



MAY 19 (21) 22 AT 8PM • MAY 23 AT 3PM
MEADY THEATER

BY GILBERT & SULLIVAN

THE LASS THAT LOVED A SAILOR
H.M.S. PINAFORE

299
1993
5-21

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON OPERA PRESENTS

UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY

Peter Erös, *conductor*

Johan Louwersheimer, *assistant conductor*

VIOLIN I

Andrew Yeung
Xiao Po Fei
Keh-Shu Shen
Coral Overman
Kyung Sun Chee
Thane Lewis
Jeff Yang

VIOLA

Haiying Li
Donna Fogle
Greg Savage
Denise Martel
Angela Engebretsen
Carrie Jo Adams
Chelsea Murray

BASS

Aron Taylor
Amy Eacker
Mark Jasper
Olav Hekela

CLARINET

Debbie Smith
Susan Ediger

BASSOON

Brian Wirt

PERCUSSION

Gunnar Folsom
Michael Ganyo

HORN

Donald J. Ankney
Todd L. Brecks

VIOLIN II

Daniel Perry
Kevin Hee
Kjell Sleipness
John Powelson
Jeanne Drumm
Leah Irby

CELLO

Zoltan Stefan
Cheryl Bushnell
Joseph Kim
Parke Burgess
Stacy Philpott
Loren Dempster
Lan-June Wang

FLUTE

Sabra Weber
Yuriko Brunelle

TRUMPET

Colby Hubler
Matt Armstrong

OBOE

Susan Worden
Gail Perstein

TROMBONE

C. A. Kirby
Nathaniel Lauren Oxford

PLOT SYNOPSIS

(1 HR)
ACT I: The curtain rises on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. Pinafore where its gallant crew energetically goes about its duties ("We sail the ocean blue"). They greet Buttercup, a "bumboat" (provision ship) woman who goes about selling her wares to the eager sailors ("I'm called Little Buttercup"). In the midst of this merriment, Buttercup spies a handsome young tar, but the mere mention of his name, Ralph Rackstraw, brings back to her the sad memory of some dark secret.

Ralph, too, carries a great weight in his heart, for he, a lowly sailor, has fallen in love with the high-born daughter of his ship's captain ("A maiden fair to see"). One surly tar, Dick Deadeye, dares to suggest that captains' daughters don't marry common sailors and is roundly scolded by his shipmates for his heresy.

Captain Corcoran comes on deck to the hearty praise of his crew ("I am the captain of the Pinafore"). Left alone with the admiring Buttercup, the Captain confesses his distress at his daughter Josephine's rejection of her arranged marriage to Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., First Lord of the Admiralty. Josephine enters, despairing at a hopeless love ("Sorry her lot"). She reveals to her father her affection for one of the sailors on his ship. The Captain is sympathetic, but will not violate the strict class distinctions of his society, arguing that Josephine must think no more of one so far beneath her.

Sir Joseph then arrives, flanked by the formidable Cousin Hebe and fawned over by an omnipresent retinue of sisters, cousins and aunts ("I am the monarch of the sea"). While inspecting the crew, Sir Joseph relates how he achieved his exalted rank through every political avenue except practical experience ("When I was a lad"). He reprimands Captain Corcoran for treating his crew with condescension, stating that a British seaman is any man's equal.

The sailors perform for their guests a rousing shanty composed by Sir Joseph ("A British tar is a soaring soul"). All pair off except Ralph who, emboldened by Sir Joseph's words, confesses his love to Josephine. She is rapturously happy to hear his words but, remembering her promise to her father, feigns haughty pride ("Refrain audacious tar"). In despair, Ralph calls the crew on deck and tells them of his rejection by his lady love. Dick Deadeye taunts him with the truth and Ralph puts a pistol to his own head. But before the fatal shot is fired, Josephine declares her love and all but Dick rejoice in the love that transcends all ranks ("Let's give three cheers for the sailor's bride").

(45 min)
ACT II: As the act opens, Captain Corcoran is found on deck, lamenting his confusion and distress at the recent turn of events ("Fair moon, to thee I sing"). Buttercup offers comfort, but hints darkly that there is a change in store for the captain

("Things are seldom what they seem"). Josephine appears, torn between her fear of giving up her wealth and social position, and her passionate love for Ralph ("The hours creep on apace"). Sir Joseph, thinking he is furthering his own cause, assures Josephine that love can conquer all differences in rank. Josephine privately interprets this as encouraging her plans to marry Ralph, and she, Sir Joseph and the captain sing a merry trio celebrating love as the great leveler ("Never mind the why and wherefore").

Dick Deadeye sneaks in to warn the captain that Josephine is about to elope with Ralph ("Kind Captain, I've important information"). The lovers, accompanied by the chorus, creep out to elope ("Carefully on tiptoe stealing"), but are foiled by the captain. Ralph fearlessly declares his right as a true-born Englishman to love Josephine ("He is an Englishman"), but the captain is driven to unaccustomed profanity in asserting that Ralph has gone too far.

Ralph is about to be dragged off to a dungeon in chains ("Farewell, my own!"), when Buttercup appears to confess her long-held secret ("A many years ago"). Happily, Buttercup's revelation resolves everyone's dilemmas and ties up all the romantic loose ends in one tidy vaudeville finale ("Oh joy, oh rapture unforeseen").

PROGRAM NOTES

There is an aura of immortality surrounding *H.M.S. Pinafore*. In the century since its composition, time has diminished neither its comic pungency nor its melodic appeal. It remains one of Gilbert & Sullivan's most popular works.

This is all the more remarkable considering *Pinafore's* stormy beginnings. Sullivan composed most of the score while in excruciating agony from kidney stones. The first performances were scantily attended, threatening financial ruin. Failed labor negotiations came close to halting the production in the early part of its run. The company created to produce the performances disbanded acrimoniously and a rump body of ex-producers attempted to establish their own production apart from Gilbert & Sullivan's oversight.

In the teeth of such disasters *Pinafore* emerged triumphant and grew to be one of the most influential operettas in the history of the genre. It was Gilbert & Sullivan's first runaway sensation, racking up over 700 performances in its initial run in 1878. By the time Gilbert traveled to the

United States in 1879, no fewer than eight unauthorized "pirate" productions were playing simultaneously in New York City alone. So great was the mania for *Pinafore* in America that it eventually played a deeply influential part in the formation of our own musical theatre traditions.

While some topicality of Gilbert's themes seems remote to modern audiences, the timelessness of his humor remains intact. It is hardly necessary to know that the imperious Sir Joseph was based on one W. H. Smith, a "landlubber" publisher who was Queen Victoria's First Lord of the Admiralty (and a fine one, at that). The humor lies in the blatant hypocrisy of a lowly office clerk who rose to the exalted rank of K.C.B. (Knight Commander of the Bath) preaching social equality while practicing a most self-serving snobbery.

So too can we continue to be amused at Ralph (pronounced "Rafe") and Captain Corcoran's conundrum of "nature vs. nurture." We are confronted at the very beginning with a commander (supposedly related to a peer) seemingly more at home with

the crew than with officers, and a "tar" (a lowly sailor) whose pronouncements are more suspiciously Shakespearean in rhetoric than the circumstances of his birth would indicate. Clearly a gloriously absurd reversal of fortune is forecast. In his sure command of satire and social commentary, Gilbert's theatricality rivals that of his contemporary, George Bernard Shaw.

Sullivan's compositional skill deserves no less praise. While his score has all the British operetta hallmarks of popular dance forms, scintillating patter, and jingoistic marches, Sullivan finds subtle musical depths in his clever parodies of the more pretentious operatic forms. Even divorced from its English soil, *H.M.S. Pinafore's* immortality is assured because it satisfies at so many fundamental levels, as an amusing comedy of love and manners and as biting satire of our fragile human pretensions.

TECHNICAL STAFF

STAGE MANAGER.....	Margo Maier	MASTER ELECTRICIAN.....	Scot Allison
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....	Alan Weldin	REPETITEUR.....	Kevin Johnson
OPERA COACH	Lisa Bergman	STITCHER	Amanda Evans, Mary Hardan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR.....	Gaen Murphree	LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR.....	Tim O'Brien
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER.....	Julie Marie Paré Jennifer Lee Robinson	SET CONSTRUCTION CREW.....	Bob Boehler, Malcolm Brown, Edward Cage, Barry Hendrix, Al Salm, Devin Thompson
SCENIC ARTIST.....	Laura Hibbs, David McGovern, Mark Chenovik	COSTUME CONSTRUCTION	Jennifer Mathieson, Sarah Murdock, Students of DRAMA 101 and 201
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....	Jennifer Lee Robinson	RUNNING CREW.....	Mark Chenovik, Nicole Heit, Joel Howard, Shelby Jenkins, Lincoln Kennedy, Joe McIlwain, Melinda Sterns, Leila Stewart, Don Torres, Mark Walker, Amber Zipperer
PROPERTIES MASTER	Alex Danilchik		
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER	Roger Shaffer, Jr.		

STAFF for the SCHOOLS of MUSIC and DRAMA

PRODUCTION MANAGER.....	Anne Stewart	LADIES CUTTER.....	Meri Wada
HEAD, DESIGN AND TECHNICAL	Bill Forrester	PUBLICIST.....	Shantha Benegal
PRODUCTION		CUTTER/TAILOR.....	Laurie L. Kurutz
COSTUME ADVISOR.....	Sarah Nash Gates	POSTER DESIGN.....	Skot O'Mahony
LIGHTING DESIGNER.....	Rick Paulson	PROGRAM DESIGN.....	Claire Peterson
FACULTY TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....	Jay O. Glerum	PROGRAM PRINTING.....	UW Copy/Duplicating Services
SCENE SHOP SUPERVISOR.....	Alan Weldin	TICKETS.....	UW Arts Ticket Office
SCENE SHOP CARPENTER.....	Malcolm Brown	MEANY HALL STAFF.....	John Poulson, Pete Zink, Dave Saxton, Nancy Hautala-Balter, Emmet Kaiser (GSA)
PROPERTIES MANAGER.....	Alex Danilchik		
COSTUME SHOP MANAGER.....	Josie Gardner		

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