from Howard University. Her upcoming projects include a role on Showtime’s The Chi and New Theatre Restaurant’s Sister Act.

Kevin James Sievert (Pish-Tush) is excited to be making his Skylight Music Theatre debut. Originally from Manitowoc, WI, Kevin attends Silver Lake College as a vocal performance and pedagogy major and intends to graduate in spring of 2018. Having training in opera performance, he hopes to pursue a combined opera/musical theatre masters post undergrad. In 2015, Kevin had the opportunity to do intensive training with Open Jar Institute in New York City, a highly selective pre-Broadway college training program. Some of his recent credits include Jamie Wellerstein in The Last Five Years and Beethoven in Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead at University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc for which he had received an Irene Ryan Award Nomination as well as Donkey in Shrek: The Musical and Judas in Jesus Christ Superstar, both with The Masquers, Inc.

Romeo and Juliet at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Other credits include: Phra Alack in The King and I at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Sonny in City of Angels at The Marriott Theatre; Ensemble in Miss Saigon at Paramount Theatre; Ensemble in Juno, and Blood and Gifts at TimeLine Theatre; Ryu in Maple and Vine at Next Theatre; Angus in MacBeth, and Puck in 50-minute Midsummer... at First Folio Theatre; Robert in Company at Brightside Theatre; and work with Writers’Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, and Red Tape Theatre. Regional work includes Toad in A Year with Frog and Toad at Cardinal Stage Company in Indiana. Television roles include Hundley in Chicago Fire on NBC. Peter received a BA in Theatre and Music Performance from North Central College.

Ava Thomann (Ensemble) is thrilled to be returning for her second production with Skylight Music Theatre. You may have seen her last in the Cabot Theatre as an ensemble member of La Cage Aux Folles. A proud Milwaukee native, Ava is a Marquette University graduate, where she studied Theatre Arts and Public Relations. She has performed with Sunset Playhouse, Off The Wall Theatre and Memories Dinner Theatre to name a few. She is also a founding member of The Summit Players, a traveling, seven member theatre company who present short, accessible, free Shakespeare workshops and performances to audiences around the state of Wisconsin. A whole lot of gratitude goes out to her family and friends for their constant love and encouragement.

Peter Sipla (The Mikado) is delighted to debut at Skylight Music Theatre in this production. Most recently, Peter was seen in the role of Peter in
WHO’S WHO IN THE CREATIVE TEAM

Austene Van (Director) is an actor, director, and choreographer. Penumbra Theatre company member credits include *The Owl Answers, Detroit ’67, Ain’t Misbehavin’, Dinah Was, Blues for an Alabama Sky, and Seven Guitars*. Austene has performed the title role in *Aida* at the Pantages with Theater Latté Da; Blanche Dubois in *A Street Car Named Desire, Henry IV, The Unsinkable Molly Brown* with Ten Thousand Things; *In The Next Room* at the Jungle Theatre; *Disgraced, Triuble In Mind, Gem of the Ocean, Crowns and A Christmas Carol* at Guthrie Theater; *Radio Golf* at IRT/ Cleveland Playhouse; *To Kill a Mockingbird* at Park Square; *Shrek the Musical, Once on This Island* at CTC; *Singing in the Rain* at Ordway. Recently directed *Intimate Apparel* at Ten Thousand Things, *Six Degrees of Separation* at Theatre in the Round Players; *Joan: Voices in the Fire* at Rarig Center; *Hot Chocolate, Gee’s Bend and Lady Day* at Park Square; *Lonely Soldier Monologues and A Civil War Christmas* at History Theatre; *Blues in the Night* at Ordway; *Ain’t Misbehavin’* at Capri, and *Black Nativity* at Penumbra. Artistic Director of New Dawn Theatre Productions.

Garry Q. Lewis (Choreographer) originally from Minneapolis, MN, has performed on Broadway in: *Anything Goes, Oh-Kay, Sophisticated Ladies, and The Wiz* as the scarecrow starring Stephanie Mills. Along with Broadway, Garry has done several national tours, industrials, commercials, and film. Garry was nominated for a CableACE award for his starring role as Puss in ‘Puss N’ Boots’, (MCA – Videocassette Inc.). Along with performing, Garry has choreographed shows throughout the country; The Illusion Theater, Hey City Theater, Penumbra Theatre in Minneapolis, MN, The Arizona Theater Company, and in Tokyo. Garry teaches in the Dance Department at Dreyfoos School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, FL and at NYU-New York University- The New Studio on Broadway for the high school summer program. Garry most recently performed as the scarecrow in Central Park in New York for the 40th anniversary of *The Wiz*. Directed and choreographed by Tony Award-winner George Faison.

J. Michael Duff (Music Director) Listed in Who’s Who In Entertainment, Mr. Duff is a composer, orchestrator, arranger and musical director who appeared on Broadway as the City Editor in *The News*. His credits as musical director and conductor include national tours of *West Side Story, Les Miserables, 42nd Street, Bob Fosse’s Dancin’, Starlight Express, CATS, Nunsense* and International tours of *Cinderella-Asia with Lea Salonga, 42nd Street-Moscow, The Sound of Music-Asia, The King and I-Asia and CATS-Tour of the Americas*. He was Resident Musical Director for six years at the Burt Reynolds Jupiter Theatre and at Marriott’s Lincolnshire Theatre. He is the composer of *Phantom of the Country Opera* (Joseph Jefferson Award nominee for Best New Work), published by Music Theatre International, *Rodeo* (ASCAP/ Disney Musical Theatre Workshop winner), *At Wit’s End* (Carbonell Award winner for Best New Work), *Ms. Cinderella* and one composer of *Female Problems: An Unhelpful Guide*.

Tim Lenihan (Conductor) is an active pianist and conductor in the Chicago area working with several theaters, including the Paramount Theatre (Annie, Miss Saigon, West Side Story, Mamma Mia, The Little Mermaid, Sweeney Todd, Cats), Drury Lane Theatre (Mame,
Sunset Boulevard, Camelot, West Side Story, Miss Saigon, Spamalot, Aida, Hairspray), Oriental Theatre (Newsies, Wicked, Billy Elliot), Auditorium Theatre (Priscilla Queen of the Desert) and Lyric Opera of Chicago (My Fair Lady). For the last six seasons, Tim has served as music director for Northern Sky Theater in Door County. He has also performed with the Kalamazoo Symphony, Northwest Indiana Symphony, Elgin Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta, and Chicago Civic Orchestra.

Sarah Brandner (Scenic and Lighting Designer) is excited to be working with Skylight Music Theatre. Recent and upcoming scenic and lighting designs include: Park Square Theatre: Cardboard Piano, Murder for Two; Theatre Mu: The Two Kids That Blow Shit Up, TOT: The Untold, Yet Spectacular Story of a Filipina) Hulk Hogan, FOB; Collide Dance Theatre: La Petit Moulin; Loudmouth Collective: The Testament of Mary, A Bright New Boise, Cul de Sac; Stages Theatre Co.: Madagascar, Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventures; Penumbra Theatre: Black Light, The Peculiar Patriot; The Guthrie Theatre: Intersections, Concrete Orange: An American Fable, Hidden People, part 1; Minnesota Opera: The Nightingale, The Elixir of Love; Recent exhibit Designs include: MN History Center: Exhibit Design: Penumbra Theatre at 40: Art, Race and a Nation on Stage, Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation, Exhibit Lighting: Toys of the 50s, 60s & 70s, Then, Now Wow. sarahabrandner.com

Zack Berinstein (Sound Designer) is a Chicago-based sound designer, audio engineer, and composer who is excited to be back at Skylight! In addition to recording and producing artists in the Midwest, his most recent sound design credits include Souvenir with Milwaukee Rep, La Cage Aux Folles with Skylight Music Theatre, Forty Two Stories with City Lit Theater, Jesus Hopped the A-Train and Little Flower of East Orange with Eclipse Theatre, and The Time of Your Life at The Artistic Home. You can find him on the internet at ZackBear.com.

Daniel J. Hanson (Production Stage Manager) previous Skylight credits include Sweeney Todd, Beauty and the Beast, I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change, La Cage Aux Folles, Violet, and Tosca. Recent stage management credits include: Spamilton: An American Parody (Royal George Theatre, Chicago, IL); Guys on Ice (Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Milwaukee, WI); The Snow (First Stage, Milwaukee WI); The Producers, The Addams Family, Avenue Q and The Color Purple (Mercury Theatre Chicago); Big Fish, All Shook Up (Theatre at the Center, Munster, IN). Some favorite stage management credits include A Year with Frog and Toad, The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins (Children’s Theatre Company, Minneapolis, MN), To Kill a Mockingbird, Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Park Square Theatre, St. Paul, MN); Queens of Burlesque (The History Theatre, St. Paul, MN); and Menopause the Musical (The Lab Theatre, Minneapolis, MN). Dan received his MFA in stage management from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association.

Brian C. Hemesath (Costume Designer) is a 2-time Emmy Award-winning designer for PBS’s Sesame Street. He spent 14 years at Saturday Night Live where he designed costumes for approximately 106 “digital shorts” with the Lonely Island boys including Dick in a Box. Hemesath was also assistant costume designer for the film John Wick 2. Broadway: Honeymoon in Vegas. Off Broadway: Disaster!, Unbroken Circle. Selected Regional: Marriott Lincolnshire: Honeymoon in Vegas, Old Globe Theatre: Guys and Dolls, Papermill Playhouse: Boeing Boeing, Smokey Joe’s Café, Pump Boys and Dinettes, High School Musical and the regional production of Honeymoon in Vegas. Asolo Rep: Guys and Dolls. Skylight Music Theatre: Chicago, The Rivals, Iolanthe. Brian received his MFA from Carnegie Mellon University and in 2015 was the recipient of the Irene Shariff Young Master award presented by TDF. Visit BrianHemesath.com. Thank you!
David H. Bell (Books and Lyrics) has directed over 40 productions at the Marriott Theatre alone since 1980. As Ford’s Theatre Artistic Director (1982-1988) in Washington D. C. he directed the world premieres of Elmer Gantry, Hot Mikado (author), and the annual A Christmas Carol (author). Among his National credits: Atlanta’s Alliance Theatre (Associate Artistic Director 1992-2001, over 20 productions), Chicago Shakespeare Theatre (As You Like It, A Comedy of Errors, Much Ado About Nothing, Taming of the Shrew) Long Wharf Theatre, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Coconut Grove Playhouse (Matador author, Don’t Stop the Carnival- Jimmy Buffett/Herman Wouk.) Internationally, David has opened productions in London, Paris, Berlin, Zurich, Vienna and the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. His awards include: 30 Joseph Jefferson nominations (Chicago won nine); Helen Hayes Award (D.C.), Lawrence Olivier Nomination (London), Dramalogue Award (L.A.), Mac and Bistro Awards (New York City), four Carbonall Nominations (Florida), two After Dark Awards (Chicago) and two National Endowment Playwrighting Awards.

Rob Bowman (Music Adapted and Arranged) concluded his sold-out run of Elaine Stritch: Singin’ Sondheim... One Song at a Time at the Cafe Carlyle. Their long-time collaboration has included her Tony Award-winning At Liberty, including its Grammy-nominated album and Emmy-winning HBO documentary, and acclaimed club acts at the Cafe Carlyle. From 1998-2003, he was the music director/conductor for the Broadway production of Chicago. Composer: several scores including Hot Mikado and A Christmas Carol. He has conducted numerous shows on and off Broadway, national tours and in regional theatres throughout the country.

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Wynonna, along with her band The Big Noise, will explore the past, present and future of Wynonna’s 33-year career on the 2017 Roots & Revival Tour.  
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Waukesha Choral Union  
WCU will feature Daniel Elder’s “Three Nocturnes” & Aaron Copeland’s “Old American Songs” at New Berlin Eisenhower High School at this opening concert.  
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The musical drama based on Victor Hugo’s famous novel about Quasimodo, the lonely bell ringer of Notre Dame de Paris.

FALL SERIES
Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra
Join the most successful and respected youth orchestra programs in the nation for their fall concert series!

THE CHERRY SISTERS REVISITED
Wisconsin Lutheran College
The Raabe Theatre will be transported back to the 1890s, where one of the most interesting musical acts touring at the time was the Cherry Sisters.

MUSIC OF THE 1960’S MAD MEN ERA
Wisconsin Philharmonic
A musical retrospective of the 1960’s is presented with the acclaimed Five by Design, known for their tight harmonies and comedic penchant.

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME
Waukesha Civic Theatre
October 27 - November 12
Margaret Brate Bryant
Civic Theatre
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FALL SERIES
Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra
November 1-19
Various Locations
www.mysymphony.org/new/

THE CHERRY SISTERS REVISITED
Wisconsin Lutheran College
November 3-12
Raabe Theatre
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Wisconsin Philharmonic
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