

Savoyardage

The newsletter of the Madison Savoyards, Ltd.

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue #87 - April 2007

2007 Performance Schedule

A Double Bill:
*The Sorcerer and
Cox & Box*

Music Hall

Park Street at
State - foot of
Bascom Hill

Friday, July 20 - 7:30
Saturday, July 21 - 7:30
Sunday, July 22 - 3:00

Friday, July 27 - 7:30
Saturday, July 28 - 7:30
Sunday, July 29 - 3:00



Winter Spells

Winter Spells, the 2007 midwinter concert of the Madison Savoyards, Ltd. was performed February 9 at the Unitarian Meeting House.

Fans of Gilbert and Sullivan gathered for their annual midwinter gathering to hear past and future cast members perform selections from the G&S canon. After the performance, everyone enjoyed refreshments and good conversation.

The Program

The program was based on the theme of spells in honor of the 2007 production of *The Sorcerer*

The first group was titled *The Spell of Rapture* and included Oh, Rapture from *The Gondoliers*, Oh Rapture Unrestrained from *Utopia, Ltd*, The Magnet and the Churn from *Patience*, Stay Frederic Stay from *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Oh Joy, O Rapture Unforeseen from *HMS Pinafore*.

The second group under the title *The Spell of Words* included None Shall Part Us from *Iolanthe*, Swear Thou the Jury from *Trial by Jury*, Oh Minerva, Hear Me from *Princess Ida*, Sigh, Kneel, and Weep from *Patience*, and Mi-ya-sa-Ma and A More Humane Mikado from the *Mikado*.

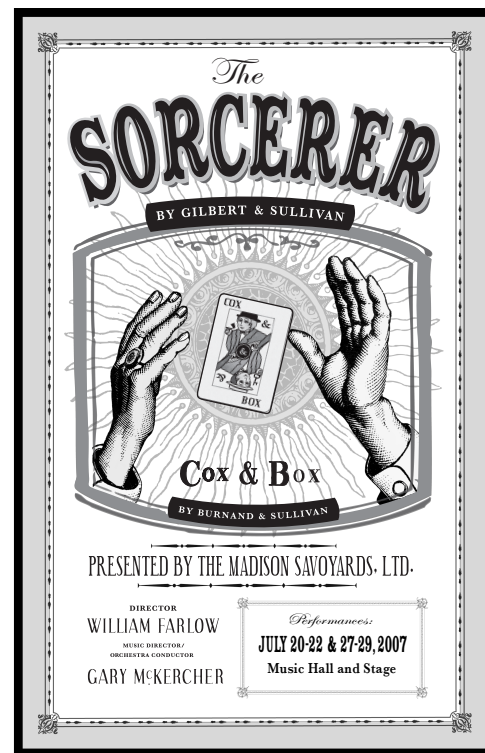
After the intermission and G&S Jeopardy session, the final group was entitled *Love Spells* and was drawn from *The Sorcerer*: For Love Alone, a scene from the first act of the Madison Savoyards school production of *The Sorcerer*, and finally Now to the Banquet we Press. Appropriately, after Now to the Banquet we Press, everyone pressed to the refreshment tables. The audience served as the chorus and was rehearsed by Terry Kiss Frank. John Kruse planned the program and assembled the cast.

Cast members included in the program:

Amanda DePons, Christopher Smith, Terry Kiss Frank, John Kruse, Wendy Rowe, James Rowe, Paul Bushland, Jill Woodhouse, Joel Burcham, and Nick Schweitzer who was a last minute substitute for Christiaan Smith-Kotlarek, who was ill. Ted Reinke was the accompanist.

The Sorcerer

Gilbert and Sullivan's first collaboration, *Thespis* (1871-2), was put together in less than three weeks and was produced at the Gaiety Theater after a week's rehearsal. There was no dress rehearsal and it ran 80 nights. Although the score has been lost, one of the numbers survives in *The Pirates of Penzance*. The producer, Richard



D'Oyly Carte, attended a performance of *Thespis* and it apparently made an impression because in 1875 when D'Oyly Carte asked Gilbert if he could write something as a companion piece to Offenbach's *La Perichole*, Gilbert replied that he had written a short opera about a breach of promise trial that he planned to have scored by Carl Rosa but the death of Carl Rosa's wife, the intended lead soprano, had shelved the project. Gilbert said he would take it up with Carl Rosa. D'Oyly Carte suggested Gilbert take it to Sullivan instead which Gilbert immediately did. Thus *Trial by Jury* was born. The success of *Trial by Jury* led D'Oyly Carte to suggest Gilbert and Sullivan write a full length opera. Their earlier experiences had convinced both Gilbert and Sullivan that they needed to have absolute artistic control including casting, stage direction, and proper time and facilities for rehearsal. Gilbert had developed an adversity to actors and singers with established reputations sometimes leading to long running feuds and legal actions. While rehearsing one of his plays in 1874, one actress missed the chair while trying to sit and ended up hitting the floor with a bump. Gilbert remarked, "Very good, very good. I always thought you would make an impression on the stage one day!" This led to a feud of several years. Gilbert expressed a strong preference for recruiting unknown actors and molding them to his vision.

To create the conditions demanded by Gilbert and Sullivan, including payment in advance, D'Oyly Carte created the "Comedy Opera Company" in 1876, the predecessor of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. The cast hired for *The Sorcerer* formed the company that carried through the later operas, thus the pattern was set. In George Grossmith's audition with Gilbert he said, "For the part of a Magician I should have thought you required a fine man with a fine voice." "That", replied Gilbert, "is exactly what we don't want."

The Sorcerer is full of lyrical and musical delights, not the least of which is perhaps the most difficult patter son of the entire canon: "My name is John Wellington

Wells". *The Sorcerer* is often described as not among the best of G&S, but one wonders if that is more the result of the enormous popularity of *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance* that came immediately after. It ran for 178 performances but was even more successful when it was revived in 1884 after *Princess Ida* closed and before *The Mikado* opened. *The Sorcerer* was last produced by the Madison Savoyards in 1992.

Cox & Box

Cox & Box was created in late 1866 when F.C. Burnand, dramatist and later editor of *Punch*, met Sullivan on a street corner. He suggested they write a comic opera based on Maddison Morton's farce, *Box and Cox*, for a party to be held a few days later in a private home. This was Sullivan's first experience with writing a comic opera and it made an impression sufficient to lead him to score it for orchestra for a public performance in the Adelphi Theater on May 11, 1867. Originally over an hour long with much dialog, it was later edited to about 35 minutes for use with D'Oyly Carte double bills. The music is delightful and shows Sullivan's talent for the genre. Elements of Sullivan's later music for the more familiar Gilbert and Sullivan operas are evident *Cox & Box*.

This performance will be the first for the Madison Savoyards.

Gilbert and Sullivan Jeopardy!

Susannah Brooks has been a cast member of several Savoyards productions, most recently in the role of Lady Sophia in *Patience*. Last summer, she appeared on the Jeopardy! television show, and ended up becoming a two-day champion. As part of the Winter Spells concert on February 9, Susannah treated the audience to a quiz in the style of Jeopardy, and played the role of host Alex Trebek. As in Jeopardy, the Gilbert & Sullivan trivia "answers" were divided into four categories, each category con-

taining four questions of ascending difficulty. The quiz is reproduced, below. As in all Jeopardy shows, it is the answers that are provided; contestants must supply the questions.

Quoth the actor, "Pinafore"! (G & S on screen)

1. In the recent film "The Good Shepherd" Matt Damon sings a falsetto version of this flowery aria.
2. This character on "The Simpsons" prolongs his own life by asking Sideshow Bob to sing the entire score of *Pinafore* as a final request
3. In the Goldie Hawn/ Dudley Moore film "Foul Play," the entrance music for this regal title character heralds an assassination attempt on the Pope.
4. This singer may or may not be "no good" when she sings "Poor Wandering One" in a 1980s film version of *Pirates of Penzance*.

You're the inspirations

1. Much of the fairy music from *Iolanthe* draws upon Mendelssohn's setting of this Shakespearean work.
2. This operetta is a "respectful operatic per-version" of a work by Tennyson.
3. The only character to be based on a real historical figure, a lieutenant from the reign of Henry VIII, appears in this operetta.
4. The ghastly phrase "blow your own horn" has sometimes been said to originate from this Gilbert & Sullivan operetta.

Pitter patter

1. In one episode of "The Simpsons" town drunk Barney Grumble demonstrates a brief bout of sobriety by doing backflips and singing this most famous patter song.
2. Frederic Sullivan, brother to Sir Arthur, was the first to be "called to the bar" in this early, short work.
3. "This particularly rapid unintelligible patter/Isn't generally heard" in this operetta
4. Many patter songs were performed originally by this D'Oyly Carte baritone.

Potent potables (Given the drink, name the operetta)

1. Milk
2. Sherry
3. Sleeping draught
4. Rhenish wine and toddy

Final Jeopardy: The lost chords

Science fiction writer Isaac Asimov, the great Gilbert & Sullivan fan, often included references into his works, including a story about a time traveler who saves the score to this Gilbert & Sullivan production

Patience DVD and CD Released

The 2006 summer production of *Patience* was recorded live in both video and a ten track audio recording. The audio recording, recorded by Buzz Kemper of Audio for the Arts, was mixed into a stereo audio two disc CD. The DVD uses a five channel surround sound track. The five channels are left, right, center, left rear, and right rear. The professionally recorded audio is a substantial improvement over previous audio and video recordings. The DVD includes extra material and both the DVD and CD include the complete performance from the beginning of the overture to the end of curtain calls including all dialog.

Both the DVD and CD are available from the Madison Savoyards and from Amazon, as are the previously released DVDs of *Pirates of Penzance* (2005) complete and *Ruddigore* (2004) highlights. See (www.madisonsavoyards.org for more details)

The Sorcerer - School Outreach Program

The Madison Savoyard School Outreach program performed Terry Kiss Frank's reduced *Sorcerer* libretto on March 16th for the K-8 grades at Eagle School. When asked at the beginning of the show how many students were familiar with Gilbert and Sullivan, many hands went up. *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* were all named by students; an obviously well-educated group! The 45 minute program was followed by a talk-back with pianist Ted Reinke, the actors and Terry (who was also filling in for Susannah Jacobsen

in the role of Mrs. Partlett). The kids asked about the Savoyards and the background of the singers. Their comments made clear that their favorite parts of the show involved the Hag of the Night and Dr. Daly singing in falsetto. Terry plans to complete a study guide for future school shows (with additional input from the Eagle students) and organize a second cast who will be able to perform. We hope to begin lining up events at public schools for the next school year. If you know of any venues which would appreciate this very amusing and well-performed version of *The Sorcerer*, feel free to let us know! *Caryl Farkas*

President's Letter

I am fortunate to be able to write my first president's letter at a time when Savoyards are doing so many new and exciting things. I will mention just three of them here.

First, it is not news that we will be doing a show this summer, but what is new is that in addition to Gilbert and Sullivan's *Sorcerer*, we will be performing *Cox & Box* by Burnand and Sullivan. This will be the first time that Savoyards have done a show not written by W. S. Gilbert, and it is believed to be the first time *Cox & Box* will have been performed in Madison.

As part of Savoyards' outreach efforts, Terry Kiss Frank has created an abridged version of the *Sorcerer* to bring the joy of Gilbert and Sullivan to young people in the area. It was recently presented to the students at Eagle School to great acclaim.

I thank Evan Richards for bringing us into the 21st century technologi-

cally. The Savoyards website (www.madisonsavoyards.org) is constantly getting better looking and more informative. And we are now recording our shows and have DVDs and CDs available for sale. See the article on this page for details.

Finally, I want to thank the prior presidents and other board members who have made all of these wonderful things possible.

Richard C. Yde, President

Jeopardy Answers

Quoth the actor, "Pinafore!"

Level 1: What is "I'm Called Little Buttercup"?

Level 2: Who is Bart Simpson?

Level 3: What is the Mikado?

Level 4: Who is Linda Ronstadt?

You're the inspiration

Level 1: What is *Midsummer Night's Dream*?

Level 2: What is *Princess Ida*?

Level 3: What is *Yeoman of the Guard*?

Level 4: What is *Ruddigore*?

Pitter patter

Level 1: What is "Modern Major General"?

Level 2: What is *Trial by Jury*?

Level 3: What is *Ruddigore*? (or *Pinafore*)

Level 4: Who is George Grossmith?

Potent potables

Level 1: What is *Patience*?

Level 2: What is *Pirates of Penzance*?

Level 3: What is *Sorcerer*?

Level 4: What is *Gondoliers*?

Final Jeopardy: What is *Thespis*?



Renew your Membership

Yes, I am doing my part to ensure more Gilbert and Sullivan productions. I've enclosed my gift of:

- Member (\$25-\$49)
 Patron (\$50-\$99)
 Sustaining Member (\$100-\$499)
 Benefactor (\$500-\$999)
 Sponsor (1,000+)
- Endowment Fund (\$ _____)
 Other _____
 Additional Gift for Summer Success (\$ _____)
- Please list my contribution as "Anonymous" in your program.
 Years I worked in/with a G&S show: _____

Sorcerer and Cox & Box Ticket advance sale - **orders must be received by Monday, May 21, 2007**

Names: _____

Street Address: _____ Apt #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

Performance date desired (please x):

- _____ Friday, July 20, 7:30 P.M.
 _____ Saturday, July 21, 7:30 P.M.
 _____ Sunday, July 22, 3:00 P.M.
 _____ Friday, July 27, 7:30 P.M.
 _____ Saturday, July 28, 7:30 P.M.
 _____ Sunday, July 29, 3:00 P.M.

- _____ # Adult tickets @ \$25.00
 _____ # Senior tickets @ \$23.00
 _____ # Student tickets @ \$10.00
 _____ # Child (under 13) tickets @ \$5.00

Seating Preference: _____

Ticket Total: _____

Donation: _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

I prefer tickets be mailed to the address above: _____
 (unless otherwise specified,
 tickets will be held at Music Hall Box Office)

Please mail to:

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Madison, WI 53701-1612

Phone: (608) 231-9005

Web: www.madisonsavoyards.org

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