

50th Mainstage Production
H.M.S. Pinafore

or, The Lass That Loved A Sailor

The Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B.

(*First Lord of the Admiralty*)..... Scott Benson

Captain Corcoran

(*Commander of the H.M.S. Pinafore*) Scott A. Gorman

Ralph Rackstraw (*Able Seaman*) Anthony T. Rohr

Dick Deadeye (*Able Seaman*) Josh Conroy

Bill Bobstay (*Boatswain's Mate*)..... Cole Strelecki

Bob Becket (*Carpenter's Mate*)..... John Orbison

Josephine (*daughter of Captain Corcoran*) Kaoru Shoji

Cousin Hebe (*Sir Joseph's First Cousin*)..... Mary Kettlewell

Little Buttercup (*a Portsmouth Bumboat Woman*) Amanda Jenkins

Chorus of Sailors:

Tom Berg	Trenton Johnson	Niko Simmons
Mitchell Glen Engel	Matthew Polum	Sam Vinitsky
Jakob Gomez	Lowell Rice	Caroline van Vliet
Stephen Hage	Aaron Rolloff	Trevor Woggon

Chorus of Sir Joseph's Sisters, Cousins and Aunts:

Alyssa Ehlen	Therese Kulas	Katherine McCord
Maria Gisselquist	Kate Lamb	Hannah Pantano
Molly Hayes	Anna Maher	Mallory Rabehl
Ella Rose Katzenberger		Lizzy Schroeder

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**Covers:** Tom Berg (*Sir Joseph Porter, November 3*)  
Trevor Woggon (*Captain Corcoran, November 5*)  
Matthew Polum (*Ralph Rackstraw, November 11, evening*)  
Jakob Gomez (*Boatswain's Mate, November 4, evening*)  
Sam Vinitsky (*Dick Deadeye, November 12*)  
Stephen Hage (*Carpenter's Mate*)  
Anna Maher (*Josephine, November 11, evening*)  
Maria Gisselquist (*Buttercup, November 11, matinee*)  
Hannah Pantano (*Cousin Hebe, November 10*)

**Swing:** Katherine McCord

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Deck of the H.M.S. Pinafore, anchored in Portsmouth Harbor

Act I: Morning

15-Minute Intermission

Act II: Night

~ Please turn off all cell phones ~

~ No eating or drinking (except water) is allowed in the theatre ~

~ No smoking is permitted in the building ~

~ The use of cameras or recording of any kind is strictly forbidden ~

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Ahoy, matey! Welcome aboard Her Majesty's Ship *H.M.S. Pinafore*, "An Entirely Original Nautical Comic Opera," which first set sail on May 25, 1878, with the composer at the helm. There was never any question that the mission of this glorious vessel was always intended to satirize, in the most hilariously melodramatic ways possible, the rigid social class structure of Victorian England and to lampoon, in "Monty Python" style, the appointment of bureaucratic landlubber W. H. Smith as First Lord of the Admiralty.

Subtitled "The Lass That Loved a Sailor", this comic gem was the first of the outstanding, world-wide successes of our only too easily parted duo, filled with rousing sea shanties, stirring patriotic hymns and sly, operatic parody, as well as some of the most beloved characters in all their Savoy Operas. Flushed with the success of his first full-length opera, *The Sorcerer*, playwright and critic W. S. Gilbert was determined to improve on the quality of plot he constructed. Encouraged by producer and impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte, he proposed his latest scenario to Arthur Sullivan – apparently the highly distinguished composer of "The Lost Chord" and "Onward, Christian Soldiers" needed some convincing. Carte needed none; he had just created The Comedy Opera Company specifically to perform the works of these celebrated collaborators, and set about to fulfill all of their wishes and desires, within reason. If you haven't seen the delightful film *Topsy-Turvy*, seek it out at once and be amazed by how this temperamental triumvirate created a new genre of musical theater, despite tempests and tantrums.

The original production, first entitled *H.M.S. Semaphore*, featured a scaled-down but absolutely accurate replica of a British warship, based on Nelson's "Victory," and Gilbert ordered all the uniforms made by the same company that outfitted the Royal Navy. Even more remarkable was the revolutionary way in which he employed the chorus, not just as backdrop, but as an active component in the advancing of the plot. It's no wonder these operas are considered the foundation of the Great American Musical!

It may surprise you to learn that *Pinafore* was not an overnight success. Audiences were deterred by a miserable early summer heatwave, so Sullivan cleverly decided to perform an overture of excerpts on his Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden. Word of mouth soon boosted ticket sales, and the daring political/social satire of the opera made it the must-see event of the season.

Months passed, and *Pinafore* set sail on international waters. There were no copyright laws in America, and within a year eight productions were playing in New York, simultaneously! Pirated productions, featuring vulgar music added by overzealous managers, leggy showgirls dressed as sailors, and even an interpolated "Hallelujah Chorus" added to the "Pinaforemania" that was sweeping the nation. D'Oyly Carte could not allow this piracy to run amok since he was reaping no profits from these productions, so in the autumn of 1879 the three men sailed across the Atlantic with a cast drawn from the Comedy Opera Company. The first authorized performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in the United States opened at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York on December 1, 1879, with the librettist himself, sporting a false beard, amidst the sailors on deck.

From that time to this, there have been few evenings when "airs from that infernal nonsense *Pinafore*" could not have been heard wafting from some church auditorium, school multi-purpose room or community theater. So "be careful to be guided by this golden rule: Stick close to your desks and never go to sea, And you all may be rulers of the Queen's Naveel!"

— Gary Briggie

SYNOPSIS

Act I: After the sailors aboard *H.M.S. Pinafore* introduce themselves in song, Little Buttercup comes aboard, to sell provisions. Ralph (pronounced "Rafe") Rackstraw sings of his love for the Captain's daughter Josephine. She is supposed to marry Sir Joseph Porter, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who arrives this day (along with his gaggle of sisters, cousins, and aunts). Josephine tells her father, Captain Corcoran, that she has had the misfortune to fall in love with a common sailor (Ralph, of course). Being dutiful and proud, however, she will keep her feelings to herself and marry Sir Joseph. Even after meeting Sir Joseph and finding him pompous and boring, she still has the fortitude to spurn poor Ralph when he confesses his love. Rejected, Ralph is set on suicide, but is interrupted in the nick of time by a repentant Josephine. They plan their elopement, encouraged by Sir Joseph's relatives and the sailors – all but Dick Deadeye, who tries in vain to discourage the union.

Act II: A worried Captain Corcoran muses on the problems of his daughter and Sir Joseph. Buttercup hints to him of mysterious changes to come. Sir Joseph and the Captain reassure Josephine that "love levels all ranks," which she takes as encouragement about Ralph. Thanks to a warning from Dick Deadeye about the planned elopement, the Captain confronts Ralph and Josephine as they are leaving the ship. Sir Joseph, shocked by the Captain's use of the "big, big D" word, banishes him to his cabin, and sends Ralph off to the brig. Buttercup steps forward with an improbable tale of babies switched in infancy, and the resulting new identities produce three happy couples united in matrimony!

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Director Gary Briggie
Music Director Randal A. Buikema
Assistant Music Director Jean Orbison Van Heel
Stage Manager Abby Narveson
Set Designer & Scenic Painter Wendy Waszut-Barrett
Stage Carpenter Andrew Barrett
Costume Designer Barb Portinga
Lighting Designer Carl Schoenborn
Props Tom Berg, Stephen Hage, Malka Key
Cell Phone Lyrics Gary Briggie
Assistant Stage Managers Malka Key, Brianna Sullivan
Audio-Visual Technician / Assistant Stage Manager Owen Rounds
Live Streaming Audio & Visual Waldyn Benbenek, Alexander Gerchak
Wardrobe Supervisor Claire Bias
Set Construction Crew .. Gary Maher, Waldyn Benbenek, and cast members
Costume Helpers Rhea Sullivan, and cast members
Rehearsal Pianists Jean Orbison Van Heel, Brian Chan
Poster Design Tom McGregor, Mary Olson
Lobby Display & Photography Stephen Hage
Ticketing Julia Ockuly
House Managers Steve Schellenberg, Margie Tomsic
Phone Box Office Rhea Sullivan, Diane Hall, and cast members
Flyer, Program, and Ticket preparation Richard Rames
House Staff Recruitment Wendy Matsutani
COVID Safety Officers Wendy Matsutani, Lowell Rice
Mallory Rabehl, Barb Hovey, Malka Key

The Board:

Producer Stephen Hage
Labour Pool Coordinator Malka Key
Publicity Waldyn Benbenek
Treasurer John Orbison
Secretary Wendy Matsutani
Chorus Representatives Lowell Rice, Mallory Rabehl
Orchestra Representative Barb Hovey
Member at Large Tom Berg

ORCHESTRA

Conductor Randal A. Buikema
Orchestra Manager / Librarian Lorine Menzhuber
Violin I Victoria Athmann (*Concertmaster*), Derick Rehurek
Jill Lestina-Warnest, Beth Henningsen, Daniel Sadoff
Violin II Lorine Menzhuber, Theodora Wynhoff
Betsy Lofgren, Karen Neinstadt
Viola Ann Bur, Laura Bidgood, Aija Ronis
Cello Karin Holmberg Kimble, Nathan Hertz, David Downing
String Bass Ann Marie McIntire, Benjamin Kitt, Jason Anderson
Flute Suzanne Benson, Nancy Hagfors
Clarinet Barb Hovey, Barbara Sabal
Oboe Donna Votino, Eric Laska
Bassoon Elizabeth Brandt, Devin Dolquist
Horn Cristina Werling, Chris Hahn
Trumpet Andy Padula, Bob Zobal, Patrick Gefre
Trombone Charles Watt
Percussion Charley Rich, Kat Felicis Ioco
Accordion Aaron Raymond Barrett
Keyboard Jean Orbison Van Heel

GLOSSARY (in order of occurrence)

Act I:

Buttercup's wares:

jacky - twists of tobacco soaked in rum (for chewing)

I've treacle and toffee - molasses, or a similar syrup

soft tommy - a kind of bread

chicken and conies - wild rabbits

pretty polonies - smoked sausages named, like the sandwich meat, after

Bologna, the Italian town where they were first made

reddest beauty in all Spithead - body of water off Portsmouth

Dick Deadeye, Bill Bobstay (boatswain) - the last names of these sailors

refer to parts of a ship's ropes or rigging

to do her menial's duty - to be her humble servant

foremast hands - those sailors who serve "before the mast" (those below the rank of officer) [see Quarter-deck]

quarter-deck - the deck to the aft of the mainmast where only commissioned officers may promenade

ship a selvagee - a hank of rope yarn made into a strap or sling

he would commit solecisms that society would never pardon - gaffes, or breaches of etiquette

Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B. - Knight Commander of the (Order of the) Bath (high honor)

bang the loud nine-pounders go - the smallest of the battery of the cannons carried on Royal Navy ships (which also include 18 and 32-pounders)

pocket borough - refers to a parliamentary seat controlled by a single individual (usually wealthy landowner); these seats were abolished by the Great Reform Act of 1832

grog - rum diluted with water (from the nickname of the Admiral who began the custom of issuing the drink to sailors, "Old Grog," so called for the grogram cloak he usually wore)

British tar - slang for sailor

Cimmerian darkness - according to Homer's *Odyssey*, the Cimmerians lived in a land where the sun never shines

I am but a living ganglion of irreconcilable antagonisms - a bundle of nerves

Act II:

either at sixes or at sevens - to be "at sixes and sevens" is to be confused

bumboat woman - boat used to peddle provisions to ships in port

storks turn out to be but logs; bulls are but inflated frogs - references to Aesop's fables

turbot is ambitious brill - kinds of fish, turbot being preferred

gild the farthing - lowest denomination of British coin at the time

the prospect is Elysian - in Greek mythology, Elysian fields were the home of the blessed

cat-o'-nine-tails - (or simply "the cat") - a whip with nine knotted lashes used for punishment

fo'c'sle - short for "forecastle," the forward part of the ship, usually containing the crew's quarters

no telephone - the first telephone transmission was in 1876, and the first London exchange opened in June of 1878, a month after *Pinafore* did

Go, ribald, get you hence - a vulgar person using coarse language

to your cabin with celerity - haste

the consequence of ill-advised asperity - harshness of manner; ill temper

I practiced baby-farming - took in foster children

CONTRIBUTORS

Gilded Lordlings (\$1000 and over)

Patricia Fishel ❖ Stephen Hage and Lara Trujillo❖ Historic Stage Services LLC (in-kind) ❖ Holly MacDonald and John Orbison

Monarchs of the Sea (\$500 to \$999)

Bill and Nancy Jones ❖ Thomson Reuters

Rulers of the Queen's Navy (\$250 - \$499)

Phil Asgian ❖ Chris and Rolf Bolstad ❖ Carolyn J Sorenson ❖ Constance Walker

Foremast Hands (\$100 to \$249)

Joe Andrews ❖ Anonymous ❖ Laurie Brooks ❖ Marcy R. Frost ❖ Gayle Gaskill ❖ James and Marjorie Jacobsen ❖ Eric Johnson ❖ Ellen and Myron Just ❖ Eleanor and Calvin Kendall ❖ Ludwik Kulas ❖ Rachel and Jack Levitt ❖ Dean MacLaughlin and Majlis Jalkio ❖ Marcia Kull and Gary Maher ❖ Sandra Iovan and George Moilanen ❖ Derrill Pankow and Allen Bradley ❖ John Renwick ❖ Marian Rubenfeld ❖ Paul and Pat Sackett ❖ David and Mary Sandberg ❖ Michael Schoeberl ❖ John and Rebecca Shockley ❖ Linnea Sodergren ❖ Carolyn and Jeff Strandberg ❖ Steve, Michele and Kent Thompson

British Tars (up to \$100)

Anonymous (2) ❖ Susan Bardill and Peter Holbrook ❖ Jeff and Karyl Beeman ❖ Ruth Berman ❖ Eric Brook ❖ Nancy S Brown ❖ Linnea Caldeen ❖ Ian Ellis ❖ Gary Engstrand and Kathy Jensen ❖ Amy and Nabil Frankfurt ❖ Cynthia Fuller ❖ Jordan Fuller ❖ Harold Gosh ❖ Linda Gries ❖ Barbara Hauser ❖ Victoria Houseman and Richard Horton ❖ Carol Hovey ❖ Margaret Kirkpatrick ❖ Barb LeCloux ❖ Janice and Louis Leichter ❖ Joanne MacDonald ❖ Malfeld & Currie ❖ Jeffrey Petty ❖ Betsy Raasch-Gilman ❖ Shirley Sailors ❖ Steven and Mary Schier ❖ Lisa P. Sinclair ❖ Norma Solstad ❖ Cherie Stofer ❖ Marianna Stotesbury ❖ Wesley and Cheryl Volkenant ❖ Jean Wilhelm ❖ Alice Williams

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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, Fall 1996, Summer 2015), *Patience* (1980, 1990, 2002, 2012), *Iolanthe* (1981, 1992, 2004, 2016), *Princess Ida* (1982, 1993, 2006, 2018), *Ruddigore* (1983, 1995, 2009, 2020, 2022), *The Gondoliers* (1984, 1994, 2005, 2017), *The Mikado* (1985, 1996, 2007, 2019), *The Sorcerer* (Fall 1985, 1997, 2010, 2023), *The Pirates of Penzance* (1986, 1998, 2011, Fall 2022), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (1987, 1999, 2013), *Utopia, Ltd.* (1988, 2008), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1989, 2001, 2015), and *The Grand Duke* (1991, 2003, 2014).

We've also presented Sullivan's *The Zoo* (Fall 1996), Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* (2000, Fall 2017), and a concert version of Sullivan's *Rose of Persia* (Fall, 2001)

The GSVLOC will present *Utopia, Limited* in the Spring of 2024

The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company

presents

50th Mainstage Production

H.M.S. Pinafore

or The Lass That Loved a Sailor

DIRECTOR: GARY BRIGGLE
MUSIC DIRECTOR: RANDAL BUIKEMA
OCTOBER 27 – NOVEMBER 19, 2023
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