# THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

***or, Love & Duty in the Old West***

**THE CAST**

| | **The Gilbert Cast** | **The Sullivan Cast** |
|---|---|---|
| General Stanley | Scott Benson | Tom Berg |
| The Pirate King | Seth Steidl | Eric Sorum |
| Frederic | Andrew Peterson | Graham Remple |
| Samuel | Mike Tober | Matt Polum |
| The Sheriff | Waldyn Benbenek | Scott A. Gorman |
| Mabel | Maggie Benham | Mary Kettlewell |
| Ruth | Lara Trujillo | Lara Trujillo |
| Edith | Mallory Downing | Mallory Downing |
| Kate | Lily Miller | Lily Miller |
| Isabel | Liza Hartshorn | Liza Hartshorn |

**General Stanley's Family:**

Mary Mescher Benbenek
Katelyn Breen
Kelly Danger
Abigail Dawydenko-Johnson
Mary Gregory
Shawn Holt
Gracie Hutchinson
Lillian Schierbrock
Molly Rose Setter
Emma Shine
Maya (Gitch) Tober
Angela Walberg

**The Pirates and Sheriff's Deputies:**

Wilson Alness
Claire Bias
Xander Condie
Dylan Croeker
Tollef Currell
Jonathan Flory
Clyde Gerber
Daniel Haakenson
Stephen Hage
Tony Palumbo
Eric Pasternack
Lowell Rice
Sam Vinitsky

| **The Gilbert Cast** | **The Sullivan Cast** |
|---|---|
| Friday, October 30th, 7:30 pm | Saturday, October 31st, 2:00 pm |
| Sunday, November 1st, 2:00 pm | Friday, November 6th, 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, November 7th, 2:00 pm | Saturday, November 7th, 7:30 pm |
| Sunday, November 8th, 2:00 pm | Saturday, November 14th, 2:00 pm |
| Friday, November 13th, 7:30 pm | Sunday, November 15th, 2:00 pm |
| Saturday, November 14th, 7:30 pm | Friday, November 20th, 7:30 pm |
| Saturday, November 21st, 2:00 pm | Sunday, November 22nd, 2:00 pm |

♥♥♥♥♥♥

**Covers:** Molly Rose Setter *(Edith, November 13, 7:30)*
Kelly Danger *(Ruth, November 14, 2:00)*
Lillian Schierbrock *(Kate, November 14, 7:30)*
Emma Shine *(Isabel, November 15, 2:00)*

**Act I**: Nevada 1873, the northern shore of Lake Tahoe

*15-Minute Intermission*

**Act II:** An old church graveyard on the Tremorden Ranch, by moonlight

♥♥♥♥♥♥

*~ 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

When I was approached to direct this show, I had some trepidation. The wildly gifted savoyard Gary Briggle had beautifully brought the show to life only a few short years ago for the company's fourth production of ***Pirates***. I felt, "what more is there to say?" It was a perfect production.

Then I had an idea – and like so many ideas, it started with, "What if…?" In this case: What if the show took place in the United States? But when and where in the U.S.? Then I considered the Old West. But who are these pirates of the prairie? Who is the General? Where did he serve? And why in the world does he have so many daughters? How do Ruth and Frederic end up on the California-Nevada border? What would have to be true for all of these elements to cohere and delight? I dug into US history in the 19th century, added a dollop of whimsy, and things fell into place almost magically.

With this hugely talented cast, a first-rate production team, a full orchestra, and the phenomenal Randy Buikema as our music director, I feel confident that you are in for a real treat! I'm so pleased that you've chosen to saddle up for this rapturously re-conceived and reverently revised ***Pirates of Penzance***!

— Joe Andrews

## SYNOPSIS

Frederic, a prairie pirate's apprentice, falls head-over-heels in love with Mabel, one of many daughters of General Stanley. Frederic is due to be released from his apprenticeship as a prairie pirate on his 21st birthday, but there's a snag … of course. Although very much in love, his dedication to duty is unshakeable. Can he find a way to live happily ever after with Mabel?

♥♥♥♥♥♥

Since its founding in 1979 by Dick Fishel and Jim Hart, the company has produced all the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas: *Trial By Jury*, *The Sorcerer, H.M.S. Pinafore, The Pirates of Penzance, Patience*, *Iolanthe*, *Princess Ida*, *The Mikado, Ruddigore*, *The Yeomen of the Guard, The Gondoliers*, *Utopia, Ltd.* and *The Grand Duke*.

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

In March 2027, the GSVLOC will present ***The Grand Duke***. Our Spring concert will be Ralph Vaughan Williams's ***Dona Nobis Pacem.***

This production is is dedicated to the memory of company member, tenor L. Peter Erickson.

We invite you to take a survey to share with us your thoughts about our production of ***The Pirates of Penzance***.

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Adaptation and Stage Direction....Joe Andrews
Music Director ....Dr. Randal A. Buikema
Assistant Music Director .... Jean Orbison Van Heel
Stage Manager....Kevin Lindee
Set Designer & Artist .... Michael Hoover
Set Builder.... Philip Hoks
Costume Designer ....Bronson Talcott
Lighting Designer....Carl Schoenborn
Choreography Consultant....Zoe Kuester
Hair and Make-up Designer ....Kelly Danger
Props Coordinator ....Christine Keller
Overture Film .... Lee Stanford, Joe Andrews
Assistant Stage Managers....Nicki Price, Brianna Sullivan
Live Streaming Audio & Visual.... Waldyn Benbenek, Alexander Gerchak
Annika Johnson, Douglas Johnson
Wardrobe Supervisor....Bronson Talcott
Set Construction Crew ....Laura Inserra, and cast members
Rehearsal Pianist .... Jean Orbison Van Heel
Poster Design .... Tom McGregor, Mary Olson
Lobby Display & Photography.... Stephen Hage
Ticketing ....Steve Schellenberg
House Managers.... Steve Schellenberg, Rhea Sullivan, Jo Pasternack
Phone Box Office .... Wilson Alness, Lily Miller, Rhea Sullivan
Maya Tober, Holly Windle
Flyer, Program, and Ticket preparation....Richard Rames
House Staff Recruitment ....Lowell Rice

***The Board:***

Producer .... Stephen Hage
Labour Pool Coordinators .... Eric Pasternack, Ella Rose Katzenberger
Publicity ....Therese Kulas
Treasurer .... John Orbison
Secretary....Lowell Rice
Chorus Representatives ....Tom Berg, Mallory Downing
Orchestra Representative....Barb Hovey
Member at Large .... Charlotte Smith
Development Coordinator .... Anna Maher
Technical Coordinator....Waldyn Benbenek

## ORCHESTRA

Conductor....Randal A. Buikema
Orchestra Manager / Librarian ....Lorine Menzhuber
Violin I .... Victoria Athmann *(Concertmaster)*, Sue Bennefeld
Beth Henningsen, Amy Letson
Suki Sun, Maura Goodin, Derick Rehurek
Violin II....Lorine Menzhuber, Betsy Lofgren, Kir Tighe
Lorelei Giddings, Karen Neinstadt, Katherine Sabak
Viola.... Ann Bur, Louis Berg-Arnold, Laura Bidgood
Gretchen Cerny, Teresa Mager, Aija Ronis
Cello.... Sara Autumn Hertz, DJ Gallagher, David Downing
Karin Holmberg Kimble, John Orbison
String Bass ....Jason Anderson, Benjamin Kitt
Flute .... Nancy Hagfors, Kris Henderson
Holly MacDonald, Nancy Wucherpfennig
Clarinet.... Louise Buckley, Barb Hovey, John Orbison, Barb Sabal
Oboe.... Donna Votino, Lori Bovitz, Lorelei Giddings, Eric Laska
Bassoon .... Beth Brandt, Ford Campbell, Gene Scholtens
Horn .... Lilabeth Swalley, Ken Lovely, Bob Olsen, Cristina Werling
Trumpet.... Ben Alle, Mandy French, Andy Padula
Doug Snapp, Bob Zobal
Trombone ....Sarah Cooke, Matt Schlukebier
Tuba ....Aaron Rolloff
Percussion ....Charley Rich, Kat Felicis Ioco, Kevin McBeth
Keyboard.... Jean Orbison Van Heel
Auxiliary Percussion .... Mallory Downing, Dylan Croeker
Banjolele ....Lillian Schierbrock
Guitar .... Matt Polum, Xander Condie
Harmonica.... Wilson Alness

# GLOSSARY *(in order of occurrence)*

**"A guttier curly wolf ne'er broke a bangtail nor roped a dogie."** – A grittier tough guy never tamed a wild horse or secured a motherless calf."

**Prairie Schooner** – A horse or ox-drawn covered wagon used for passengers or freight hauling, widely used in the mid-nineteenth century for Westward migrations

**Iron Pyrite** – Commonly known as fool's gold, it is an iron sulfide with a metallic luster and a pale brass-yellow hue that gives it a superficial resemblance to gold.

**élan and distingué** – élan is style, vigor, liveliness, flash; distingué means someone who is distinguished, refined, elegant.

**Rockefellers and Vanderbilts** – The Rockefeller fortune was founded on oil, at one point controlling 90% of the United States oil production, and eventually included railroads in the West. The Vanderbilt fortune was built on shipping, especially during the Gold Rush, and railroads.

**"The Cartwrights"** –The Cartwright Family were characters in the Western television series ***Bonanza***, which ran on NBC from 1959 to1973.

**Men who do not honor fences** – Those who aren't bound by convention or rules that limit their freedom.

**From Marathon to Lexington** – in 490 BC. the Greeks defeated the Persians at Marathon (the messenger who died after running the 26 miles to Athens with the news somehow inspired modern "marathons"). The battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, were the first major military actions between the British Army and the patriot militias during the American Revolutionary War.

**I answer hard acrostics**– A parlor game similar to charades, with acted-out words, whose first letters then spell out the real message to be discovered.

**Another newer testament** – The Book of Mormon.

**The croaking chorus from *"The Frogs"* of Aristophanes** – a comedy produced in Athens in 405 B.C. (the croaking chorus goes "Berkekekex, koax, koax")

**Oath of old Hippocrates** – The Hippocratic Oath is an oath of ethics historically taken by physicians. It requires a new physician to swear to uphold specific ethical standards.

***Sanskrit* and *Sumerian*** – Sanskrit is a classical language from northern Indian region, belonging to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European languages. Sumerian is the oldest attested language, from ancient Sumer, now modern-day Iraq.

**Moroni and his clarion** – The angel Moroni reportedly visited Joseph Smith and guided him to the golden plates which were the source of the Book of Mormon. The image of Moroni blowing a trumpet is atop many Mormon temples.

**Winchester** – Winchester rifles are lever action repeating rifles manufactured by the Winchester Repeating Arms Company. The Model 1873 was marketed as "The Gun That Won the West."

**Bowie knife** – A Bowie knife has a large, fixed-blade sheath knife, created by Rezin Bowie in the early nineteenth-century for his brother James Bowie, who became famous for his use of a large knife in a duel.

**Donner Party** – The Donner Party was a group of American pioneers migrating to California in a wagon train. Delayed due to a multitude of mishaps, they spent the winter of 1846 – 1847 snowbound in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, some resorting to cannibalism to survive.

**When in Missouri all the pain of being dispossessed** – Early Mormon settlers faced hostility from Missouri residents, culminating in their forced expulsion in 1833. They fled to Illinois, establishing the city of Nauvoo. Subsequent hostility from Illinois residents led to the Mormon migration to the Utah Territory, beginning in 1847.

**May I suggest that in the West our destiny is manifest!** – Manifest Destiny, a term coined in 1845 by newspaper editor John O'Sullivan, was the 19th-century belief that the United States was divinely destined to expand across North America, spreading its culture, government, and institutions.

**Divine Emollient!** – something that softens, as poetry apparently does, even for pirates

**Pray observe the magnanimity we display to lace and dimity** – a thin cotton fabric.

## Act II

**unstained escutcheon** – shield displaying heraldic insignia; family crest

**five and a little bit over** – Gilbert originally set ***The Pirates of Penzance*** in 1877, forgetting that 1900 was not a leap year. As a result, Frederic's 21st birthday actually would have been 1944, not 1940. Our production corrects that error, by setting the piece in 1873. As a result, Frederic's 21st birthday would correctly be 1940.

**Silent matches** - Matches which were ignited by dipping them in a bottle of asbestos and sulphuric acid so that they ignited silently.

**Dark lantern** - A hand lantern with a sliding shutter to allow the user to hide or control the light, historically used by thieves, police, and others needing concealed illumination.

**Brigadier** – A one-star general. Brigadier generals commanded a brigade.

## CONTRIBUTORS

### **Divine Emollients** ($1000 and over)

Mary Mescher Benbenek and Waldyn Benbenek ❖ The Brodys ❖ Patricia Fishel ❖ Stephen Hage and Lara Trujillo ❖ Dean Laurance ❖ Holly MacDonald and John Orbison ❖ Pamela Showalter-Johnson

### **True Allies** ($500 to $999)

Anonymous ❖ Jonathan Flory ❖ Bill and Nancy Jones ❖ Janet McLandsborough ❖ Constance Walker

### **Honorary Members of Our Band** ($250 - $499)

Phil Asgian ❖ Beth Henningsen ❖ Paul and Pat Sackett ❖ Securian Financial

### **Friends Who Plow the Sea** ($100 to $249)

Robb Bass ❖ Tom Berg and Maureen Kane Berg ❖ Chris Burns ❖ Deborah Canning ❖ Lisa Citak ❖ Stewart Corn ❖ Connie Earl ❖ Diana and Philip Eitzman ❖ Dave Elgethun ❖ Gayle Gaskill ❖ Daniel Japuntich ❖ Ted and Susanna Kettlewell ❖ Tom Lind-MacMillan ❖ Joanne and Roderick MacDonald ❖ Richard and Diane Madlon-Kay ❖ Diane Malfeld and Craig Currie ❖ Pete and Karen Mattson ❖ Jeffrey Petty ❖ Chuck Rang ❖ Margaret Redmond and Steve Ring ❖ John Renwick ❖ Steve Russman ❖ Steven and Mary Schier ❖ Billy and Jenny Sparks ❖ Michele, Steve, and Kent Thompson ❖ Janet Zander and Mark Ellenberger

### **Pirate 'Prentices** (up to $100)

Anonymous (4) ❖ Scott and John Azbill-Salisbury ❖ Marsha Baer-Dennis ❖ Susan Bardill ❖ Shari Barr ❖ Jeff and Karyl Beeman ❖ Karen and Phil Bergem ❖ Ruth Berman ❖ Bruce Boese ❖ Eric Brook ❖ Jean Carlson ❖ Barbara Cohen ❖ Ian Ellis in memory of Jean and Jonah Ellis ❖ Caroline and Dutton Foster ❖ Amy Frankfurt ❖ Lori Gazda ❖ Delores Ginthner ❖ Wayne and Betty Gladfelter ❖ Tony and Kathleen Green ❖ Linda Gries ❖ Sher G ❖ Chris and Mike Hagburg ❖ Hageman/Dorn Family ❖ Neil and Uve Hamilton ❖ Linda and Michael Hancher ❖ Victoria Houseman and Richard Horton ❖ Carol Hovey ❖ Dave and Janet Hunter ❖ Anne Kersten ❖ James Kerwin ❖ Daniel Lapsley and Darcia Narvaez ❖ John and Laurie Larson ❖ Jan and Lou Leichter ❖ Catherine Lundoff ❖ P.T. and B.B. Magee ❖ Diane Malfeld and Craig Currie ❖ Demi and Diggitt Miller ❖ George Moilanen and Sandra Iovan ❖ Jean Montgomery ❖ Jane Moren ❖ Victoria Morse and William North ❖ Barbara and Larry Parks ❖ Betsy Raasch-Gilman ❖ John Rittman ❖ David Rounds ❖ Sarah Sheehan ❖ James and Meg Stephenson ❖ Ilze Strobela ❖ Wes and Cheryl Volkenant ❖ Alanna Walen ❖ Laurie Waters ❖ Larry and Sherri Wick ❖ Karyn Wrenshall ❖ Jeanne Zimmer ❖ Daniel Zimmer

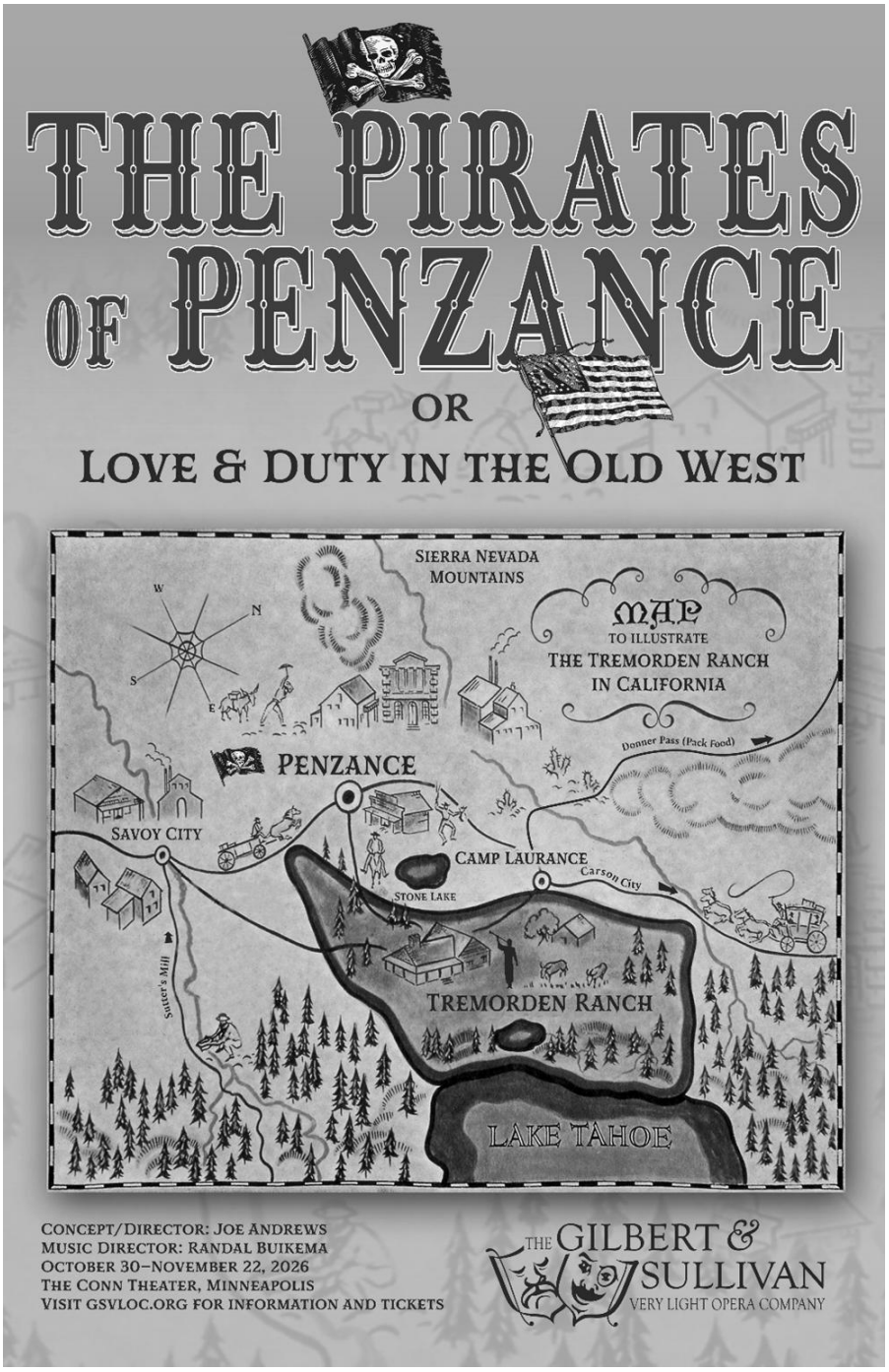
♥♥♥♥♥♥

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Clyde and Nancy Gerber *(for tumbleweed bouquets & grapevine topiaries)*, Trevor Woggon *(music arrangement)*, Barbara Sabal *(saloon keyboard loan)*, Dean Laurance *(garage used for set construction)*, Josh and Ashley Zapata-Palmer Photography, Orion Associates, and our gallant band of ushers, ticket sellers, and concessionaires.

# The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company

presents




**October 30 – November 22, 2026**

The Conn Theater
1900 Nicollet Avenue South
Minneapolis

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