Albert Bergeret, Artistic Director

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE
or, The Slave of Duty

Libretto by Sir William S. Gilbert
Music by Sir Arthur Sullivan
First Performed at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, NY, U.S.A., December 31, 1879
Stage Direction: Albert Bergeret & David Auxier
Music Director: Albert Bergeret; Asst. Music Director: Andrea Stryker-Rodda
Scenic Design: Lou Anne Gilleland
Costume Design: Gail J. Wofford
Lighting Design: Benjamin Weill
Production Stage Manager: Joshua Strone
Assistant Stage Manager: Annette Dieli

The New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players Orchestra conducted by Albert Bergeret

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Major-General Stanley ................................................................. James Mills*
The Pirate King ........................................................................... David Wannen*
Samuel (His Lieutenant) .............................................................. David Macaluso*
Frederic (The Pirate Apprentice) .................................................. Alex Corson
Sergeant of Police ........................................................................ David Auxier*
Mabel (Major-General Stanley’s Wards) ........................................ Sarah Caldwell Smith*
Edith ......................................................................................... Erika Person*
Kate ............................................................................................ Katie Hall
Isabel ......................................................................................... Laura Sudduth*
Ruth (Pirate Maid-of-all-work) ...................................................... Angela Christine Smith*

Ensemble of Pirates, Police, and General Stanley’s Wards
Elisabeth Cernadas*, Brooke Collins*, Louis Dall’Ava*, Lauren Frankovich*,
Michael Galante, Merrill Grant*, Andy Herr*, Sarah Hutchison*, Lance Olds*,
Chris-Ian Sanchez*, Cameron Smith, Matthew Wages*, Emily Wright*

Dance Captain: David Auxier*

*These Actors and Stage Managers are members of Actor’s Equity Association,
the Union of professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

SCENES

ACT I - A Rocky Seashore on the Coast of Cornwall
ACT II - A Ruined Chapel by Moonlight

There will be one fifteen minute intermission.
Latecomers will be seated at an appropriate interval in the performance

COMPANY AND PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director/General Manager .............................................. Albert Bergeret
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device for such photographing or sound recording is prohibited.
When Frederic was still a little boy, his nurse (Ruth) was told to apprentice him to become a pilot. She heard the word incorrectly and apprenticed him to a band of pirates, remaining with them herself as a maid-of-all-work. Although Frederic loathed the trade to which he had thus been bound, he dutifully served. As the curtain rises, his indentures are up and he announces his intention to leave the band and devote himself to the extermination of piracy. He urges the pirates to join him in embracing a more lawful calling, but they refuse. Ruth, however, wishes to become his wife. Having seen but few women during his pirate life at sea, Frederic hesitates to accept a woman so much older than himself, but he finally consents to take her.

Just then a group of girls, all the wards of Major-General Stanley, happen upon the scene. Frederic sees their beauty - and Ruth’s plainness - and renounces her. Of these girls, Mabel takes a particular interest in Frederic, and he in her. The other girls are seized by the pirates and threatened with immediate marriage. When the Major-General arrives, he can dissuade the pirates only by a ruse: he tells them that he is an orphan, and so works upon their sympathies that they let him and his wards go free.

During the ensuing days and nights, however, this lie troubles the Major-General’s conscience. He sits brooding over it at night in a ruined chapel. He is consoled by his wards’ sympathy and Frederic’s plan of immediately leading a band of police against the pirates. The police are reluctant, but Frederic is still enthusiastic.

Meanwhile the Pirate King and Ruth seek out Frederic with surprising news. They have discovered that his indentures were to run until his twenty first birthday, and--as he was born in Leap Year on February 29th--he has really had as yet only five birthdays. Obeying the dictates of his strong sense of duty, he immediately rejoins the pirates and tells them of the deception that has been practiced upon them by Major-General Stanley. The Pirate King and Ruth storm off threatening revenge, and Frederic sadly bids Mabel farewell.

When Mabel tells the police of this change they comment on their unfortunate lot, then decide to hide. The pirates storm the chapel, seize the Major-General, and easily defeat the unarmed policemen; however, when requested to yield “in Queen Victoria’s name,” they do so at once. Ruth reveals that these apparently lawless pirates are “all noblemen who have gone wrong.” The Major-General pardons all and allows them to marry his wards.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

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MUSICAL NUMBERS

OVERTURE

ACT I

“POUR, O POUR THE PIRATE SHERRY” (Opening Chorus and Solo) ..........Pirates and Samuel

“WHEN FREDERIC WAS A LITTLE LAD” (Solo) .................................................Ruth

“OH, BETTER FAR TO LIVE AND DIE” (Solo and Chorus) .........................Pirate King and Pirates

“OH, FALSE ONE, YOU HAVE DECEIVED ME!” (Recitative and Duet) .........Frederic and Ruth

“CLIMBING OVER ROCKY MOUNTAIN” (Chorus and Solos) .................Girls, Edith, and Kate

“STOP, LADIES, PRAY!” (Recitative and Chorus) .....................................Frederic, Edith, Kate, and Girls

“OH, IS THERE NOT ONE MAIDEN BREAST”
(Solos and Chorus) .....................................................................................Frederic, Mabel, and Girls

“POOR WANDERING ONE!” (Solo and Chorus) ............................................Mabel and Girls

“What Ought We to Do” (Solos and Chorus) ..............................................Edith, Kate, and Girls

“How Beautifully Blue the Sky”
(Chattering Chorus and Duet) ......................................................................Girls, Mabel, and Frederic

“STAY, WE MUST NOT LOSE OUR SENSES”
(Recitative and Chorus) ..............................................................................Frederic, Girls, and Pirates

“HOLD, MONSTERS!”
(Recitative and Chorus) ..............................................................................Mabel, Samuel, Major-General, Girls, and Pirates

“I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major-General”
(Solo and Chorus) .....................................................................................Major-General, Girls, and Pirates

“OH, MEN OF DARK AND DISMAL FATE” (Finale of Act 1) ......................Ensemble

ACT II

“OH, DRY THE GLISTENING TEAR” (Opening Chorus and Solo) .................Girls and Mabel

“THEN, FREDERIC, LET YOUR ESCORT LION-HEARTED”
(Recitative) .................................................................................................Major-General and Frederic

“When the Foeman Bares His Steel”
(Solos and Chorus) ......................................................................................Sergeant, Mabel, Edith, Kate, Major-General, Police, and Girls

“Now for the Pirates’ Lair!” (Recitative) ....................................................Frederic, Pirate King, and Ruth

“When You Had Left Our Pirate Fold”
(Solos, Trio, and Chant) ...............................................................................Ruth, Frederic, and Pirate King

“Away, Away! My Heart’s on Fire” (Trio) .....................................................Ruth, Frederic, and Pirate King

“All Is Prepared” (Recitative) ......................................................................Mabel and Frederic

“No, I Am Brave!” (Recitative, Solo, and Chorus) .......................................Mabel, Sergeant, and Police

“When a Felon’s Not Engaged in His Employment”
(Solo and Chorus) ......................................................................................Sergeant and Police

“A Rollicking Band of Pirates We” (Chorus and Solo) ...............................Pirates, Sergeant, and Police

“With Cat-Like Tread, Upon Our Prey We Steal”
(Chorus and Solo) ......................................................................................Pirates, Police, and Samuel

“Hush, Hush! Not a Word”
(Recitative, Chorus, and Solo) .....................................................................Frederic, Pirates, Police, and Major-General

“Sighing Softly to the River”
(Ballad and Finale of Act II) ........................................................................Major-General and Ensemble
DAVID AUXIER (Sergeant of Police)
Isaac Asimov Award Recipient for Artistic Achievement 2015-16. Favorite NYGASP roles: Captain Corcoran (Pinafore), Sergeant (Pirates), Pish-Tush (Mikado). Mr. Auxier has been co-director and company choreographer since 2010 and has worked in or on all 13 G&S operas. He conceived and directed last year’s critically acclaimed, reimagined production of The Mikado and the award-winning hit G&S cabaret revue I’ve Got a Little Twist, and wrote the book for NYGASP’s original G&S à la Carte! David is also a MAC Award nominated songwriter and is currently penning an all-original musical. www.davidauxier.com

ELISABETH CERNADAS (Ensemble)
Off- Broadway: New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players at New York City Center - Pirates of Penzance (Kate), The Mikado, HMS Pinafore, also national tours; Ruddigore, Iolanthe, Utopia Limited, The Grand Duke (Berthe), Patience, Yeomen of the Guard. Regional: Godspell (Joanne), The Full Monty (Estelle), Cinderella (Cinderella) Into The Woods (The Baker’s Wife), Bye Bye Birdie (Mayor’s Wife); New York Fringe Festival, New York Musical Theater Festival, Algonquin Arts Theater, Morgan Wixon Theater, Jarvis Conservatory, Bay Area Classical Harmonies, Ivoryton Playhouse, Shakespeare Santa Cruz. International: Festival Lyrique en Mer, Belle Ile (France), Spoleto Festival (Italy) The International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival (England).

BROOKE COLLINS (Ensemble) has performed the entire G&S canon! Favorite roles include Josephine (H.M.S. Pinafore), Angelina (Trial by Jury), Fiametta (The Gondoliers) and Phylla (Utopia, Limited). She has received awards from the Commission on Presidential Scholars in the Arts, the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Brooke attended the Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Harvard University, and the Peabody Conservatory. Her children, Isadora (6) and Asher (3) are huge NYGASP fans.

ALEX CORSON (Frederic) is excited to return for his fifth year with NYGASP after his debut in The Sorcerer in 2012. Appearing in operas and operettas with companies such as Light Opera of New Jersey, New Jersey State Opera, and New Jersey Youth Theatre, credits include Ernesto (Don Pasquale), Frederic (Pirates of Penzance), Ralph (H.M.S. Pinafore), Marco (The Gondoliers), Monostatos (The Magic Flute), Mercury/Orpheus (Orpheus in the Underworld), and Tony (West Side Story).

LOUIS DALL’AVA (Ensemble) has performed 29 principal G&S roles, 21 of those with NYGASP. Some of his favorite NYGASP credits include Don Alhambra del Bolero (The Gondoliers), Pooh-Bah (Mikado), the little klutzy cop as well as the Pirate King (The Pirates of Penzance), and Dick Deadeye (H.M.S. Pinafore). Pooh-Bah with Mobile Opera and Sorg Opera. Directing: The Theatre at Monmouth (ME), Opera Naples & Gulfshore Opera (FL), Opera Northeast. Mr. Dall’Ava is the 2005–06 recipient of NYGASP’s Isaac Asimov Award for Artistic Achievement.

LAUREN FRANKOVICH (Ensemble) NYGASP since 2009, including: The Mikado (Peep-Bo), Princess Ida (Sacharissa), The Sorcerer (covering Constance), Patience, Iolanthe, and The Pirates of Penzance. Lauren made her Carnegie Hall solo debut in 2014 performing “Make Our Garden Grow” with EVUSA and the NY Pops. Other credits include: Babes in Toyland (The Little Orchestra Society), Le nozze di Figaro (Barbarina), Fairy Queen (Fairy), West Side Story (Maria), and Gypsy (Baby June). TV: Celebrity Ghost Stories (Debbie Matenopoulos); M.M. Manhattan School of Music, B.M. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

MICHAEL GALANTE (Ensemble) NYGASP since 1987! Michael has performed the entire G&S canon and The Rose of Persia with NYGASP. Credits include Lord Dramaleigh in Utopia, Limited, and Francesco in The Gondoliers. Other theatre credits include: Flute
(A Midsummer Night’s Dream), Fenton (The Merry Wives of Windsor), Lennie (Of Mice and Men) and Moonface (Anything Goes). Michael was the 2008-2009 recipient of NYGASP’s Isaac Asimov Award for Artistic Achievement.

MERRILL GRANT (Ensemble) is thrilled to join NYGASP for her third season! She has performed Yum-Yum in The Mikado in Indianapolis, and sang and danced in several operas as a member of the Opera Chorus with Indianapolis Opera. She performed operetta arias in Graz, Austria and a Spanish Zarzuela in Napa Valley. In New York, she has participated in developing new works for musical theatre in many Equity readings, and with the NYMF and Fringe festivals. Her cabaret act on Shirley Temple played New York and the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland.

KATIE HALL (Kate) As a NYGASP alto since the turn of the century, Katie is thrilled to be reprising her role of Kate. Past roles include Chloe (Princess Ida), Ruth (Ruddigore) and other show-stealing turns as Contadina, Yeowoman, Titiputian, South Pacific Island Viviparian, General’s Daughter, Admiral’s Aunt, Sultan’s Sister-Wife and an assortment of Bridesmaids (Amateur and Pro). Katie is honored to be this year’s recipient of NYGASP’s Isaac Asimov Award.

ANDY HERR (Ensemble) NYGASP credits include Pooh-Bah (The Mikado), Synthius (Princess Ida), Pirates of Penzance, HMS Pinafore, Ruddigore, and The Gondoliers. Other past credits include: Midsummer Night’s Dream (Bottom), Play On (Billy), Amigo Duende (Barrigon), Barefoot in the Park (Paul), among others. He is also a proud member of AEA. Enjoy the show!

SARAH HUTCHISON (Ensemble) Proud NYGASPer since 2009! She was last seen as Lady Psyche in Princess Ida, as well as Kate (Yeomen of the Guard), Olga (Grand Duke), and in 8 additional G&S productions in NYC and on tour. Her most exciting “strange adventure” took her to China as soloist for the Hollywood Concert Orchestra’s 2013-2014 China tour, along with fellow NYGASPer Chris-lan Sanchez. Graduate of Muhlenberg College. Thanks to my amazing family & friends for their love and support! Proud member of Actors’ Equity. “Keep Calm & Patter On...”

DAVID MACALUSO (Samuel) A graduate of Manhattan School of Music, David has performed in operas, musicals, new works and recordings throughout the US, Off-Broadway & abroad. Most recently he was managing producer, performer & collaborative director in NYGASP’s sold out Cox & Box. Credits include Sir Joseph/Buttercup in NY Drama Desk Award-nominated Pinafore (Vortex Theater) and Robin Oakapple/co-producer of the internationally-acclaimed House of Murgatroyd at the International G&S Festival in England. Favorite roles include Strephon, Grosvenor, Luiz, Che (Evita), Sparky (Forever Plaid), Motel (Fiddler), Molina (Spiderwoman), Falke (Fledermaus).

JAMES MILLS (Major-General Stanley) celebrated his 10th season with NYGASP last year by completing the G&S canon. Recently seen as John Wellington Wells (The Sorcerer), favorite G&S roles include the Lord Chancellor (Iolanthe), Reginald Bunthorne (Patience), Jack Point (The Yeomen of the Guard), and Major-General Stanley (The Pirates of Penzance). In addition to performing, James is a Stage Director for the College Light Opera Company in Falmouth, MA where he recently mounted productions of The Yeomen of the Guard, Patience, and The Hunchback of Notre Dame. He is a proud member of AEA.

LANCE OLDS (Ensemble) NYGASP since 1997: 11 of the 13 (all but Grand Duke and Sorcerer). Lance married company member Lauren Wenegrat 10 years ago and they are the proud parents of Anwyn and Declan. First national tour Footloose (understudied Christian Borle). Off-Broadway: Mark Twain’s Blues. Regional: Kennedy Center, Seattle Rep, Weston Playhouse. Film/TV: MTV’s Eye WHO’S WHO IN THE CAST cont.
Candy, Far From Heaven, ballroom danced in Enchanted, Stepford Wives, Mona Lisa Smile, Kate & Leopold. On-camera and singer/songwriter clips at www.lanceolds.com

ERIKA PERSON (Edith) debuted with NYGASP as Iolanthe in 2004. She has since sung Tessa (Gondoliers), Phoebe (Yeomen), Pitti-Sing (Mikado), Lady Angela (Patience), Dame Hannah (Ruddigore), Hebe (Pinafore), and Lady Sophy (Utopia, Ltd.), and received NYGASP’s 2014 Isaac Asimov Award. She has sung at Carnegie Hall, New York City Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Symphony Space, and with opera companies across the country. With NYGASP, she has sung in theaters across the U.S., and made international debuts in Canada and England. Erika resides and teaches voice in the Los Angeles area. www.erikaperson.com

CHRIS-IAN SANCHEZ (Ensemble) NYGASP since 2004: Has performed the entire G&S canon with this Company! Other credits include Passing It On (Coconut Grove Playhouse with Len Cariou), Gastone in La Traviata (Queens Symphony Orchestra), Thuy in Miss Saigon (Actor’s Playhouse- Carbonell Nomination, Virginia Music Theatre, Carousel Dinner Theatre and Sunlight Theatre!), Mereb (Aida), Judah (Joseph), Roger (Grease) and Tommy Keeler in Annie Get Your Gun (Surflight Theatre), and James the Elder in Jesus Christ Superstar (K.C. Starlight Theatre). Worked with NY City Opera in Dead Man Walking, Carmen and L’Etoile.

SARAH CALDWELL SMITH (Mabel) Debut with NYGASP: Mabel (The Pirates of Penzance) at New York City Center. Ms. Smith’s principal roles with the company include the title role in Patience, Yum-Yum (The Mikado), Rose Maybud (Ruddigore), Gianetta (The Gondoliers), and Constance (The Sorcerer), among others. Sarah also tours with NYGASP’s award-winning cabaret, I’ve Got A Little Twist. NYC: City Center Encores! (Music in the Air), VHRP LIVE! (title roles in Naughty Marietta and The Fortune Teller, Grace Holbrook in The Princess Pat, Gretchen in The Red Mill), Avery Fisher solo debut as Infant Casmira (Candide) with National Chorale, Blondchen (Die Entführung aus dem Seraglio).

ANGELA CHRISTINE SMITH (Ruth) most recently appeared in the title role of Princess Pat with Victor Herbert Renaissance Project LIVE!. G&S roles: Queen of the Fairies, Buttercup, Ruth, Katisha, Lady Blanche, Lady Jane, Dame Carruthers, Duchess of Plaza-Toro, and Baroness von Krakenfeldt. Additional credits: Proud cast member of NYGASP’s award-winning cabaret I’ve Got A Little Twist; 2014 International G&S Festival in Harrogate, England; recipient of the Isaac Asimov Award for Artistic Achievement; performances with Ardea Arts, Opera Singers Initiative, Belleayre Festival Opera, Light Opera of New York (LOONY), Opera Saratoga and Opera Delaware.

CAMERON SMITH (Ensemble) has sung Nanki-Poo, Ralph Rackstraw, Edwin, and Lord Toller with NYGASP; other credits include Lake George Opera, Tanglewood, and Caramoor. M.M. Manhattan School of Music. He is a marathoner and triathlete, plays guitar and drums, brews his own beer, and takes care of two amazing daughters!!

LAURA SUDDUTH (Isabel) NYGASP since 2012. Laura made her NYGASP debut in The Mikado at New York City Center and is thrilled to be back. Favorite roles performed include Anne in A Little Night Music, Amor in L’Incoronazione di Poppea, Peep-Bo in The Mikado and Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro (Pacific Opera Theatre-UOP), Despina in Così Fan Tutte and Gianetta in L’elisir d’Amore (UMKC Opera), and Sandy in The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (Santa Rosa Summer Repertory Theatre), Regional Theatre: Kansas City Repertory Theatre (Saved! The Musical), The Coterie Theatre (The Outsiders).

MATTHEW WAGES (Ensemble) began his professional endeavors in Opera Comique
with NYGASP, and completed the entire G&S canon last season as Florian (Princess Ida). Recent ‘dramatis personae’: Bouncer (Sullivan’s Cox & Box), Lord Mountararat (Iolanthe), Giuseppe Palmieri (Gondoliers), Major Murgatroyd (Patience), Dick Deadeye & Bill Bobstay (H.M.S. Pinafore), Sergeant of Police & Samuel (Pirates of Penzance), and Roderic (Ruddygore: Revisited) at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, U.K.; Principal Bass with VHRP, Live!, Sandor (The Fortune Teller), Romero (The Serenade). Proud member of AEA and SAG/AFTRA. www.matthewwages.com

DAVID WANNEN (The Pirate King)
NYGASP since 2004. NYGASP favorites include The Pirate King (The Pirates of Penzance), Wilfred Shadbolt (The Yeomen of the Guard), Colonel Calverley (Patience), Paramount (Utopia), Pvt. Willis (Iolanthe), Sultan (The Rose of Persia), Arac (Princess Ida), Bill Bobstay (H.M.S. Pinafore) and the title role in The Mikado. Tours: Beauty and the Beast (Beast u/s), Camelot with the late Robert Goulet (Lancelot u/s); Regional: Nominated Best Featured Actor by Philadelphia Inquirer for Camelot with Media Theater. Producer, 2017 The Mikado; Co-Producer & Original Cast, I’ve Got a Little Twist! Executive Director, NYGASP. David would like to send his love to his family: Cole, Sam, Olivia, Jamé!

EMILY WRIGHT (Ensemble) NYGASP since 2009. Emily has performed most of the Gilbert & Sullivan Canon, and choreographed community productions of The Pirates of Penzance and The Mikado. She is well-versed in many music genres, and performs nationally in concert work alongside her husband, tenor, Vincent Ricciardi. Her favorite musical theatre roles include: Eliza Doolittle (My Fair Lady), Julie Jordan (Carousel), and Lucy (You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown). But her favorite role is being Mom to Mikey. Proud member of AEA. www.eandventertainment.com
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WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY

ALBERT BERGERET (Artistic Director/General Manager) Mr. Bergeret is a career-long professional specialist in the works of Gilbert & Sullivan, having performed, staged, conducted and designed every opera in the repertoire over a 40 year period. He has directed G&S productions for university students and residency programs for elementary schools. He has been hailed as “The leading custodian of the G&S classics” by New York Magazine (Peter Davis) and his work as both stage and musical director has been widely acclaimed in the press both in New York and on tour throughout the United States, Canada, and the UK. Mr. Bergeret founded NYGASP in 1974 and has served as Artistic Director/General Manager since its inception. He has conducted and staged all 13 of the works in the G&S canon as well as the company’s smash hit production of George Gershwin’s Of Thee I Sing. He has conducted programs with the Buffalo Philharmonic, Orchestra London in Ontario Canada, Northwest Indiana Symphony and the Erie Philharmonic in a program featuring Metropolitan Opera baritone Robert Goodloe. With NYGASP he has also conducted and directed such diverse personalities as Hal Linden, Steve Allen, John Astin, Pat Carroll, Noel Harrison, John Rubenstein, Louis Quilico, Lando Bartolini, and John Reed, O.B.E.

JOSHUA STRONE (Production Stage Manager) is a graduate of University of Miami in Theatre Arts, Motion Pictures, and Music Business and Entertainment Industries (2015). Joshua performed with NYGASP in his younger years as “Drummer Boy” in Gondoliers and “Young Yeoman” in Yeomen of the Guard. After spending 2 years as House Manager and Event Services Coordinator as a part of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts.

ANNETTE DIELI (Assistant Stage Manager) Credits include: Hartford Stage Co. (running crew), Bronx Opera (props, costume assistant), Artistic Director of her own puppet company, assistant stage manager and wardrobe for NYGASP at City Center and touring venues. Stage manager for Beshert, an original musical by Ari Gold, for the NYMTF, 2012. In 2009 she was a Venue Director for NY Fringe Festival.

BENJAMIN WEILL (Lighting Designer) Benjamin Weill thrilled to be back for his fourth season as resident lighting designer for NYGASP. He is the recent recipient of the BroadwayWorld New Jersey award for Best Lighting Design of a Musical. He has designed touring and sit-down shows on both coasts, including: The Pirates of Penzance, HMS Pinafore, Fiddler on the Roof, Les Miserables, Ruddigore, South Pacific, ...Charlie Brown, Songs for a New World, The Diary of Anne Frank, Into the Woods, Book of Days, The Crucible, Cloud 9, Cyrano de Bergerac, and Lorca in a Green. www.benjaminweilldesign.com

GAIL J. WOFFORD (Costume Designer/Co-Founder of NYGASP) holds a Masters of Arts in Theatre Arts from Texas Tech University. As resident costume designer she designed and constructed costumes for The Mikado, The Pirates of Penzance, H.M.S. Pinafore, The Yeomen of the Guard, Iolanthe, Trial by Jury and other operettas. Gail was Costume Coordinator for N.J. State Opera for 12 years and head of wardrobe for the NY Grand Opera. She has executed projects for WNET, Channel 13, National Tour of Dreamgirls, the film Mission Apollo and worked with numerous opera companies throughout the US.
The Pirates of Penzance hardly needs an introduction. Long before Joe Papp’s Broadway production and major motion picture added renewed popularity, this engaging operetta had established itself as one of the best loved pieces of musical theatre in the English speaking world.

The Pirates of Penzance was the only Gilbert & Sullivan opus to receive its premiere here in the USA. In a vain attempt to secure an international copyright for their work, the celebrated team brought their fifth collaboration to The Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York in December of 1879. The title might very well have been inspired by the many “pirated” (and therefore not profitable to G&S) productions of H.M.S. Pinafore which had preceded them across the Atlantic. Several such productions ran concurrently in New York, clearly establishing the American appreciation for this uniquely British art form. Perhaps because they were in the public domain from the outset (at least here in the States), these works have rarely been absent from the boards ever since.

The history of Pirates is notable for several other reasons as well. On the voyage across the ocean, Sullivan misplaced his musical score and had to recreate all of the music from memory. His composition for the women’s entrance eluded him, so he substituted a similar chorus from the never published score of Thespis. As a result, “Climbing Over Rocky Mountain” is the only authentic chorus in existence from that lost score. With the rousing ensemble number “When the Foeman Bares His Steel”, Sullivan perfected the double chorus technique which was to become one of his hallmarks. Two distinct choral themes are introduced separately and then overlapped for a dramatic musical climax. Gilbert also brought to the foreground for the first time his frequent lampooning of the British Aristocracy, with direct references to Queen Victoria and the Peerage. Then of course “I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major-General” raised the art of the patter song to an all time high. This song has been parodied in numerous product commercials (Campbell’s Soup, Handiwipes, and The New York Times come to mind immediately), has been frequently used as an elocution exercise for speech students, and was once employed by comedian Tom Lehrer to set a list of all the elements from the periodic table!

The score for Pirates is as effervescent as its characters. Sullivan’s reference to grand opera (and Verdi in particular) is everywhere, most notably in Mabel’s aria “Poor Wand’ring One”, which is a direct parody of Violetta’s “Sempre Libera” from La Traviata - in the same key and with the identical cadenza. Yet another layer of imitation enters the picture when Sullivan’s
take on the Anvil Chorus in *Il Trovatore*, “Come Friends Who Plough the Sea”, later becomes the tune for the popular camp song “Hail, Hail the Gang’s All Here”. These examples refer to well known moments, however, in many other Gilbert & Sullivan settings the parody remains more memorable than its original source!

Children have always been attracted to *Pirates* because of the child like behavior of these gentle souls and their earnest apprentice. Historically the idea of “noblemen who have gone wrong” is not only familiar child’s play but also close to the truth. Most famous “pirates” were political or social outcasts from the upper classes. Gilbert’s satiric and deliberately silly ending actually has real historic validity! From a performing company’s perspective *Pirates* has many charms. First and foremost is the predominant role that the chorus plays, and the opportunity for individual characterizations within the ensembles. The interaction between the various groups of pirates, policemen, and daughters is particularly playful and always delights both the audience and the cast participants. Another colorful aspect is the wide range of the vocal parts, from the very high coloratura soprano of Mabel and the lyric tenor of Frederic, to the growly low bass of the policemen. In the first production of *Pirates* in which I performed back in college, I sang first tenor in the first act and second bass in the second act because I could actually hit both extremes! It is an oddity of the printed score that the Major-General is listed as singing with the basses at certain points and with the tenors at other times - certainly not a musical necessity and rarely followed in practice.

To describe *Pirates* as a romp is surely no exaggeration. It’s representation of naïveté, romance, and sentiment - all mixed with wit and sophisticated verbal by play - leaves the audience and performers alike with a giddy sense of joy that is timeless. I’m sure that *Pirates* will remain a staple of the G&S canon for as long as these classic operettas continue to enthral the child in all of us!

Now in its forty-third year of operation, New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players (NYGASP) is America’s preeminent professional Gilbert & Sullivan repertory ensemble. Under the dynamic leadership of Artistic Director Albert Bergeret, who has been hailed as “the leading custodian of the G&S classics” by *New York Magazine*, NYGASP has created its own special niche in the cultural mosaic of New York City and the nation. Since its founding in 1974, the company has presented over 2000 performances of the G&S masterpieces throughout the United States, Canada, and the U.K. captivating audiences of all ages. NYGASP’s CD “Oh, Joy! Oh, Rapture!” contains an exuberant selection of G&S highlights and is available for purchase at www.nygasp.org or for download on iTunes.

Mr. Bergeret’s vision for his company’s mission is clear: to build and maintain an ensemble of professional repertory singers, actors, dancers, and musicians dedicated to bringing quality performances of the Gilbert & Sullivan masterpieces to as wide an audience as possible. To do so he has developed a unique blend of creative spontaneity and classical precision which is neither revisionist in nature nor mired in the rigidity of the more typical view of “tradition”. NYGASP’s productions are charged with contemporary energy while retaining that traditional respect for the shows themselves which is so important to Gilbert & Sullivan enthusiasts. The use of elaborate, but relevant, choreography and movement is a particularly important element. Where possible, topical references from the nineteenth century are updated when the original intent would be lost on a modern musical theatre audience, but without disturbing the shape or scope of the material as written. Gilbert’s satire of human foibles and sophisticated wit remain intact, while Sullivan’s evocative scores, which need no revision at all, are given the full range of vocal and orchestral color for which they call.

The company has in its repertory thirteen different complete G&S operettas (cast,
INTRODUCTION TO THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE cont.

orchestra and crew of 50-80 people), special versions of the most popular operettas designed for children’s audiences, and a variety of charming concert programs created especially for NYGASP’s “Wand’ring Minstrels” ensemble.

The company’s recognition and stature continue to grow. In January of 2002 the company mounted its first triumphant season at New York’s venerable City Center, playing 3 of its most popular productions to over 20,000 G&S enthusiasts in 3 weeks. NYGASP has now played a total of 9 seasons on the City Center stage. The company makes an annual appearance at Wolf Trap Park in Vienna, Virginia where a loyal and exuberant audience of over 5,000 attends each performance.

NYGASP’s annual New York season has included performances at the Peter Norton Symphony Space on Manhattan’s Upper West Side since 1978. NYGASP is performing at two venues for the 2017-18 season, the Marjorie S. Deane Little Theatre and the Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College. Productions include The Sorcerer, H.M.S. Pinafore and Ruddigore.

The company’s celebrated ensemble of G&S experts, developed by introducing new singers each year from New York’s immense pool of vocal and theatrical talent, has collaborated with such guest artists as world-renowned G&S exponent the late John Reed, O.B.E. in numerous comic baritone roles, Tony winner John Rubinstein and Frank Gorshin both as King Gama in Princess Ida, John Astin as Sir Joseph in H.M.S. Pinafore, Hal Linden and Noel Harrison as the Major General in The Pirates of Penzance, Pat Carroll as Little Buttercup in H.M.S. Pinafore, and Steve Allen as The Mikado.

The company has also produced a unique cabaret act. I’ve Got a Little Twist, created and directed by NYGASP principal David Auxier, won a 2010 Bistro Award, is currently touring throughout the country, and appeared Lincoln Center’s 2011 Atrium series. “Take Gilbert & Sullivan, add a TWIST of Broadway, and stir!” is Twist’s recipe. Highlighting Musical Theatre’s roots in Gilbert & Sullivan, the show is entertaining for all ages.

In honor of NYGASP’s 25th anniversary, a dedicated fund and annual award for artistic achievement were established in the name of a noted and much loved Gilbert & Sullivan fan, the late Isaac Asimov who was a devoted fan of the company’s work. To date, 13 dedicated NYGASP artists have been honored with the award.

Touring activities continue throughout the year, frequently featuring productions from the New York season. In June 2010 NYGASP was part of the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Gettysburg, PA. The company returned in August 2014 to the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, England. NYGASP’s 2018 tours brings the company to venues throughout the West and Midwest.

Educational outreach and other special programs have been presented in theatres, schools, hospitals, and nursing homes all over the country. During the New York season the company gives full-scale performances of a popular Gilbert & Sullivan classic during school hours for student audiences of diverse ethnic backgrounds ranging in age from second grade through high school. Specially prepared study materials for these performances are provided to the schools in advance. This program is made possible, and has reached over 30,000 students in eight seasons, through the generosity of Wine Spectator Magazine and the Lowey Family Foundation. The company has also been featured as part of Lincoln Center’s “Meet the Artist” program.
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The Local Legends program honors individuals and organizations who lead by example in their support of the arts and community engagement. We want to acknowledge those who wish to create a legacy through a transformative gift of $100,000 or more to Overture and our community.

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- An anonymous couple because they believe Overture is a beautiful space that everyone should be able to enjoy

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