

The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera
Company
Presents

Beyond Light Opera:
Orchestral and Choral Music of
Sir Arthur Sullivan



Featuring members of the chorus and orchestra of
The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company

Steven Michael Utzig
Music Director

Saturday, November 4, 2000
Sunday, November 5, 2000
Howard Conn Fine Arts Center

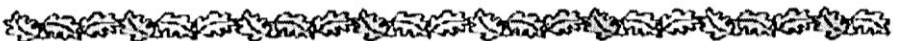


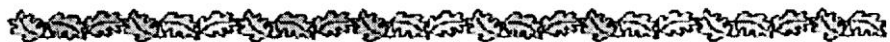
The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company

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, 1996), *Patience* (1980, 1990), *Iolanthe* (1981), *Princess Ida* (1982, 1993), *Ruddigore* (1983, 1995), *The Gondoliers* (1984, 1994), *The Mikado* (1985, 1996), *The Sorcerer* (1985, 1999), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1986, 1998), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1987, 1999), *Utopia {Limited}* (1988), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1989), *The Grand Duke* (1991), *Iolanthe* (1992), *Princess Ida* (1993), and *Orpheus in the Underworld* (2000).

Steven Michael Utzig

Mr. Utzig has served as music director for GSVLOC since for the past 3 seasons and will again join the company for the Spring 2001 production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. In addition to his work with GSVLOC, Mr. Utzig has served as music director for several Twin Cities area theater companies, having conducted over twenty productions in the past four years, including *The King and I*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *West Side Story*. An active baritone soloist, Mr. Utzig has also had occasion to cross the footlights and has appeared on stage as El Gallo in *The Fantasticks* and principal soloist with the 1999 production of *Christmas Revels* featuring Claudia Schmidt. In addition to his musical theater activities, Mr. Utzig is also music director of St. Paul's United Church of Christ.





Program

Overture to *The Yeomen of the Guard*

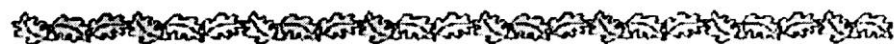
Symphony in E (Irish)

—Intermission—

Selections from *Ruddigore*

- *Fair is Rose*
- *Welcome, gentry*
- *Painted emblems of a race*
- *Hail the bride*
- *Oh, happy the lily*

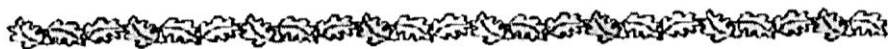
Te Deum Laudamus

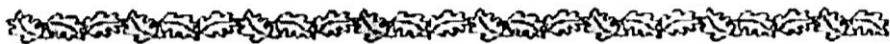




Sir Arthur Sullivan

Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan was born in London on May 13, 1842. At age 11, he received an appointment as a member of the Chapel Royal school. Sullivan studied at the Royal Academy of Music until 1858, when he left to enroll in the Leipzig Conservatory. He returned to London in 1862, when his incidental music to *The Tempest* received considerable acclaim. During the next several years, Sullivan composed his Irish symphony and many other choral and orchestral works. In 1867, Sullivan made his first venture into comic opera with the score to *Cox and Box*, based on a farce by Madison Morton. Sullivan was introduced to William S. Gilbert in 1871, and their first collaboration was *Thespis* for impresario John Hollingshead of the Gaiety Theatre. *Trial by Jury*, premiered in 1875, was the first G&S opera composed for Richard D'Oyly Carte, who later formed his own company and built a new theatre, the Savoy, to showcase Gilbert & Sullivan's works. Next came *The Sorcerer* (1877), followed by *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1878), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1879), *Patience* (1881), *Iolanthe* (1882), *Princess Ida* (1884), *The Mikado* (1885), *Ruddigore* (1887), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1888), and *The Gondoliers* (1889). Shortly after the composition of *The Gondoliers*, Gilbert and Sullivan had a serious falling-out. They reunited briefly in 1893 to collaborate on *Utopia Limited*, and again in 1896 on *The Grand Duke*, but the partnership then ended permanently. Sullivan's last major composition was *Ivanhoe*, an ambitious opera that premiered in 1891 – and failed dismally. Sullivan suffered from ill health for many years, and died in London on November 22, 1900.





Program Notes

Overture to *The Yeomen of the Guard*

It is not unusual in musical theatre that the writing of the overture be put off until the last minute and then be handed off to an assistant to the composer. Of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, we have documentation from the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company that Sullivan himself wrote and scored only five: *Iolanthe*, *Princess Ida*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Grand Duke*, and *The Yeomen of the Guard*. Though *Yeoman of the Guard*, which opened at the Savoy in October 1888, is the closest that the Gilbert and Sullivan collaboration came to creating a grand opera, the opera was composed in a great rush. In fact, Sullivan wrote the overture in the auditorium during the final rehearsal and threw the parts to the players in the orchestra as he completed them.

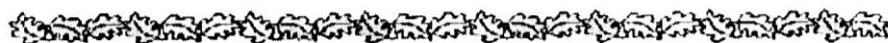
Symphony in E (Irish)

The idea for a symphony based on Irish themes evidently occurred to Sullivan during an 1863 trip to Ireland:

I feel my ideas assuming a newer and fresher colour, and I shall be able to work like a horse on my return. Why, the other night as I was jolting home from Holestone (15 miles from here) through wind and rain on an open jaunting-car, the whole first movement of a symphony came into my head with a real Irish flavour about it—besides scraps of the other movements. I shall get it ready for the Musical Society next season . . .

In the event, the Symphony did not receive its premiere until 1866, under August Manns. It was an immediate triumph for the young composer, as reflected in this glowing review in *The Times*:

The symphony . . . is not only by far the most noticeable composition that has proceeded from Mr. Sullivan's pen, but the best musical work, if judged only by the largeness of the form and the number of beautiful thoughts it contains, for a long time produced by any English composer . . . [He] has composed a first symphony, which, or we are greatly mistaken, will, for some time hence, engage the attention of the musical world, and lead to a second that may possibly fix it for at least a generation.





Symphony in E (continued)

That reviewer was wrong on two counts. First, Sullivan did not ever produce the second symphony. And second, the work did not take the musical world by storm. It certainly got its fair share of performances during the composer's lifetime, but cooler heads eventually concluded that the work was more important for the promise it showed than for what it achieved in its own right. To be sure, the Symphony in E is tuneful and pleasant, but it is not in the pantheon of great symphonies, not even of great first symphonies.

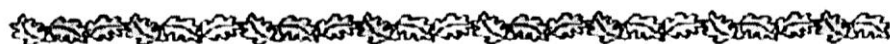
The composer wished to avoid the subtitle "Irish," for fear of comparison with Mendelssohn's much-admired Symphony #3, the "Scotch." However, it was published by Novello (after Sullivan's death) under the title "Irish," and this is the title by which it is best known.

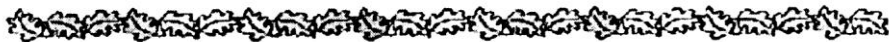
Ruddigore

Ruddigore opened on January 22, 1887 at London's Savoy Theatre to a less than enthusiastic response. The primary fault of the piece may have been that it simply was not *Mikado*, Gilbert and Sullivan's celebrated hit which immediately preceded *Ruddigore*. The lackluster response may have also been attributed to the operetta's convention: a "supernatural opera" based on a melodrama. The premise of the melodrama is that the lineage of the Baronet of Ruddigore has been cursed by a witch to commit at least one crime a day under penalty of dying in unspeakable agony.

Te Deum Laudamus (A Thanksgiving for Victory)

Though the Boer War (1899-1902) was far from over in May 1900, Sullivan was secretly persuaded by Sir George Martin, organist at St. Paul's Cathedral, to compose a Te Deum for the eventual Service of Thanksgiving that would follow the inevitable English victory. The solemnity of the composition and the extensive use of military brass instruments seem to suggest that Sullivan also would provide a war requiem. The text "When thou tookest upon thee," for example, is set as a hushed funeral march. And, in the final section "Vouchsafe, O Lord," Sullivan underscores the chorus with full brass accompaniment playing his own hymn tune, St. Gertrude, more familiarly known as "Onward Christian Soldiers." The first performance of the Te Deum did not come until June 1902, eighteen months after the composer's death and one month after the final Boer commando surrender.



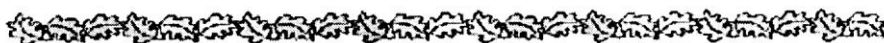


Please join us for our production of H.M.S. Pinafore
March 16-April 8, 2001



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Telephone: (612) 925-9159

Visit the GSVLOC home page at:
<http://www.gsvloc.org>





The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company

Chorus

Soprano

Stephanie Brody
Emily Coates
Sara Gustafson
Amy Hoelmer
Julie Parshall
Margaret Sullivan

Alto

Marcia Hill
Lisa Horton
Judith McClain
Charlotte Morrison
Jo Pasternack
Sandy Schoenecker
Kristen Schweiloch
Julie Seykora

Tenor

Peter Erickson
Paul Hart
Steven Hintz
Kristefor Lysne
John Murray
Richard Rames
Scott Sandberg

Bass

Jeremy Bierlein
Ernest Brody
Roger Evans
Steve Hage
Reid Hegland
Warren Loud
Chris Michela

Orchestra

Violin

J. Michael Compton
(concertmaster)
Greg Bastien
Janet Egge
Debbie Feinwachs
Betsy Lofgren
Sharon Munkwitz
Agnes Wolf
Eva Zorn

Viola

Tom Rognsvoog
Aija Ronis

Cello

Coral Bastien
Amy Carlson
John Litch

Bass

Reid Hegland

Flute

Julie Lindstrom
Katie Lowry

Oboe

Jean Beyer
Jan McElfish

Clarinet

Barb Hovey
Julie Piper

Bassoon

Holly Leighton
Rebecca Totzke

Horn

Judy Heimermann
Paul Johnson
Bob Spector
James Straka

Percussion

Jim Streich

Trumpet

Mike Hillman
Bob Hirte
Jim Leighton
Gus Lindquist
Betty Mackay
Mike Supple
Bob Zobal

Flugelhorn

Dennis Lodin
Andrew Shellenbarger

Trombone

Greg Michnay
Greg Onstad
Gary Zielinski

Euphonium

Stan Bann
Alex Lindstrom

Baritone

Eric Peterson

Tuba

Jerry Greupner
Sam Sharp

