

Utopia, Limited

or, The Flowers of Progress

THE CAST

King Paramount, the First (*King of Utopia*)..... Waldyn Benbenek
Scaphio (*Judge of the Utopian Supreme Court*) Chris Lowry
Phantis (*Judge of the Utopian Supreme Court*) Christopher Michela
Tarara (*The Public Exploder*) L. Peter Erickson
Princess Zara (*eldest daughter of King Paramount*) Betsie Feldkamp
Princess Nekaya (*younger sister of Princess Zara*) Sarah Wind
Princess Kalyba (*younger sister of Princess Zara*) Elizabeth Ghandour
Lady Sophy (*their English Governess*) Lara Trujillo
Salata (*Utopian maiden*) Jamie Dix
Melene (*Utopian maiden*) Rhea Sullivan
Phylla (*Utopian maiden*) Kaila Frymire
Bold-faced Ranger Eric Pasternack

Imported Flowers of Progress:

Captain Fitzbattleaxe (*First Life Guards*) Timothy James
Captain Sir Edward Corcoran, K.C.B. (*of the Royal Navy*) Stephen Hage
Mr. Goldbury (*a company promoter*) Isaiah Waid
Sir Bailey Barre, Q.C., M.P. Jim Ahrens
Mrs. Blushington (*of the County Council*) Victoria Valencour
First Life Guardsmen Jim Brooks, Dave Eckenrode, Richard Rames

Chorus of Utopians:

Mark Alt	Mary Gregory	Mackenzie Sherburne
Ernest Brody	Stephen Hage	Dan Sola
Stephanie Brody	Shawn Holt	Rhea Sullivan
Jim Brooks	Mary Mescher Benbenek	Raquel J. Swanson
Jamie Dix	Charlotte Morrison	Victoria Valencour
Dave Eckenrode	John Orbison	Holly Windle
Kaila Frymire	Eric Pasternack	Madeline Youngstrom
	Richard Rames	

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**Understudies:** Mark Alt, Ernest Brody, Jim Brooks, Dave Eckenrode,  
Kaila Frymire, Mary Gregory, Stephen Hage, Shawn Holt,  
Charlotte Morrison, John Orbison, Richard Rames, Mackenzie Sherburne,  
Dan Sola, Rhea Sullivan, Raquel J. Swanson, Holly Windle

**Act I:** The South Pacific island of Utopia, the 1920s

*15-Minute Intermission*

**Act II:** Some time later

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~ *Please turn off all cell phones & pagers* ~
~ *No eating or drinking is allowed in the theatre* ~
~ *No smoking is permitted in the building* ~
~ *The use of flash cameras is strictly forbidden* ~

This production of *Utopia, Limited*
is dedicated to the memory of
long-time company members
Debbie Feinwachs and Marcia Hill

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Spoiler alert: *Utopia, Ltd.* is the least performed G&S operetta and comes with a number of problems a producing organization must be prepared to solve. The show's beginnings were not auspicious: indeed, after *The Gondoliers*, Gilbert and Sullivan were ready to call it quits on their collaboration. They had never been friends, but after a messy lawsuit (in which Sullivan took D'Oyly Carte's side against Gilbert) even a working relationship seemed impossible. It was four years before they came back together for *Utopia*. Sullivan used the hiatus to write the grand opera he had long promised. But when *Ivanhoe* proved an expensive flop, Sullivan needed more lucrative work. Sullivan's disappointment combined with Gilbert's infamous ability to hold a grudge made collaboration tense. Neither was willing to offer or accept editorial advice.

In *Utopia*, Gilbert presents us with unusually long dialogue scenes. Sullivan retaliates with long orchestral interludes, scenes, dances, and extended choral sections. None of this serves the plot very well. And, by the way, what is the plot? Gilbert threw in all his favorite legal, political and social targets, but took such a long time deciding on a storyline that Sullivan finally put his foot down and declined to set any more music.

The good news is that there is considerably more wheat than chaff in *Utopia*. Two years' work (by a number of company members) has led to our revised version. We have propped up the storyline, trimmed the verbiage, excised chunks of music (including a lovely little waltz in the first act finale ... another time, maybe) and promise to have you home well before midnight. As always, the energy, intelligence, talents and collegiality of the GSVLOC make *our* collaborations a joy that I hope will show in every moment of this production.

—Lesley Hendrickson

SYNOPSIS

Act I — King Paramount, ruler of the South Pacific island kingdom of Utopia, is such an Anglophile that he has sent his eldest daughter Zara to England to be educated. Her two younger sisters, meanwhile, are being molded into showpieces of British manners by Lady Sophy, an English governess who has captured the King's affections. Although attracted to the King, Lady Sophy is dismayed by revelations in the local scandal sheet, the *Palace Peeper*, about his disgraceful behavior. As it turns out, the King himself is the author of the newspaper's rumors. He is being manipulated by Utopia's two Supreme Court Judges, the "wise men" Scaphio and Phantis, who—in a quirkily Gilbertian form of government referred to as "despotism tempered by dynamite"—have the power to denounce the king to the Public Exploder, who would then dispatch him.

Princess Zara returns to Utopia, escorted by a small troop of British "First Life Guards," one of whom (Captain Fitzbattleaxe) has gained her affection. The young couple manages to divert the attentions of Scaphio and Phantis, who have inconveniently fallen in love with the Princess themselves. Zara has also brought with her the "Flowers of Progress," representatives (with a certain degree of satire) of all the elements that have made Britain great. Each one makes recommendations, but it is Mr. Goldbury, the "company promoter," whose vision inspires King Paramount to do what even glorious England has not yet managed to do: turn his country into a "company limited" (based on the "Joint Stock Companies Act of Parliament '62"). General rejoicing.

Act II — Utopians adjust to the new English ways, and the King holds the first meeting of the Cabinet Council (a parody of Minstrel show). Scaphio and Phantis had hoped to make a profit from the new Utopian enthusiasm for English goods, but are upset to learn that the people can claim limited liability and avoid payment. Even worse, as the King explains to them, a corporation can be "wound up" but not "blown up," so he need no longer fear them. Zara's sisters get their own revelations about the realities of English girlhood, and Lady Sophy learns the truth about the King, while the two Wise Men plot with Tarara to stir up a revolt against the Flowers of Progress. Fortunately, Zara remembers the vital missing element which will ensure perfection. All ends in bliss, further praise for Britain, and a stirring Utopian "Ulahlica!"

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Director Lesley Hendrickson
Music Director Marina Liadova
Stage Manager Laura Bidgood
Set Designer & Scenic Painter Larry Rostad
Costume Coordinator Anne Forgacs
Lighting Designer..... Dan Feldkamp
Assistant Stage Managers..... Jack Kravik, Trina Morrison, Brianna Sullivan
Wardrobe Mistress Jo Pasternack
Set Construction..... Ernest Brody, Bob Hunter, Jack Kravik
Dean Laurance, Larry Rostad, Feifei Wei, and cast members
Props Laura Bidgood, Dan Sola
Prop & Costume Workers Karrie Blee (Utopian Flag), Anne Forgacs
Mary Beth Gagner (uniforms), Lesley Hendrickson
Bob Hunter, Jo Pasternack, and cast members
Lighting Technicians..... Dan Feldkamp, Robert Hunter, Feifei Wei
Audio-Visual Engineer..... Bob Johanneck
Audio-Describer..... Judy Baldwin
Poster/Program Graphic Design:..... Ivar Hendrickson
Lobby Display & Photography Stephen Hage
Group Photos Daniels Studio
House Managers..... Kathryn Larsen, Holly MacDonald
Fred Morrison, Carol Paulson
Ticket Sales..... Charlotte Morrison
Ticket helpers..... Stephanie Brody, Betsie Feldkamp, Katie Lowry
Mary Mescher Benbenek, Fred Morrison
Trina Morrison, Eric Pasternack, Thomas Trisko
House Staff Recruitment Rhea Sullivan

The Board:

Producer Dan Sola
Labour Pool Coordinator..... Eric Pasternack
Publicity Rhea Sullivan
Treasurer Richard Rames
Secretary..... Waldyn Benbenek
Chorus Representatives Stephen Hage, Mary Gregory
Orchestra Representative..... Barb Hovey

ORCHESTRA

Conductor..... Marina Liadova
Orchestra Manager Debbie Clapp
Violin Joe Dolson, Concert Master
Michele Anderson, Rachael Athmann, Amy Atzel, Nancy Birth
Karen Krueger, Lorine Menzhuber, Ann Nadon, Miyuki Onishi
Julia Salazkin, Jo Schansberg, Kristen Weeks, Theodora Wynhoff
Viola Emily Hagen, Arwen Hotchkiss, Scott Olsen
Tom Rognsvoog, Aija Ronis
Cello..... Coral Bastien, Jesse Berndt
John Dunham, Karen Rognsvoog
Bass..... Benjamin Kitt, Kristin Metz, Doug Nelson
Flute Kathleen Hansen, Kristen Kinnear-Ohlmann, Annie Richardson
Clarinet..... Kent Barth, Debbie Clapp
Oboe..... Elizabeth Berry, Kristen Cooper, Steve Schellenberg
Bassoon..... TJ Blackburn, Heather Clark, Maia Hamann
Horn Michael Engh, Chris Hahn, Jeffrey Ohlmann
Trumpet..... Tim Killam, Betty MacKay, Andy Padula, Bob Zobal
Trombone..... Benjamin Bussey, Tim Jung, Greg Michnay, Greg Onstad
Percussion John Litch

Rehearsal Pianists: Steven Norquist, Jean Van Heel

GLOSSARY (*in order of occurrence*)

ACT I:

Tarara—The Public Exploder's name is a reference to the recent music-hall hit song imported from America: "Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay!"

Girton—a women's college at Cambridge University, founded in 1869

Lalabalele talala! etc.—Gilbert used some actual Polynesian for Tarara's raging: "Idiot, I run around screaming but can't make much more noise, since I am hoarse. Crossly I drag myself into the open and go spinning around sweating."

Double-first in the world's university—in British higher education, top honors in two final examinations

dynamite explodes in his auriculars—ears

song of far niente—idleness (in Italian)

To which some add (but others do not) Ireland—a reference to the long-raging debate over Irish independence

The Kodaks do their best—Kodak cameras (which came out in 1888) were advertised with the slogan "You press the button, we do the rest."

Knightsbridge nursemaids, serving fairies, Stars of proud Belgravian airies—servant girls the Guardsmen presumably have left behind in London

ye South Pacific Island viviparians—those whose young are born live (not hatched)

Ulahlica!—The Utopian equivalent for "Hear, Hear, Hear!"

swell the county rate—increase the local taxes

what contango means and also backwardation—fees paid to postpone settlement of a stock purchase or sale, respectively

K.C.B.—Knight Commander of the (Order of the) Bath (high honor)

Q.C.—Queen's Counsel (senior lawyer)

M.P.—Member of Parliament (elected Politician)

terrify the simple Gaul—the French

Maxim gun and Nordenfelt—kinds of machine gun

thanks to coke—a fuel made from coal

Company Limited—an incorporated company ("Inc.")

of sovereigns all the pink—the best

Joint Stock Companies Act of Parliament '62—This act made it easier for small investors to pool their resources and incorporate with reduced personal risk (limited liability). Note: Seven was the required number of founders to establish a company, and the word "limited" (Ltd.) had to be added to the company's name.

ACT II:

the notes of lover's lay—a poem to be sung

Court of St. James's vs. Court of St. James's Hall—confusing the royal palace with the music hall which featured the original "Christy Minstrels" (Royal audience members were not amused)

all that isn't Belgrave Square is Strand and Piccadilly—fashionable areas of London

Don't be unhappy, it's still on the tapis—under consideration

an English girl of Eleven stone two—A stone equals 14 pounds, so Goldbury's ideal girl weighs 156 lbs.—of course, she's 5 foot 10

Eleven maids out, eleven maids in, And perhaps an occasional "maiden over!"—Cricket playing references (a "maiden over" is analogous to a scoreless inning in baseball)

She'll waltz away like a teetotum—a kind of top

short-petticoated—an indication of being a young girl (before wearing long skirts)

that asinorum pons I have crossed—actually, "pons asinorum," or Bridge of Asses; schoolboy slang for one of Euclid's propositions, due to the difficulty of "getting over" it

CONTRIBUTORS

Flowers of Progress (\$100 and over)

Arlene & Tom Alm ❖ Suzanne Ammerman ❖ Philip Asgian ❖ Chris Bolstad ❖ Richard T. Crane ❖ Wendy Evans ❖ Richard Fishel ❖ Gretchen & Jim Fogo ❖ General Mills Foundation ❖ Carol & Greg Gross ❖ John Hanlon ❖ Douglas O. Happe ❖ Jack & Geraldine King ❖ Marion Levy ❖ Michael Mack ❖ L. David Mech ❖ Shirley Moore ❖ John Orbison ❖ Derrill M. Pankow ❖ Garry & Mary Ann Peterson ❖ Nancy & Bert Poritsky ❖ R. N. Quiche ❖ James Quinn ❖ Tom & Beverly Rogers ❖ Paul & Patricia Sackett ❖ Leon Satran, M.D. ❖ The family of Steven and Mary Schier ❖ Radonna & Jim Schwarz ❖ Doris Skalstad ❖ Richard Evan Stone ❖ James Wall ❖ Connie Waterous ❖

Company Promoters (\$50 - \$99)

Ruth Arnold ❖ Benjamin & Aroti Bayman ❖ Helen Bergren ❖ Jerome and Sharon Berkowitz ❖ Paul Bondhus ❖ James Booth ❖ Beth, Laurie & Terry Brooks ❖ Jeffrey R. Brown ❖ May Cederberg ❖ Mary Ann Doyle ❖ Mark Ellenberger and Janet Zander ❖ Robert Gartner ❖ Loretta & Stafford Hansen ❖ Elizabeth Hawn ❖ Evan & Elaine Hazard ❖ Marjorie and James Jacobsen ❖ Kenneth Kauffman ❖ Mary & Steven Kennedy ❖ Margaret Kirkpatrick ❖ Mr. & Mrs. E. K. Lehmann ❖ Rachel Levitt ❖ Sanford Lipsky ❖ Dr. Merle Mark ❖ Philip Melmer ❖ Douglas Merrigan ❖ Eric Newman ❖ Riley Owens, Jr. ❖ Nancy Powell ❖ Redleaf Family Foundation ❖ Don Ruble ❖ Carol Schneider ❖ Prodosh Sengupta ❖ Doug Siems ❖ Glenn Skoy ❖ Jenella Slade ❖ Joan T. Smith ❖ Phyllis Stone ❖ Brett D. Wagner ❖

South Pacific Island Viviparians (up to \$50)

Sara Balamut ❖ Phillip & Karen Bergem ❖ Ruth Berman ❖ Mary & Robert Boehlke ❖ Marv Bookin ❖ Christine D. Bremer ❖ Judith & Richard Brownlee ❖ Carole Christensen ❖ Pearl Cole ❖ Jeanne Cornish ❖ Calvin Dahl ❖ Tom Decker ❖ Jeffrey Disch ❖ Nancy Drew ❖ Siobhan Dugan ❖ Sally J. Economon ❖ David Eggen ❖ Ian Ellis ❖ Gary & Patricia Engstrand ❖ Entegris Matching Gift Program ❖ L. Peter Erickson ❖ David & Anna Lou Ford ❖ Brian & Linda Goodspeed ❖ Arthur Gropen ❖ Vicky Hagens ❖ Florence Halverson ❖ Linda Dexter Hancher ❖ Jack & Grace Harkness ❖ Kris Henderson ❖ Bob & Marge Hennesy ❖ Kathy Hering ❖ Ms. Gemma Hessian ❖ Arthur & Joan Higinbotham ❖ Peter Hiniker ❖ Richard Horton & Victoria Houseman ❖ C. Joseph & Katherine Howard ❖ Mary Ann Huelster ❖ Bill & Nancy Jones ❖ George Francis Kane ❖ Marita Karlisch ❖ Jake Koller ❖ Ralph Larson ❖ Rhett & Jodi Lavin-Tompkins ❖ Mary Leahy ❖ Robert LeClaire ❖ Lynn Lockhart ❖ Katie Lowry ❖ Roderick & Joanne MacDonald ❖ C. Paul Martin ❖ Jeanne & Jeff McLean ❖ Adele Mehta ❖ Don Mittelstadt ❖ Michael Monsor ❖ Virginia F. Morse ❖ Barbara Nussbaum ❖ Scott Olsen ❖ Daniel P. O'Neill ❖ Jane Otto ❖ Dan & Pat Panshin ❖ Mr. & Mrs. George Peer ❖ Pat Pennington ❖ Elsa Peterson ❖ Polly Jo Peterson ❖ Robert Pierson ❖ Molly Redmond ❖ Ronald H. Reimann ❖ Louise & William Rondano ❖ Pat Rosaves ❖ Jack Ross ❖ Amy & Richard Roth ❖ Marian Rubenfeld ❖ Shirley Sailors ❖ Elaine Savick ❖ Alison Savin ❖ Russell G. Schroedl ❖ Suzanne Sewell ❖ Stacey & David Smith ❖ Evelyn Struthers ❖ Leslie Swenson ❖ Richard & Caroline Thompson ❖ Arnold Thornton ❖ Jim & Sharon Toscano ❖ Marcia Van Hulle ❖ Rosemary Wagner ❖ Lillian Wallis ❖ Frederick & Dorothy Waltz ❖ Kathy & Ed Wolter ❖

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Since its founding in 1979 by Dick Fishel and Jim Hart, the company has produced all the Gilbert and Sullivan shows: *Trial By Jury* (1979), *Patience* (1980), *Iolanthe* (1981), *Princess Ida* (1982), *Ruddigore* (1983), *The Gondoliers* (1984), *The Mikado* (Spring 1985), *The Sorcerer* (Fall 1985), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1986), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1987), *Utopia, Ltd.* (1988), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1989), *Patience* (1990), *The Grand Duke* (1991), *Iolanthe* (1992), *Princess Ida* (1993), *The Gondoliers* (1994), *Ruddigore* (1995), *The Mikado* (Spring 1996), *The Zoo and Trial By Jury* (Fall 1996), *The Sorcerer* (1997), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1998), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1999), Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* (2000), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (2001), *Patience* (2002), *The Grand Duke* (2003), *Iolanthe* (2004), *The Gondoliers* (2005), *Princess Ida* (2006), and *The Mikado* (2007)

In the Spring of 2009, we will present ***Ruddigore***.

Our next Lake Harriet Bandshell performance will be ***The Pirates of Penzance***,
in July of 2008

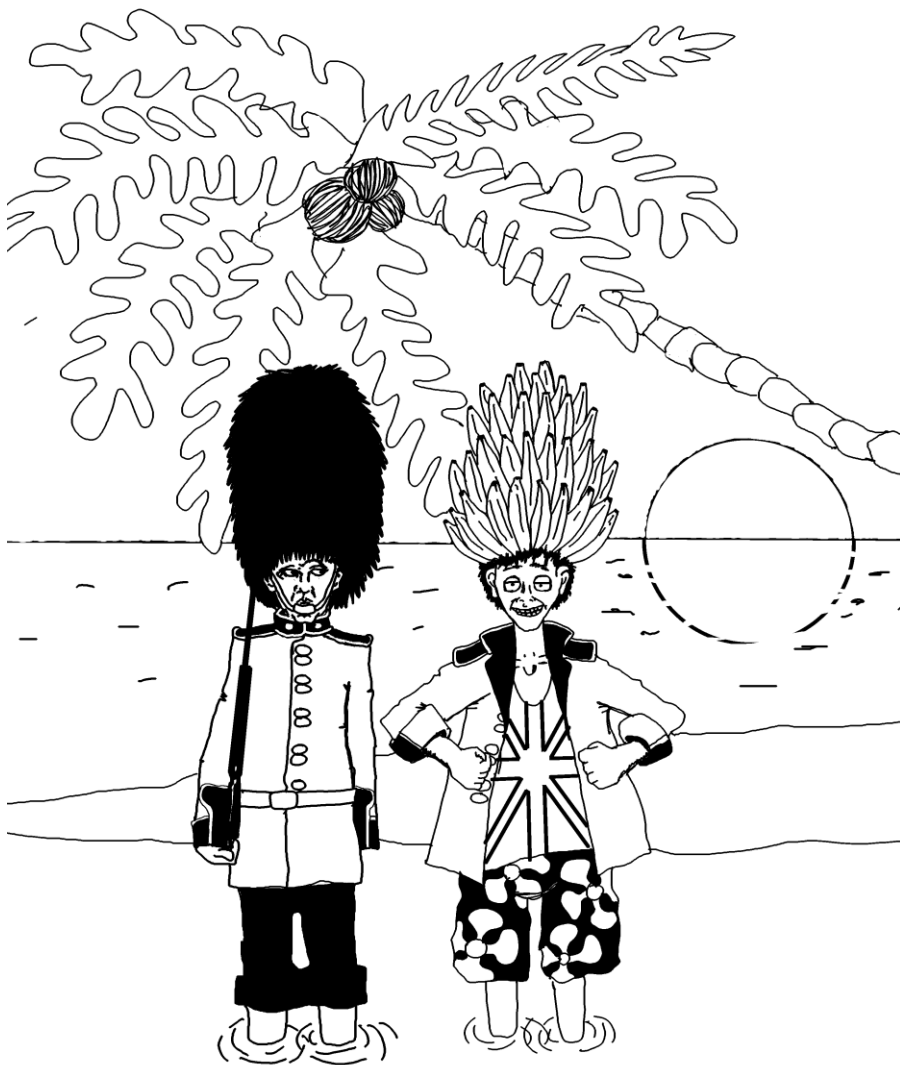
The Gilbert & Sullivan
Very Light Opera Company

presents

Utopia, Limited

or

The Flowers of Progress



February 22 – March 16, 2008

Howard Conn Fine Arts Center
1900 Nicollet Avenue South
Minneapolis

THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN VERY LIGHT OPERA COMPANY

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