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On behalf of YPC's Board of Trustees, the Young People's Chorus of New York City extends heartfelt congratulations to the Blue Hill Troupe as they celebrate another remarkable season!



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Special Thanks

The Blue Hill Troupe would like to thank the following for their valued contributions to our production of The Grand Duke:

Matt Civello, Louisa Fernandes, Artemis Loomis, Jeremy McEvilly, Jeremy Rosenbaum



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About the Blue Hill Troupe



Seth and Alida Milliken's yacht Shawna. Moored at East Bluehill, Maine, her deck was our first stage for H.M.S. Pinafore in August 1924.

Founded in 1924 in Bluehill, Maine, the Blue Hill Troupe has a three-part mission: bring high-quality theater performances to New York City audiences, raise money for New York City charities, and maybe, just maybe, have a little fun along the way. With all of the Troupe's net proceeds from ticket and advertising sales going to the charity partner, we have raised over \$12 million (adjusted for inflation) over the years.

Troupe members, aged 21 to 90-something, donate our time and energy to put on two full theatrical productions a year, usually a Broadway musical-type show and a Gilbert & Sullivan comic opera. We also present a series of concerts each winter. And if you indulge in a post-rehearsal or post-work session beverage, you might possibly hear a hearty rendition of "Hail, Poetry," our theme song, from *The Pirates of Penzance*.

Although we do boast a number of professional theater people in our ranks, most Troupe members make a living in other professions. But in our "spare" time, Troupers sing and act, design and build sets, create costumes and props, wire lighting and sound systems, edit and produce the program, sell tickets and usher. The quality of our productions is testimony to our dedication and love for the theater (and each other).

The Blue Hill Troupe has twice performed at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops, and we were featured for many years in the Metropolitan Museum concert series. We have also been profiled on "CBS Sunday Morning" and the MetroArts/Thirteen performance series.

The Blue Hill Troupe was named International Champion at the 22nd Annual International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, England, and also earned awards for Best Director, Best Supporting Actor, Best Female Voice, and Best Animated Chorus, for our production of Gilbert & Sullivan's *Patience*.

For more information visit: www.bht.org or ask any of us.

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Our leaders since 1970, costumed for the Spring Show in which he or she served. These pages are underwritten by them.



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Meet Our Charity Partner

Young People's Chorus of New York City

The Blue Hill Troupe is thrilled to again join forces with the Young People's Chorus of New York City (YPC) as our esteemed charity partner.



For over 30 years, YPC has celebrated diversity and strived for artistic excellence under the visionary leadership of Artistic Director Francisco J. Nunez, a renowned MacArthur Fellow and Musical America's 2018 Educator of the Year. The impeccable virtuosity and spectacular showmanship of YPC have captivated audiences worldwide.

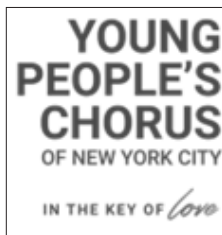
YPC's dedication to its mission empowers nearly 2,000 children from every corner of New York City annually. With its core after-school performance program, community choruses program, and collaboration with 18 public schools citywide, YPC has created unparalleled opportunities for young singers to shine.

What truly sets YPC apart is its commitment to inclusiveness. A staggering 85% of its talented choristers receive full scholarships, ensuring that no child is ever turned away from the joy of singing. These scholarships sustain YPC's comprehensive artistic program, which includes 550 hours of intensive group and private voice lessons, chorus rehearsals, dynamic dance and choreography training, exhilarating performance opportunities, and inspiring tours each year.

But the work of YPC goes beyond the stage. Through its College Bound program, YPC ensures that 100% of its choristers graduate from high school on time and are accepted to a college of their choice, while also providing essential support for their higher education journey. From free after-school subject tutoring and complimentary access to computers and Wi-Fi, to daily homework help and valuable workshops on financial literacy and college applications, YPC adds crucial value to its choristers' lives. With SAT/ACT tutoring, corporate networking opportunities, and assistance with college financial aid, YPC is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of leaders.

Since its inception, YPC has inspired over 40,000 children of all races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds to strive for excellence—not only on the stage but in every facet of life.

Join the Blue Hill Troupe as we extend our support to YPC and help it to continue transforming lives through the power of music.



*This page has been graciously underwritten in honor
of future generations of Blue Hill Troupers.*



YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHORUS OF NEW YORK CITY

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*These dedicated Troupe members who
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Fred Weintz

Barbara Erskine

1960 ~ Celebrating 65 years of service to the Troupe

Dottie Ashton

Adrian Hil

Richard Flicker

Maggie Stearns

1965 ~ Celebrating 60 years of service to the Troupe

John Ackley

Gale D'Luhy

Ersel Buckley Sharp

Caren Wilcox

1970 ~ Celebrating 55 years of service to the Troupe

Ralph Confessore

Micki Linen

Vicki Firth

Lavinia Meeks

Sally Gaudons

Torrey Robeck

Anne Finsthwait

Marie Simmons

Randy Lindel

1975 ~ Celebrating 50 years of service to the Troupe

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Denis Halton

Lianne Johnson Boller

Frank Harvey

Bolt Bolton-Smith

Gregory Hsu

Jane Coleman

Dee Lewis

Barbara Danser

Mouse Miles

Hal Danser

Victoria Schwatka

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Jane Southall

Vic Germack

1980 ~ Celebrating 45 years of service to the Troupe

Dan Cannizzo

Katy Rossow

Anne Fairbanks Childers

Jean Kunkel Weiler

Mac McMorris

1985 ~ Celebrating 40 years of service to the Troupe

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In Memoriam



F. Harvey Battel Loomis (BHT 1957) Master of the seas, lover of words, a lilting tenor, and a gentleman through and through, we mourn the passing this year of long-time Trouper, Harvey Loomis. He spent two decades anchoring the tenor chorus and was Troupe President in 1970.

Do you know where Donohue's Restaurant is? Can you sing this round: "Hello, Harvey Loomis. We would like a dry martini?"

If not, you might be a newcomer who is only now learning of some BHT traditions that have faded from the collective memory.

Nonetheless, Harvey deserves his own song for single-handedly creating three traditions we cherish today:

1. The President-wearing-a-silly-hat program photo started with Harvey. He was not sure who thought of it, but someone plunked the *Princess Ida* helmet on his head, told him to smile, and the tradition was born!
2. Improvising on a tradition of the President giving a small token of appreciation to each active member, it occurred to Harvey—having a brother-in-law in the decorative ceramic business—to reproduce the show poster on tiles to hand out during show week.
3. And finally, there is the tradition of the Shell necklace: While on an extended tour in the South Pacific following his presidency, Harvey acquired the necklace in Samoa and then asked a fellow Trouper on his way to New York to give the necklace to his successor, who in turn was all too happy to pass it on Hooray! Another tradition was born!



Harvey grew up in Manhattan, graduated from the Buckley School, Deerfield Academy, and Yale University in 1953, and spent three years in the Navy. A sought-after ocean-racing sailor, Harvey completed fifteen Newport-to-Bermuda races and many other ocean races around the world. When ashore and not traveling around the world, Harvey worked as a writer and editor for Time-Life Books. In addition to his career with the Blue Hill Troupe, Harvey continued singing when he moved to Sagaponack, NY in 1980, and joined the Choral Society of the Hamptons. He was also a trustee at the Hampton Library, served on the Tree Committee for Sagaponack Village, and sailed his iceboat, *Rose of Mecox*, when the pond froze.

Harvey leaves his wife and partner of 45 years, author Linda Bird Francke, three stepchildren, and 10 close nieces and nephews, including our own Al Loomis.

Harvey will be fondly remembered for his good cheer, his warm smile, the twinkle in his eyes, and his gift for making everyone feel loved. A memorial will be held on July 19, 2025 in Bridgehampton, NY. —Al Loomis

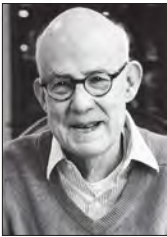
This page has been graciously underwritten by Mary and Win Rutherford.

In Memoriam



Garrison (Garry) Lane (BHT 1961), our good friend, and long-time member, passed away in February 2025. He joined the Troupe following a very musical four years at Princeton, where he sang with the Chapel Choir, the Glee Club Octet, the Nassoons, and the Triangle Club. After moving to NYC and joining the Troupe, he sang in a number of Gilbert & Sullivan productions. He also found time to sing with the close harmony group, The Nickelodeons. He even managed to find time for his day job as a bond salesman!

In 1968, he and his wife, "Hiho," moved to Greenwich, CT, where he continued singing with the Greenwich Choral Society, The Windjammers, and the Off Sounders. He was even a member of SAG and had roles in the movies *Roll Over* and *Heartburn*! Garry sang his way to heaven to join his beloved wife, and son, Sewell. He leaves two daughters, Marsha and Madeleine, their spouses, three grandchildren, and his companion of 15 years. You brought a lot of beautiful music to the Troupe, Garry. We remember you and miss you. —*Lila Vultee*



John Shroyer (BHT 1963) was a true Renaissance man: an esteemed lawyer, a talented viola player, and an accomplished surfer. But above all, he was a wonderful friend—caring and loyal, with a great sense of humor that would erupt into explosions of laughter. John was born in Michigan, grew up in Illinois and attended the University of Illinois and the University of Virginia Law School. He joined the firm of Dunnington, Bartholow and Miller, where he practiced as a trust and estates lawyer for an astounding 58 years! On arriving in New York, John discovered

BHT, which he joined as a Backstager in 1963. He also started summering in the village of Quogue, where he fell in love with surfing. He was still surfing at an advanced age, earning himself the nickname "OT" ("Old Timer") from fellow surfers. Throughout his life he also enjoyed playing viola in chamber music groups. John capped all his accomplishments with his very happy marriage, late in life, to Patricia Kelsey Schultz. During the pandemic, they relocated to North Carolina where they enjoyed being near Patty's children. John died last October at the age of 91. It was too soon. He is survived by Patty, his sister Janet C. Shroyer, three step-children, and five step-grandchildren. —*Michele Wood Ruhm*



Helen Barnet Kiesel (BHT 1982) was known by her nickname, "Tertia" (as she was the third Helen in her family). She met her future husband, Michael (BHT 1981) at a Troupe party at The University Club in 1982 and married in 1984. They were both members of the Backstage, where Michael worked with Byron Bell on scenery, and Tertia worked with the ladies in props. They both attended the Spring Show with a few friends every year of their marriage, and Tertia continued working for the Troupe selling tickets until just recently. Tertia will be remembered for her

sweetness and her very friendly and outgoing manner. But her very favorite was always Michael, who will continue to sorely miss his wife of 40 years, as will her numerous and devoted friends. —*Michael Kiesel*

In Memoriam



Nancy Eloise Wenzler (BHT 2004) was born on July 8, 1940, in Schenectady, NY. She grew up in Connecticut and Kentucky. Nancy graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio in 1962. She worked briefly as a social worker in Louisville before turning what was supposed to be a summer in Europe into a two-year adventure working in Munich, Copenhagen, and Lucerne. Nancy married Otto F. Wenzler in 1971, and they welcomed daughter Heidi (BHT 2024) in 1975, and son Fritz Patrick (F.P.) in 1977. Nancy and her family lived in Morristown, NJ, until she

moved back to NYC in 2003. The following year, Nancy became a member of BHT. A stalwart Backstage member, you could always count on Nancy saying an enthusiastic "YES!" whether she was tirelessly fireproofing set pieces, hauling whatever needed to be hauled in the back of her SUV, or just being available to step in at any moment. She was recognized for her fabulous attitude with the Wendy Ruhm Award in 2015. She was 84 when she passed in the summer of 2024. She is survived by her brother Jay Miller, her two children, and her nine grandchildren. —*Jackie Yang*



Marty Paige (BHT 2008) was born in Los Angeles, California, and spent his working career in the Merchant Marine. He sailed container ships as a first officer after having earned his Masters certificate from the Merchant Navy Academy. He came to New York City as a retiree in 2008, and bought an apartment in my brownstone on West 80th Street in Manhattan. As neighbors, we became friends. I told him that his skills would be very much appreciated in the Troupe, and he joined that year. For several years, Marty was a reliable, competent, hardworking builder of

sets, and could also be counted on to help with move-ins and strikes. Through his work on sets, Marty became friendly with Byron Bell. With the encouragement of Byron's wife Susie, an anthropologist at the American Museum of Natural History, Marty began working as a volunteer at the Museum. At the museum, he constructed dioramas and other exhibits for several years. Marty met his future wife, Shirley, who was originally from Colombia, here in New York City. They were married on May 7, 2021, at the Terrace surrounding Bethesda Fountain in Central Park. Marty died suddenly on February 2, 2025, while visiting Colombia with Shirley. He was 75. He was intelligent, creative, artistic, inquisitive, outgoing, and generous. He is greatly missed by his wife, other family members, and those in the Troupe and at the Museum who knew and worked with him. —*Peter Cohen*

"There Is No Light Without a Dawning" **by Helen Steiner Rice**

*No winter without a spring
And beyond the dark horizon
Our hearts will once more sing...
For those who leave us for a while
Have only gone away
Out of a restless, careworn world
Into a brighter day*



BHT Met & Marrieds

To our knowledge, at least 106 Troupers have met each other in the Troupe, and then married. (Marrying someone, and THEN getting them to join the Troupe does not count for joining the ranks of the M&Ms). Here are photos of just a small percentage of some of those glorious nuptial days!

Hail the bridegroom, hail the bride!



Gale Rainsford & John D'Luhy
12/07/1968



*Mimi Wood & Tom Ruhm**
10/05/1974



Holly Miller & Michael Watts
09/20/1975



Emily Kernan & John Rafferty
11/26/1977



Nancy Epstein & Randy Lindel
06/18/1978



Karen Nielsen & Stuart Bevan
01/26/1980



Alden Rockavell & Jamie Murphy
09/12/1981



Bea Blake & Ron Alexander
01/04/1985



Allison Egbert & Rob Brokave, III
02/18/1989

**deceased*



*Shirley Ferguson & Tripp Royal**
12/15/1990



*Kitty Brown & Gordon Stanton**
01/06/1996



Pam Eustis & Bob Miller
03/15/1997



Karen Stamm & Eli Gottlieb
05/10/2003



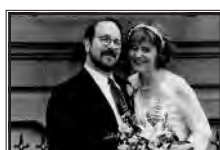
Nancy Hegy & Jeff Martin
05/06/1995



Kathleen Byrum & Greg Suss
01/27/1996



Jill Bloess & Tom Ruppel
09/26/1992



Vikki Simpkins & Jack Willoughby*
05/15/1999

M & M



Torrie Keefe & Doug Larson
05/06/2000



Dyllan McGee & Mark Weigel
10/02/1999



Suzanne Robbins & John Taylor
07/01/2000



Joss Bonnes & Fred Bowne
07/12/2003

Another BHT Met & Married Couple

*Salutes the BHT
and the
Young People's Chorus of NYC*

*From The Grand Duke.....
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"Man and Maid for aye united"*

*Tamara Jacobs BHT '79
David Epstein BHT '79
Celebrating our 39th Anniversary*



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BHT Met & Marrieds

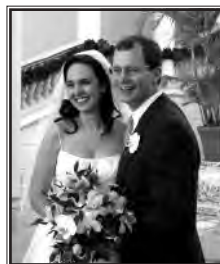
(continued)



Jen Smith & Bert Tunnel
07/10/2004



Lianne Johnson & Doug Boller
04/30/2005



Mari Garffer & Tom Lannamann
12/30/2005



Meredith Clark & Ken Kiernan
07/20/2012



Rachel McGregor & Joe Arnov
10/04/2014



Sylvia Szafarska & Sandy Dickinson
09/05/2020



Deb Cohen & Edgar Masters
02/29/2016



Emily Freed & Al Loomis
06/04/2021



Ella & Topher
11/01/2024

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Blue Hill Troupe*



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Years in the Making

By Emily Ruderman

On December 13, 2021, I found out that the Young People's Chorus was going to be the Blue Hill Troupe's charity partner for its 100th and 101st seasons. I was sitting in Win Rutherford's living room as part of the 100th Anniversary Planning Committee, taking minutes, and I immediately wrote down "need to figure out ways to keep them actively involved throughout the season. Create a partnership." But, wait—in 2021? Yes, you did that math right. This was a full two years before the start of the 100th season.

Since that fateful day, it became my mission to figure out how to collaborate with this incredible organization. When, suddenly, it hit me! Young People's Chorus. Blue Hill Troupe Winter Concerts. We are both choirs. Not only that, but we both have a deep passion for the arts and believe in the magic of making music.

Flash forward to 2023. In addition to planning the 100th Celebration Weekend, I became the 100th Committee liaison to Concerts and Concerts Co-Chair. In collaboration with my Co-Chair at the time, Paul Mitchell Wilder, and YPC stalwarts Gregory Peterson and Cornelia Iredell, we started the conversation around what a joint performance could look like. But, between the busy schedules of both BHT and YPC, it was proving difficult to nail down. So, we pivoted. Maybe we can't have this in our 100th season, but could we make it happen during our 101st?

One thing about me is that when I get an idea in my head, I do not let it die without a fight. Luckily, Lila Newman, Nancy Bloom, Lindsay Bogaty, and Francisco Nunez at YPC were right there with me. After many an email, Zoom call, and site visit, we were finally able to say, "on February 5, 2025, at St. Ignatius Loyola, the Blue Hill Troupe and YPC will perform in a combined concert."

And what a day it was. We performed to a standing-room-only crowd of 300+ people and raised over \$1,200 for YPC. Troupers got to see first-hand where our donations were going and experience the immense talent of the choristers, while the students got to see that music and theater can be part of your life for as long as you want it to be. When, all together, we sang "One Short Day" from *Wicked* and "Hail, Poetry" from *The Pirates of Penzance*, the crowd jumped to their feet. Mingling with kids ages 8 to 18, it was evident that this meant as much to them as it did to us. It was more than a performance; it was a celebration!

Why do I share this story? Because I'm proud. Proud of the partnership and the collaboration. Proud of the time and the effort. Proud of the songs and the smiles. Proud of the impact and the possibilities. We did it! It may have been years in the making, but it sure was worth every second.





Bravi to the Blue Hill Troupe!

The Six of Clubs

Win Rutherford, Rich Miller, Bebe Broadwater,
Angela Cason, Nick Firth, John Hargraves

Capital Campaign Donors

The BHT Board of Directors and Capital Campaign Committee gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the Troupers who donated to the BHT Fund Campaign. Thanks to the generous spirit of the Troupe, we have a new home in which to sing, rehearse, create and connect. Hail Poetry!

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The Blue Hill Troupe Pinafore Society was established to strengthen the Troupe and secure important resources to ensure our ongoing and future stability.

The Troupe welcomes contributions from our audiences, members of the Troupe and anyone who is inspired to support us and our efforts to present high-quality, philanthropically-driven community theater productions. Corporate matching gifts are also welcome!

We are pleased to recognize the many individuals, both inside and outside the Troupe, who have made a contribution in support of our work during the past twelve months.

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We proudly celebrate
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with Young People's Chorus
of New York City, and its
enduring commitment to the
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Young People's Chorus of NYC

Long live the Blue Hill Troupe!



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Julie Schwartz
Jay Sherwood
Nancy Moore Simpson
Jackie Yang
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To request more information, contact development@bht.org
Thanks.

list as of April 1, 2025

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BHT Backstage



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and the
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Past Productions and Charities

SEASON	FALL SHOW	SPRING SHOW	CHARITY
2024-25	<i>Cinderella</i>	<i>The Grand Duke</i>	Young People's Chorus of NYC
2023-24	<i>Anything Goes</i>	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	Young People's Chorus of NYC
2022-23	<i>The Addams Family</i>	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	LSA Family Health Service
2021-22	<i>Urinetown</i>	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	LSA Family Health Service
2019-20	<i>Mystery of Edwin Drood</i>	<i>No Production</i>	Rocking the Boat
2018-19	<i>Once Upon A Mattress</i>	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	NYC Outward Bound Schools
2017-18	<i>The Boy Friend</i>	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	GallopNYC
2016-17	<i>Pirates of Penzance</i>	<i>City of Angels</i>	Rocking the Boat
2015-16	<i>A Little Night Music</i>	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Children's Cancer and Blood Foundation
2014-15	<i>Lucky Stiff</i>	<i>Patience</i>	Jewish Home Lifecare
2013-14	<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i>	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC)
2012-13	<i>Grand Hotel</i>	<i>The Mikado</i>	GO Project
2011-12	<i>A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum</i>	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	I Have A Dream Foundation-New York
2010-11	<i>Little Shop of Horrors</i>	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	The Carter Burden Center for the Aging
2009-10	<i>Brigadoon</i>	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	The New York Foundling
2008-09	<i>Into the Woods</i>	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Inwood House
2007-08	<i>Mame</i>	<i>Princess Ida</i>	Covenant House New York
2006-07	<i>How to Succeed in Business</i>	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	The New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
2005-06	<i>Follies</i>	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	The Doe Fund
2004-05	<i>High Society</i>	<i>The Grand Duke</i>	Student Sponsor Partners
2003-04	<i>Lady, Be Good!</i>	<i>Iolanthe</i>	The Jericho Project
2002-03	<i>The Most Happy Fella</i>	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Young People's Chorus of NYC
2001-02	<i>Sweeney Todd</i>	<i>The Mikado</i>	The Children's Aid Society
2000-01	<i>Company</i>	<i>Patience</i>	Urban Pathways, Inc.
1999-00	<i>The Mystery of Edwin Drood</i>	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center
1998-99	<i>Princess Toto</i>	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	The Family Academy
1997-98	<i>The Pajama Game</i>	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Yorkville Common Pantry
1996-97	<i>Cabaret</i>	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Interfaith Neighbors, Inc.
1995-96	<i>The Apple Tree</i>	<i>Princess Ida</i>	The Burden Center for the Aging
1994-95	<i>1940's Radio Hour</i>	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Partnership With Children, formerly The Big Sisters Inc.
1993-94	<i>A Little Night Music</i>	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	God's Love We Deliver
1992-93	<i>Mr. Cinders</i>	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Children of Bellevue
1991-92	<i>She Loves Me</i>	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Veritas - Young Mothers Program
1990-91	<i>Something's Afoot</i>	<i>The Mikado</i>	The Studio in a School Assn.
1989-90	<i>Little Mary Sunshine</i>	<i>Patience</i>	Goddard Riverside Comty. Ctr.
1988-89	<i>Bon Voyage</i>	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Hospital Audiences
1987-88	<i>Down in the Valley</i>	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	The Door
1986-87	<i>A Slice of Life</i>	<i>The Grand Duke</i>	Prep for Prep
1985-86	<i>Mistrial by Jury / Cox & Box</i>	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	The Young Adult Institute
1984-85	<i>The Zoo</i>	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association

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Past Productions and Charities

SEASON	SPRING SHOW	CHARITY
1984	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	The Little Theatre at Hunter College
1983	<i>Princess Ida</i>	The Children's Art Carnival
1982	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center
1981	<i>The Mikado</i>	Youth Counseling League
1980	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	Union Settlement College Readiness Prog.
1979	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Leake & Watts Children's Home
1978	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Bloomingdale House of Music
1977	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Association of Mentally Ill Children
1976	<i>Patience</i>	Fountain House
1975	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association
1974	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	The New York School Volunteers
1973	<i>Iolanthe</i>	The Fortune Society
1972	<i>The Grand Duke</i>	Odyssey House Mothers Program
1971	<i>The Mikado</i>	The New York School Volunteers
1970	<i>Princess Ida</i>	The New York City Mission Society
1969	<i>The Pirates of Penzance & Trial by Jury</i>	Third Street Music School Settlement
1968	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Third Street Music School Settlement
1967	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	Yorkville Youth Council
1966	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1965	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Yorkville Youth Council
1964	<i>Patience</i>	The Vocational Advisory Service
1963	<i>Iolanthe</i>	The Vocational Advisory Service
1962	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1961	<i>The Mikado</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1960	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore & Trial by Jury</i>	Multiple Sclerosis Society
1959	<i>Princess Ida</i>	Multiple Sclerosis Society
1958	<i>The Pirates of Penzance / Cox & Box</i>	Travelers Aid Society
1957	<i>Ruddigore</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1956	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1955	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	The Legal Aid Society
1954	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	The Legal Aid Society
1953	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Goodwill Industries
1952	<i>The Sorcerer</i>	Goodwill Industries
1951	<i>The Pirates... & Trial by Jury</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1950	<i>The Mikado</i>	Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital
1949	<i>Patience</i>	Lenox Hill Hospital
1948	<i>Princess Ida</i>	Lenox Hill Hospital
1947	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Lenox Hill Hospital
1946	<i>Ruddigore</i>	New York City Cancer Committee
1945	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	New York City Cancer Committee

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Past Productions and Charities

SEASON	SPRING SHOW	CHARITY
1944	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore & Trial by Jury</i>	New York City Cancer Committee
1943	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association
1942	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	The Bargain Box
1941	<i>The Sorcerer & Trial by Jury</i>	The Bargain Box
1940	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Everybody's Thrift Shop
1939	<i>Patience</i>	West Side Thrift Shop
1938	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore & Trial by Jury</i>	Association for the Aid of Crippled Children
1937	<i>The Grand Duke</i>	Everybody's Thrift Shop
1936	<i>The Mikado</i>	Christadora House
1935	<i>Princess Ida</i>	Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service
1934	<i>Utopia, Limited</i>	Seaman's Church Institute of New York
1933	<i>The Yeomen of the Guard</i>	Stuyvesant Square Hospital
1932	<i>Iolanthe</i>	Girls Service League of America
1931	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	American Colony Aid Association
1930	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	New York Skin and Cancer Hospital
1928	<i>Patience</i>	French Hospital
1927	<i>The Gondoliers</i>	Bluehill Hospital/East Bluehill Church
1926	<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Bluehill Hospital/East Bluehill Church
1925	<i>The Mikado</i>	Bluehill Hospital/East Bluehill Church
1924	<i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	

Congratulations to the cast and crew!
We're sure you'll be marvelous!



~ BHT Concerts 2024-2025 ~



*The Blue Hill Troupe
2024-2025 Board
offers a royal salute
to this season's
magnificent productions!*

The Grand Duke – A Rediscovery Story

by Martin Everall

The Grand Duke, the fourteenth and final collaboration between Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan, was viewed, through much of the 20th Century, as not a success, and certainly, it did not in its initial run enjoy the popularity of *The Mikado* or *H.M.S. Pinafore*, but its reputation has been steadily growing as more groups tackle this lesser-known work. The opening night was actually quite well received: the music was celebrated, but reviews considered Gilbert's libretto full of clever ideas, but problematic.

Many of the cast were newer to the D'Oyly Carte Company, the big name from earlier works being Rutland Barrington as Ludwig. Particularly fine praise was given to Ilka Pálmay as Julia (an interesting side note: Ms. Pálmay was Hungarian and spoke with a thick accent, giving rise to the ultimate topsy-turvy idea—the other characters are technically speaking German, but with English accents; Julia being English speaks German with a German accent!)



Barrington and Pálmay
original cast - 1896

The initial run of 123 performances, while disappointing, also hardly suggests an outright failure, and part of this was, no doubt, due to the changing taste of the London theater-going public: musical theater was in, and operetta was seen as old-fashioned. The G&S libretti were often trimmed after opening, but the cuts to *The Grand Duke* were odd and perfunctory—a few musical repeats, and 3 full musical numbers from Act II were cut—whereas the bigger issue is really the overwritten dialogue. *The Grand Duke* has by far the most dialogue of any G&S work. Gilbert did consider revising the work for a 1909 revival, but, sadly, died before realizing this.

Throughout much of the 20th century, professional performances were non-existent and only a few amateur groups (BHT being one) tried to tackle the work, partly because the only extant score was poor, and also, because there were no recordings of the work. This all changed in 1975 when, in honor of the 100th Anniversary of the D'Oyly Carte company, a concert version was staged, and more importantly recorded. People everywhere were finally able to hear the score, and were surprised at just how good it was.

It is generally considered that, rather than being poor, *The Grand Duke's* issue is that it needs a serious pruning, and, as there is not a particular performance tradition, this leads companies to cut in various ways: a sort of *Grand Duke* choose your own adventure. Even as sturdy a work as *The Pirates of Penzance* gets adapted (see the new Broadway version), so certainly, this only seems reasonable here!

After languishing for the better part of a century, *The Grand Duke's* fortunes are in the ascendant. It now regularly sees revivals, including by professional companies, and is seen on the stage in the US, the UK, and around the world every year. It has been a joy putting together this year's take on the world of Pfennig Halbpennig: we hope you delight in the result as much as we do!

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Frontstage at Work



Put me in, coach, I'm ready.



Fifteen or sixteen stars in the Troupe, all jealous of each other



David P, Dan & Sam: I've got the hoarse horse right here.



Tender? Truthful? True? Comely? OK, we'll give you "comely"!



I'm a child? Untaught? Homely? Absolutely NOT!



Earnest Young and Harold Levine. No? Ohhhh. Ernest: Neal Young. Herald: Matt Levine



We're just, um, a random group of, er, friends. Would you like a sausage roll?



The Wizard will see you now: Head Wizards Francisco Nunez (YPC) and David Pastelnik (BHT)



Now he's thinking: Make her a tender, gentle, submissive, affectionate (but not too affectionate) child-wife. And she's thinking: Are you nuts? Do you know me at all?



In one production, conspiracy members foreswore sausage rolls in favor of the disembodied heads of friends, neatly avoiding those greasy pies.

This page has been graciously underwritten by Jane Barnes.

BHT KIDS

Future Princes and Princesses...



Ava Joan Andrus



Lochlan and
Caledon Arnow



Ike and Tessa Asher



Will and Lucy Auchincloss



Niya Baboor



Chris Bernd



Nolan Chung



Tessa and Zella
Confessore



Arthur and Millie Cubbin

**Nothing is impossible.
The word itself says,
"I'm Possible."**

– Audrey Hepburn

...Or Dukes and Duchesses



Leon Angelo
Feltman-Miller



Sadie Goodman



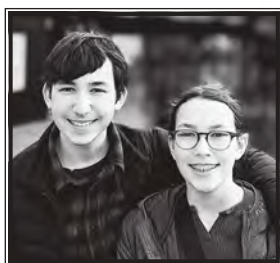
Sequoia Hughlett



Alexander and Amelia Kiernan



Aurora
Parker-Kroh



Zach and Olivia Levine



Ben Miller



Maddie Noonan



Lila, Ben, and Juliette Roselle



Cora and Audrey Swenson



Caroline and Pino Tillson

The Grand Duke Glossary

Created with the aid of *The Gilbert and Sullivan Lexicon*, by Harry Benford, an indispensable reference work

Setting

Statutory Duel: a legally prescribed method of settling a grievance

Pfennig Halbpennig: penny halfpenny, thus not exactly an impressive place



Comedian/Comedienne: a more general term for actors, not intending to imply the troupe is a comic troupe

Dummkopf: (German) literally Dumbhead, i.e., stupid

Krakenfeld: (German) the field of the Kraken, a mythical squidlike sea monster

Speisesaal: Capital of Pfennig Halbpennig, in German literally, Dining Hall

Act I

Sposo: (Italian) bridegroom

Homely: not unattractive, merely homelike and cozy

Rate: berate

Bilious: anything that upsets the liver

Louis Quatorz: Louis the 14th, King of France for most of the 17th Century



Tuppenny: two pennies (a pittance)

"All right at night": short for "all right on the night" — an English theatrical phrase, usually applied to a bad rehearsal, along the lines of a bad dress rehearsal means a good performance

"square the press": bribe a critic for favorable reviews

Hoydens: brazen rude girls

Wheelers and leaders: the team of horses that make up a four-in-hand. Wheelers are those harnessed closest to the carriage, leaders those harnessed in front

Fin: hand

Gerolstein: an Offenbach opera: *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*

Vernal: springlike

Diurnal: daily

Agitato: Italian music term, meaning agitation

Muckled: a variant of mickle, a word in Scottish dialect meaning talking with a big mouth

Muff: a bungler

Gibbet: a frame for hanging criminals

Duello: (Italian) duel



Falchion: a broad short, curved sword

Exigence: urgent need

Ipsso facto: (Latin) the act itself

Dissemble: hide the truth

Penny roll: the smallest bread that can be purchased at a bakery

Mock-turtle soup: made of veal or calf's head, and flavored to taste like the more expensive turtle soup

Waterbury watches: watches made in Waterbury, CT, cheap enough for anyone to own



Verbam sat: short for the Latin "Verbum sat sapienti" a word to the wise is sufficient

Tollolish: a nonsense word implying pleasant and permissive. No doubt, Lord Tolloller from *Iolanthe* would approve!

Act II

Eloia: apparently a made-up word that sounds Greek

Opopanax: perhaps a variant of opopanax, Greek for all healing. However, in Victorian England, there existed a line of perfume advertised as Opopanax

Defile: move in single file

Till all is blue: until daybreak

Lesbian: from the island of Lesbos, now known as Mytilene. In the ancient world, it was renowned for the quality of its wine

Diergeticon: perhaps a misspelling of Diergerticon, meaning a rousing song or anything exciting

Millstone nether: the lower stone used for grinding grain in a mill

Leman: a lover or paramour, not always with a positive connotation

Corse: corpse

Avaunt: begone

Chimerical: wildly imaginative, like the chimera, a fabled beast with a lion's head, goat's body, and dragon's tail. It also breathed fire

Super: see supernumerary below

Trooper: a cavalryman

Epithalamia: (plural) nuptial songs

Broach: open

Marsala: a rather sweet, syrupy wine from Marsala, in Italy



Bumpers: glasses filled to the brim. Pirates know about bumpers

Pommery: a particularly good French wine (see our article for fun facts about the 1874 vintage)

Supernumeraries: stage extras

Merovingian: pertaining to the Frankish dynasty (now part of France) c. 500-750 A.D. Almost as old as the Kraken!



Two half-quarters and a makeweight: in a bakery, two smaller loaves with a bun thrown in

Banns: formal notices of marriage

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"You must eat a sausage roll!"

By Pamela Eustis Miller

My stately Great-Aunt Flavilla Normington, who ran the school lunch programs for the public schools in Michigan during the 1920s, happened to make astoundingly tasty Sausage Rolls. Here's an update to make it easier, but still just as tasty! Enjoy.

Ingredients:

- Frozen Puff Pastry, 2 sheets
- Pork Sausage, 16 oz. (1 lb. tube)
- Egg Yolk (beaten with a splash of milk)



Directions:

1. PreHeat your oven to 375 degrees (F).
2. Line your baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Mix up your 1 lb. of Pork Sausage. You can leave it as-is, or add some herbs (we use sage, thyme, nutmeg, and pepper) and mix well with your hands. Let rest in the fridge for about 15-20 minutes.
4. Roll out your rectangular Puff Pastry sheets on a floured board. One at a time, put a roll of the sausage on the long edge of your rectangle. Roll it up tightly, stopping with about 1" of pastry. Brush that bit with your egg wash (to glue it together), then finish rolling. Do the next piece of pastry.
5. Leave as a whole roll or cut them to the size you want.
6. Place the rolls, seam down, on the parchment paper.
7. Carefully cut some diagonal slits on top: brush the tops of the rolls with egg wash.
8. Bake in your preheated oven for about 20 minutes.
9. Make-Them-Crispy part! Take them out of the oven after 20 minutes and carefully remove them to a plate. Add a wire mesh grid that fits your baking sheet (on top of the parchment paper), then carefully put the sausage rolls back on the grid, and return them to the 375 degree oven for another 10 minutes.

Let them cool for 5-10 minutes (they stay warm for a while) and serve with grainy or spicy mustard or A1 Brown Sauce.

Make sure to refrigerate them if you don't eat them all. Reheat for a snack or take them cold for picnics.

This page has been graciously underwritten by Tracy Bidleman.

*“In the period Socratic every dining-room was Attic”
(Which suggests an architecture of a topsy-turvy kind)
-Ludwig, The Grand Duke*



Photos by Phillip Reed



*Thanks for the Music!
Bravi to the
Young People's Chorus
of New York City
and to the
Blue Hill Troupe*

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Backstage at Work



Sylvia & Ellyn: If her dress is badly fitting...



Roddy, Carey, Christine, Nina, clearly having the time of their young lives.



Ted and Rick are clearly the brains of the operation...



...while Artemis and Al are pretty obviously the brawn.



For ten years past I've ruled a theatrical company! A man who can do that can rule anything!



They might be planning to paint the costumes...cast, beware!



Jeff? Jackie? I'm Bob. Have you ever done theater production work?



Jackie is NEVER surprised by any setback. Well...



Our most important production decision today: Which bar are we going to?



The lovely Rachel, demonstrating how to throw oneself into working on props



Emily & Amanda, the chairs of the Props Committee?

This page has been graciously underwritten by Judy Orlando and Jack Tamagni.

*Congratulations to
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Director's Note

Lies spouted by government leaders. Rich people hoarding money and resources. Law enforcement figures operating without restraint and with impunity. Confusing legislation and legal arguments. Deceitful politicians who will sacrifice their morals for financial gain. Fake news. Excessive government red tape. A groundswell of unhappiness with the current state of affairs among the populace. A hope, a wish, a prayer that somehow, some loophole somewhere in the law could fix everything. And: musical comedy.

Welcome to Pfennig Halb-Pfennig in 1956, the same year as the Budapest uprising against Communist rule. (If you want to find Pfennig Halb-Pfennig on a map, it is directly north of South Pfennig Halb-Pfennig.)

One of the things I deeply love about Gilbert & Sullivan is that, like all great art, it is both timeless and timely. G&S wrote an opera about a fictional Grand Duchy in the past, but the situations in which the characters find themselves are not confined to any earlier era. We thought it would be illuminating to tell this story in a new setting, illustrating both its relevance and its status as a cautionary tale while at the same time remembering that laughter is both a powerful force and excellent medicine.

I hope you enjoy our interpretation of the Troupe's 2005 adaptation, which incorporates the best of both Sullivan's glorious score and the wit and wisdom and humor of Gilbert's book, as experienced by a struggling theatrical troupe in 1956. And speaking of 1956: Hey, Budapest, how's that "overthrowing tyranny" thing going?

I guess, to paraphrase the Notary, we all have our roles to play.



Cast and crew of The Grand Duke at the 2005 International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival

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OR, THE STATUTORY DUEL

Written by

William S. Gilbert

Composed by

Arthur S. Sullivan

April 30 - May 4, 2025

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of New York City**

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Gary Slavin

Music Director

David Schmidt

Assistant Director and Choreographer

Janet Bushor

Executive Producers

Sandy Dickinson and Jennifer Dorre

Production Stage Manager

Mark Justin

Set Design

Ted Cubbin

Construction

Bob Miller and Carey Ngai

Technical Design

Rick Churchill

Costume Design

Ken Rush

Lighting Design

Betsy King Militello and Sam Militello

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Opening Cast (April 30 Eve; May 2 Eve; May 3 Mat)

Closing Cast (May 1 Eve; May 3 Eve; May 4 Mat)

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance)

ELSA	Julie Feltman Phoebe Rosenblum
BERTHA	Lesley Berry* Alice J. Lambert
OLGA	Manya Gaver-Holmes Alex Elkins
GRETCHEN	Sarah Rhoads Deborah Doroshow
LUDWIG	Ken Harmon* Paul Mitchell Wilder
LISA	Amy Hughlett Lauren Cupples*
DR. TANNHÄUSER	Michael Macaione* (both casts)
ERNEST DUMMKOPF	Neal Young* Chazmond J. Peacock*
JULIA JELLICOE	Jennifer Dorre Capron Levine
MAID	Olivia Sohmer Rosenbaum (both casts)
RUDOLPH	David Pasteelnick David Bell
SECRET POLICE:	Ryder Kessler, Nancy Blagman, Haley Huxley, Michael Bodsworth, Katie Holler, Edwardyne Cowan*, Dan Rosenbaum, Ian McGrath
THE BARONESS VON KRAKENFELDT	Suzanne R. Taylor Dena Cubbin
WAITER	Michael Bodsworth (both casts)
HAROLD, AN ATTACHÉ TO THE PRINCE OF MONTE CARLO	Geoff Gaebe Matt Levine
THE PRINCE OF MONTE CARLO	Richard J. Miller B. Tyler Parker
THE COSTUMIER	Gregory Peterson (both casts)
THE PRINCESS OF MONTE CARLO	Julia Farina Francesca Serritella

SUPERNUMERARIES: Francesca Serritella (O), Julia Farina (C), Matt Levine (O),
Geoff Gaebe (C), Sami Sallaway, Alice J. Lambert, Matt Berry, Jonathan Tilley

TAP DANCERS: Ryder Kessler, Deborah Doroshow, Edwardyne Cowan*,
Cameron Moser, Maria Plantilla

CAN-CAN DANCERS: Francesca Serritella (O), Julia Farina (C), Matt Levine,
Geoff Gaebe, Sami Sallaway, Alice J. Lambert

ENSEMBLE: Allison Benko, Matt Berry, Nancy Blagman, Michael Bodsworth,
Edwardyne Cowan*, Rachel Goodman, Katie Holler, Haley Huxley, Ryder Kessler,
John Leonard, Ian McGrath, Sam Militello, Cameron Moser, Maria Plantilla,
Sigourney B. Romaine, Jr., Dan Rosenbaum, Olivia Sohmer Rosenbaum, Sami
Sallaway, Yosra Thabet, Jonathan Tilley, Judy Weis, Jessica Zhang

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ACT ONE—Backstage and in the Town Square

Won't it be a pretty wedding?..... Ensemble with solos
 Pretty Lisa, fair and tasty Lisa & Ludwig with Ensemble
 By the mystic regulation Ludwig with Ensemble
 Were I a king in very truth..... Ernest with Ensemble
 How would I play this part Julia and Ernest
 My goodness me! What shall I do? Ludwig with Ensemble and Secret Police
 Ten minutes since I met a chap Ludwig with Ensemble
 About a century since Notary with Julia, Lisa, Ernest, and Ludwig
 Now take a card, and gaily sing Julia, Lisa, Ernest, Notary, and Ludwig
 The good Grand Duke..... Secret Police
 A pattern to professors of monarchical autonomy..... Rudolph with Secret Police
 As o'er our penny roll we sing..... Baroness & Rudolph
 Finale, Act I: Come hither, all you people Company

ACT TWO—The Performance Hall of the Grand Ducal Palace

As before you we defile Ensemble
 Your loyalty our ducal heart-strings touches Ludwig with Ensemble
 Yes, Ludwig and Julia are mated/Take care of him..... Lisa with Ludwig
 Now Julia, come, consider it Julia & Ludwig
 Your Highness, there's a party at the door Ensemble, Baroness, and Ludwig
 Now away to the wedding we go Baroness with Ensemble
 So ends my dream..... Julia
 If the light of love's lingering ember Julia and Ernest
 Well, you're a pretty kind of fellow..... Ernest and Rudolph
 Come, bumpers—aye, ever so many Baroness with Ensemble
 Why, who is this approaching?..... Ludwig with Ensemble
 The Prince of Monte Carlo..... Harold with Ensemble
 His Highness we know not..... Ludwig
 We're rigged out in magnificent array Prince and Princess of Monte Carlo
 with Supernumeraries
 Dance Company
 Take my advice—when deep in debt Prince with Ensemble
 Hurrah! Now away to the wedding..... Ensemble
 Finale, Act II: Happy couples, lightly treading Company

Music Director and Conductor: David Schmidt

Violin 1 Deborah Nixon (Concertmaster),
 Marc Szammer, Thomas Purcell
 Violin 2 Sooyeon Jun, Yoonjung Hwang
 Viola Brian Thompson, Luke Quintanilla
 Cello James Pedersen, Dan Shevlin
 Bass Sarah Favinger
 Flute/Piccolo Justin Lee, Bianca Morris
 Oboe Taemin Ahn/Brian Shaw
 Clarinet Fran Novak, Alice Petre

Bassoon Yuki Higashi/Emilija Irvin,
 Kevin O'Brien
 Horn Todd Olszewski*,
 Rebecca Milzoff Silverstein*
 Trumpet Caitlin Featherstone/Oscar Thorp,
 Pierce Yamaoka
 Trombone Jacob Ogbu, Anthony Santiago
 Bass Trombone Alex Slomka
 Percussion Scott Still

*Orchestra personnel may have changed since
 time of printing.*

* Members of the Blue Hill Troupe

*This page has been graciously underwritten in loving memory
 of Frederic H. and Radmila Bentley*

THE GRAND DUKE, A NOT-SO-BRIEF SYNOPSIS

By David Bell

Wacky. Zany. Over the top. That's Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Grand Duke*. It's a lot of fun, but wild. Because the story is one of Gilbert and Sullivan's most complex goofs, you might enjoy the show more after reading the plot over in advance.

Setting the scene: 1956. Location: A made-up tiny Germanic nation called Pfennig-Halbpfennig. The curtain comes up on a group of excited performers prepping for a quick "during a break from rehearsal" wedding for two of their colleagues, as well as for their production of *Troilus and Cressida*. Theater people! A theatrical troupe managed by Ernest Dummkopf. Theaters are full of activity and intrigue! But what's going on here isn't all show biz related...

MEET THE CONSPIRATORS!! These actors can't wait for opening night! But they also have politics on the brain. They are part of a secret society¹ that plans to overthrow the Grand Duke! He's horrible! He must be stopped! We see the leading romantic comedy couple, Ludwig and Lisa, complaining that they can't get married today due to a conflict with the Duke's wedding. We also meet the Notary and company solicitor, Dr. Tannhäuser, and the company's intense, dramatic leading lady, Julia. Soon the actors' show will open, Ludwig and Lisa will finally have their delayed wedding, the conspiracy will succeed, and Ernest and Julia will become the new Grand Duke and Duchess! What could go wrong?

LUDWIG'S MISTAKE—AND THE AFTERMATH. Offstage, Ludwig accidentally reveals the conspiracy to a member of the Secret Police! Grand Duke Rudolph will surely arrest all the actors and execute their leaders! So, the secret police arrest all the actors, every character we have grown to like is beheaded, and the streets of the duchy run with the blood of the innocent. Shortest comic opera ever. We're KIDDING. Can you imagine? Ugh, not wacky. Remember the Notary? An amazing lawyer: he has a way out. Gentle Reader, this loophole is the craziest plot point W. S. Gilbert ever came up with. **FASTEN YOUR SEATBELTS.** So, in this German duchy there is an obscure law that forbids real duels (bang, bang, blood, Hamilton vs. Burr) and instead commands citizens to stick to statutory duels. The weapons are playing cards, and the "loser" only dies a pretend death. In a statutory duel:

- He who draws the highest card wins.
- The loser pretends to be dead, a "legal ghost."
- The winner takes on all the loser's responsibilities (spoiler: that'll hurt later).

And there's one more thing: all laws in this duchy have expiration dates, and this law just HAPPENS to expire tomorrow. How convenient. So, the Notary proposes that Ernest and Ludwig "duel." The loser will pretend to be dead for one day and the winner will go to the Duke, confess, and blame the whole thing on the loser. And, since technically the loser is now "dead," the whole thing will be over. When the law expires, the "loser" will be resurrected, and since he's already suffered the death penalty, he can't be arrested again. Neat trick. They duel. Ludwig wins. Ernest is "dead." Ludwig heads off to confess and end this nightmare. All the problems are solved. Shortest show ever. We go home. KIDDING. More wacky hijinks will ensue.

¹This secret society doesn't have a password or a code phrase. They signal membership by eating sausage rolls. Delicious! Also - why??

LUDWIG, RUDOLPH, AND THE BIG TWIST. There is only one more truly diabolical plot twist, and then your brain cells can chill for the rest of the night. Here we go...

We finally meet the Grand Duke Rudolph. He's an obnoxious and miserly hypochondriac, and no one likes him! Remember how he was getting married? Well, we find him with his fiancée, the wealthy Baroness von Krakenfeldt. Boy, do they both love money. They canoodle a little bit and then get into a spat—their wedding is happening tomorrow, but the Baroness has just learned that Rudy's parents signed a marriage contract 20 years ago promising he'd marry this Monegasque² princess! He assures her that he has found a foolproof way to ditch the princess and that their wedding is still on. Rudolph FINALLY reads the detective's report (received via the Baroness). Wait! A plot to depose him tomorrow? On his wedding day?? He is horrified.

Here comes that last big twist. We all know what is SUPPOSED to happen. Ludwig will confess, the conspiracy will give up their dreams of regime change, and the actors' political subplot will go away. Right? The Notary said so. Ludwig walks over to the Grand Duke with his plan firmly in place. But then Ludwig gets a bright idea. You see, Rudolph is so freaked out by the prospect of being overthrown that Ludwig talks him into a scheme. This statutory duel thing is only for today, right? Hey, Mr. Duke: why not lose a statutory duel to Ludwig (on purpose) and allow him to sit on the throne for the horrible day of turmoil and arrests and upheaval? Ludwig volunteers for this duty. Rudolph is delighted! He gets a vacation and avoids political danger! Except, as soon as Ludwig becomes Duke, he immediately extends the law for another hundred years. Sorry, Rudolph - you're dead for good. So is Ernest. All hail permanent Duke Ludwig! End Act One!

We're going to speed through the rest of the synopsis because it's clear and fun and needs no real explanation. Remember how the law states that the winner must accept all the loser's obligations and responsibilities? Well, not only does Ludwig inherit the throne, but he also must:

- Make all the actors members of the court. (Ernest promised! And they have nothing to wear!)
- Honor Julia's contract, which guarantees her THE lead in every production. Well, the lead in this show, she figures, is GRAND DUCHESS.
- Marry the Baroness. Rudolph promised her!
- Take over the foreign policy of the duchy. Particularly since the Prince of Monte Carlo has now appeared with his beautiful daughter, waving a marriage contract or something. (If you didn't think the Princess would arrive, this must be your first operetta.)

We'll hold the last set of plot points partially secret. At this moment in the opera, nearly every character is miserable. But the Notary, along with ghost Ernest and ghost Rudolph appear, and open a big law book, only to discover...something that leads to a happy ending and a joyous quadruple wedding. We're not telling. You're just going to have to wait and see. Anyway, general rejoicing. Dancing! Harmony!! Champagne!!! High notes!!!! See: wasn't that fun!

²Monegasque: a person from Monaco, But then perhaps you knew that.

**We shape our
buildings and thereafter,
our buildings shape us.**

– Winston Churchill



Christopher Welsh R.A.

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BHT Grand Dukes Through the Years



1937: The Troupe mounted the New York premiere of *The Grand Duke* in the same theater as this year.



1972: A magnificent *Troilus & Cressida* to start Act II. Ludwig and members of his theatrical company included six past and future BHT Presidents and future Broadway star Karen Akers in the chorus (above center).



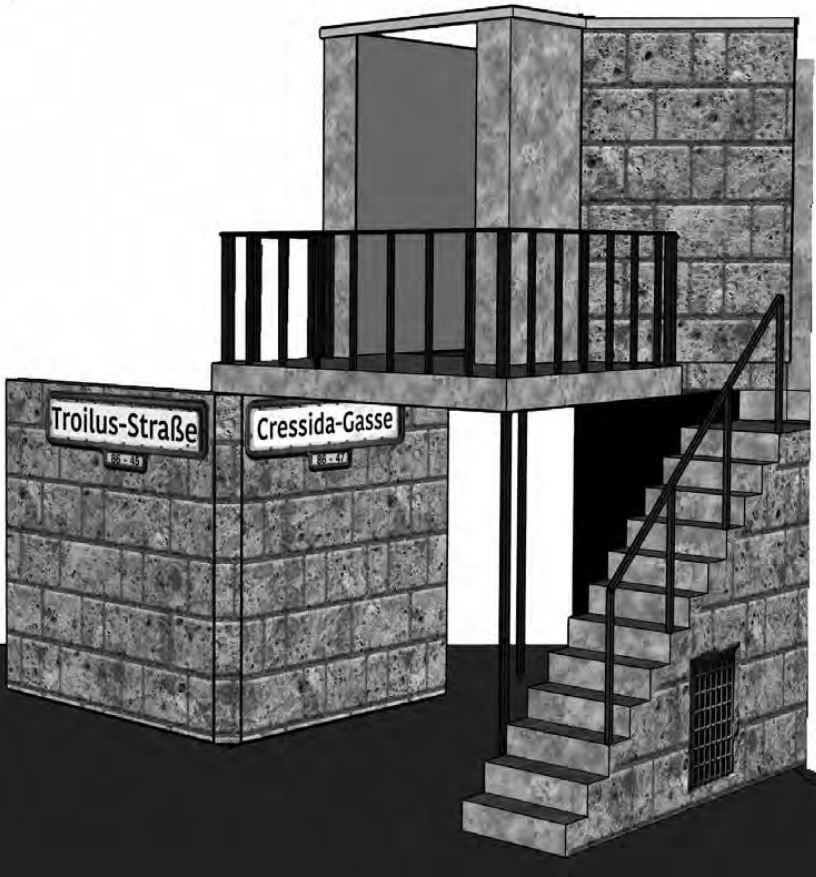
1987: A festive and colorful *Grand Duke* was crowned by the Pince of Monte Carlo's giant roulette wheel in Act II.



2005: A production that went on to win honors at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in England.

This page has been graciously underwritten in loving memory of Nathan Hayward, Jr., Rosa Hayward Jones, and Rosa Hayward McDonald.

No half measures.
Big words – strong language – rude remarks



**The BHT Backstage
Salutes
the BHT Frontstage**

Come, bumpers—aye ever so many: A Toast to Tradition, with a Twist

By Katie Holler, BHT Class of 2008,
Brindisi Buff, & Ardent Oenophile

Before Don Draper was downing Old Fashioneds or Jay Gatsby was pouring champagne with reckless abandon, opera had already established its tribute to the good life: the drinking song. In operatic tradition, the *brindisi* is that ever-reliable moment when characters forget their troubles, raise their glasses, and burst into waltz-time rapture extolling the virtues of life, love, camaraderie, and (frequently) wine.



The form became prominent in Italian opera of the early 19th century, symbolizing literal and metaphorical intoxication. Its spirited rhythms and communal nature offer composers and librettists a chance to pause the narrative and revel in celebration, inviting both the characters and the audience to raise a glass. Its ultimate, perhaps most memorable example is Giuseppe Verdi's "*Libiamo ne' lieti calici*," the sparkling toast to pleasure that draws us into the ill-fated love story of *La Traviata* (1853). From there, the *brindisi* spread rapidly into the operetta tradition, where its playful, slightly subversive energy found an ideal home.

Johann Strauss II, the "Waltz King" of Vienna, elevated this form in his masterpiece *Die Fledermaus* (1874). He used the *brindisi* throughout the operetta, making it a recurring motif of indulgence, social liberation, and comedic mischief—from the charmingly intimate seduction of Act I's "*Trinke, Liebchen, trinke schnell*" to the Act II showstopper "*Im Feuerstrom der Reben*" which swells to a full-throttle, Dionysian choral waltz praising "King Champagne" and the fire of the vine.

Enter Gilbert & Sullivan's "Come, bumpers—aye, ever so many," the *brindisi*'s cheeky cousin who shows up in Act II of *The Grand Duke* (1896). In this deliciously catchy number, a rather tipsy Baroness von Krakenfeldt treats us to a rollicking drinking song, accompanied by members of the local theater troupe who join her in an inebriated celebration of her marriage to their leading man and newly-minted Grand Duke of Pfennig Halbpennig, Ludwig.

While the song pays homage to the tradition and musical form of the *brindisi* with its call and response structure, lilting 6/8 meter, and memorable melody, it is far from opera's standard *brindisi* fare. Rather than lifting her glass in a toast to love, victory, or high ideals, the ultra-frugal Baroness—a character more known for pinching pennies than popping corks—sings about the joys of indulging in one of the finest Champagnes of the century, Pommery 1874. Her obvious relish, however, is not romantic—it's economic. She's helped herself to a "magnum of merry champagne," and delights in "the soothing idea that somebody else pays the bill."

So, when the Baroness sings "Come, bumpers," it's not just a nod to operatic tradition—it's a loving send-up of it. Where Verdi gives us tragic romance and Strauss gives us unbridled revelry, Gilbert & Sullivan give us an open bar and remind us that satire, like fine champagne, is best served dry.

And speaking of dry, there is another reason why the Baroness is bubbling over with joy unabounded: she's drinking the OG brut champagne!

The BHT Frontstage “Theatrical Team”

Salutes

The Backstage “Theatrical Crew”



Eloia!



A Toast to Tradition, with a Twist

As you revel in this evening of theatrical mayhem—complete with statutory duels, legal loopholes, and secret society sausage rolls—it's only natural to wonder: what might Gilbert and Sullivan have sipped to celebrate the opening of *The Grand Duke*? A glass (or two or three) of Pommery Champagne 1874 would have suited them perfectly, just as it does their Baroness.

Not only was 1874 a landmark Champagne vintage of the 19th century, but Pommery '74, in particular, has a special place in the history of Champagne as a tastemaker of its time. Madame Pommery, one of the first women to lead a major Champagne house, defied conventions in business and taste. In 1874, she boldly pioneered the creation of brut Champagne, a style with significantly less sugar than the sweeter wines of the era and one that was intentionally crafted to appeal to the aristocratic tastebuds of England—one of Pommery's biggest and most enthusiastic export markets. And, happily for us, Pommery '74 conveniently scanned with "many more" in Gilbert's lyrics for the forementioned (and fabulously funny) Act II *brindisi*.

While others catered to more syrupy palates, Madame Pommery envisioned a future of refined, crisp, and elegant sparkling wines—something akin to Gilbert's wit—and Pommery 1874 became the embodiment of that vision. This vintage marked the first commercially successful brut Champagne ever produced, and it completely transformed the global Champagne market, much as The Savoy Operas transformed the fare of the musical stage. English connoisseurs, known for their preference for drier wines, fully embraced it, and the world soon followed. It was, quite literally, a taste of things to come, as were the works of Gilbert and Sullivan, whose genius and success in English comic opera paved the way for American musical theater.



Mme. Pommery

Once released, Pommery 1874 became THE Champagne of the Belle Epoque, beloved by aristocrats, artists, and anyone who knew their mousse from their magnum. Certainly, Gilbert did. Rarely does he drop such a prominent product placement in his plays—and when he does, it's typically to poke fun at something. *The Grand Duke* is an exception where he does so in grand style (while poking fun at the *brindisi*!). And it's easy to imagine Sir Arthur Sullivan, a true *bon vivant*, raising a glass of this extraordinary wine either in celebration of a successful opening night at the Savoy or while indulging his tastes for high-society gatherings and gambling in the casinos of Monte Carlo.

And much like Gilbert and Sullivan's oeuvre, Pommery 1874 left a lasting legacy. It shaped the future of Champagne and defined a new standard of taste. This toast of the town would no doubt have served as a perfect accompaniment to an evening of Gilbert's trademark satiric wit and Sullivan's sparkling effervescent music.

So tonight, whether you're a theatrical impresario, a sovereign wannabe, or simply a lover of first-rate musical theater and fine bubbly, imagine yourself raising a glass of this iconic vintage. Or, better yet, get a bottle of the 2024, 150th-anniversary release of Pommery: "Apanage Brut 1874" and picture yourself rubbing elbows with the patrons of the Savoy at intermission. Either way, here's to brilliant wit and bold innovation—and Champagne that, like *The Grand Duke*, sparkles from start to finish. Cheers!



*Connecticut Troupers
shine the lights on
the Blue Hill Troupe's
century (+one) of service*

*Jane Barnes, Chris Bell, Walter Bernd, Adriane Berner,
Susan & Peter Brothers, Jim Busterud,
Miranda & Richard Chung, Helen Post Curry,
Barbara Erskine, Wendy Falconer, Chuck Goldberg,
Jonathan Jacobson & James McKibben, Shirley Jenks,
Casey Keeler, Elizabeth & Robin Montgomery,
Leslie Middlebrook Moore, Jay Sherwood,
Jon Stoddard, Judy Smith, Edward Smythe,
Holly Stevens, Kathleen & Greg Suss, Jen & Bert Tunnell*

Professional Staff



Gary Slavin (Director and Choreographer)

Twenty years ago, Gary first worked for the Troupe choreographing *The Grand Duke*. He has since done this particular opera more than any other and is very excited to bring this unique version to life, aided and abetted by the Troupe's terrific rewrite, the Lovely and Talented Janet Bushor, and the truly gifted Maestro David Schmidt along with this excellent company of Troupers, on and off stage. This is Gary's 18th show for the Troupe; among them is the 2015 production of *Patience*, which garnered both Best Director and International Champion awards (among several others) at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Harrogate, England. Also at the International Festival, he directed *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company and five productions for Savoynet. Gary's work has been seen at the NY Fringe Festival and the NY Musical Festival, as well as on television, in Europe and Off- and even Off-Off Broadway. He has staged works for Utopia Opera, Light Opera of New York and the St. Bart's Players in NYC, as well as for a wide array of theaters across the country for so many years that he doesn't remember how many—unless you ask him. There is no job more fun and rewarding than gathering with smart, talented, dedicated and funny humans and discovering how to tell a story. Special thanks to Marisa Green who contributed greatly to the original inspiration for this production, and to Bob Church for every everything. Last, thanks to you: The People Who Sit Down in the Dark. I hope you enjoy experiencing our story as much as we have enjoyed preparing it and telling it.



David Schmidt (Music Director)

David is in his eighth season conducting for BHT. He conducted the BHT 100th Anniversary performances of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in Blue Hill, Maine last summer, was the Music Director for *The Sorcerer* (pre- and post-pandemic) and has led BHT Concerts each season since 2017. Like many Troupers, David cut his teeth at the College Light Opera Company, where he worked as a Music Director and an Associate Conductor on productions of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*; *Iolanthe*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *The Desert Song*, and many others. David proudly serves as Director of Music Ministries at the Church of St. Pius X in Scarsdale, NY, where he has led hundreds of performances by the choir and instrumental ensembles and manages their concert series. In addition to his work as a conductor, David has enjoyed a career singing a broad range of opera, concert, and musical theater on stages across the U.S. and Italy. In New York, he has been a soloist at the Lincoln Center Festival (*The Blind*) and has sung frequently with the chorus of the Metropolitan Opera. At the Spoleto Festival in Italy, he gave the premiere performance of an aria composed for a new production of *The Telephone* directed by composer Gian Carlo Menotti. He has performed principal roles and concerts with Nashville Opera, Anchorage Opera, Opera Memphis, Des Moines Metro Opera, Ensemble Studio Theatre, National Opera Company, Memphis Symphony Orchestra and Missouri Symphony Orchestra, among others. Favorite roles include: Starbuck (*continued on page 77*)

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Professional Staff

David Schmidt (continued from page 75)

(110 in the Shade), Marcello (*La Boheme*) and Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*). Love and thanks for unending support to Abby, Dinah, Nell, and puppy Daisy May, Duchess of Hugo (yes, she's a Duchess!).



Janet Bushor (Asst. Director / Asst. Choreographer)

is thrilled that *The Grand Duke* completes her having done the entire G&S canon with the Troupe. She has also done three musicals including choreographing *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and collaborating on *Anything Goes*. She has assisted on too many shows to mention over three decades with Gary Slavin in New York and elsewhere, as well as with other director/choreographers. As a performer, Janet has played Bitelle in the National Tour of *La Cage aux Folles*, Elsie in the Off-Broadway play *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral*, Sheila in *A Chorus Line* (three times), Gymnasia in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and Sally Rand in *Sugar Babies*. Janet was a featured dancer in *Cabaret*, the tango dancer in *Guys and Dolls*, and a dancer in *Pal Joey*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (European Tour) and *Evita*. Janet's film and TV principal roles include *Wild Things*, *Law & Order SVU*, *The Sopranos* and the independent film *Flowers*. She is forever grateful for her relationship with Gary as collaborator and dear friend in and out of the rehearsal room, and for the lifelong friends she has made in this group. When Janet isn't working on shows, she works as a personal trainer, www.bodiesbyjanet.com, and as a pet sitter.



Daniel J. O'Connor (Assistant Music Director and Rehearsal Accompanist)

is thrilled to join BHT as rehearsal accompanist for *The Grand Duke*. When he's not at the keyboard, Daniel works as a software developer at an ad tech company in Manhattan and lives with his partner Oliver in Hell's Kitchen. Daniel received his master's degree in Pipe Organ Performance from Yale's Institute of Sacred Music and continues to serve as a substitute organist/pianist at churches around New York.



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“Hey you, yes you, the older one. Baroness?
Come join us in a salute to the Blue Hill Troupe
and the Young People’s Chorus. And what’s
that in your hand? Pommery ’74?
Well, you might as well bring that along...”



The Edie Whiting “Last to Leave the Party”
Award Winners are proud of our social stamina.
And proud to know that this award has
nothing to do with drinking.

And we’ll drink to that!

Principal Bios

Opening Cast

Grand Duke Rudoph



David Pasteelnick most recently appeared as Lord Pinkelton in BHT's fall production of *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Other Troupe appearances

include *The Pirates of Penzance* (Major General Stanley), *Urinetown* (Hot Blades Harry), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Neville Landless), *The Gondoliers* (The Duke of Plaza-Toro), *Once Upon a Mattress* (King Sextimus), *A Little Night Music* (Frederik Egerman), *Patience* (Reginald Bunthorne), *Utopia Limited* (Phantis), *The Sorcerer* (John Wellington Wells), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Baker/Gangster), and *Brigadoon* (Harry Beaton). Other favorites elsewhere include *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey II), *Assassins* (Charles Guiteau), *Pippin* (Leading Player), *The Secret Garden* (Dr. Archibald Craven), *Guys and Dolls* (Nathan Detroit), *Sweeney Todd* (Toby), *The Mikado* (Koko), *Camelot* (Mordred), *The Crucible* (Rev. Hale), and *Into the Woods* (Jack). David is a grants manager at Brooklyn Public Library. Love to Karl.

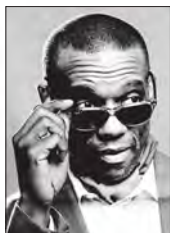
David Bell is delighted to be back on the BHT mainstage after a long absence.

An ardent Gilbert and Sullivan fan, he has more than fifteen roles from the G&S multiverse under his belt. As an opera singer, he has performed throughout North America and Europe, specializing in Mozart and Rossini tenor roles. Career highlights include the Rosa Ponselle gala at Carnegie Hall, excerpts from *Carmen* on "All Things Considered," and sacred solos at Windsor Castle. In recent years, David has been teaching math and science. Off the clock, he is frequently found performing in dive bars as an improvisational comedian, making up one-act musical theater pieces in exchange for beer. His mother forgives him for this.



Closing Cast

Ludwig



Ken Harmon would gladly suffer many a sausage roll for everyone involved in this production. Ken's prior appearances with the Troupe include Lord Evelyn

Oakleigh in *Anything Goes*, J.W. Wells in *The Sorcerer*, Carl Magnus

Paul Mitchell Wilder is confident that our jolly, jolly jinx will mark an epoch in the theatrical annals of the Troupe. This experience has been such a joy! BHT credits include

Anything Goes (Billy Crocker), *The Addams Family* (Lucas),



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Suzanne R. Taylor (BHT '97), Yosra Thabet (BHT '23), Timmy Wasley (BHT '07)

Principal Bios

Opening Cast

in a *Little Night Music*, the title role in *The Mikado*, Fall Show Producer (and last-minute Aldolpho) in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and Miles Gloriosus in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Ken joined the Troupe in 2010 and was the 99th season's President. He salutes all of his fellow Troupers for making the magic happen no matter what. Hail Poetry!

Ludwig (continued)

Pirates of Penzance (Pirate King, twice!), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (John Jasper), *The Yeomen of the Guard* (Col. Fairfax), *The Gondoliers* (Luiz), *City of Angels* (Stone). He often performs with Random Access Theatre's *The Drunk Texts*. By day, he is Manager of Organizational Engagement and Culture for the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship. Love to Sam, fair and tasty.

Closing Cast

Ernest Dummkopf



Neal Young is happy to be back on stage with his fellow Troupers! BHT roles include Captain Corcoran in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Stine in *City of Angels*, Reverend

Crisparkle in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Mal Beineke in *The Addams Family*, Giuseppe in *The Gondoliers*, Wilfred in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Sir Harry in *Once Upon a Mattress* and Elisha Whitney in *Anything Goes*. Off-Broadway shows include *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, *The Jello is Always Red* and *Fermat's Last Tango*. Regional: George Bailey in *A Wonderful Life* and Michael in *Alone Together*, among others. Love to Carla, Clara, and Violet!

Chazmond J. Peacock was recently been seen on the BHT stage as Frederick in *The Pirates of Penzance*. He has been seen as The D'Ysquith Family in *A Gentleman's Guide to*



Love and Murder, Man 1 in *Songs For A New World*, Dick Dauntless in *Ruddigore* (2023 Int'l G&S Festival), Bazzard in *The Mystery Of Edwin Drood*, Bobby Strong in *Urinetown: The Musical* and Alexis in *The Sorcerer*. Favorite roles include Col. Fairfax and Wilfred Shadbolt in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Marco in *The Gondoliers*, Strephon in *Iolanthe*, and The Duke in *Patience* (2015 Int'l G&S Festival Best Male Performer nominee). Other credits: Dick Dauntless in *Ruddigore*, Mingo in *Porgy and Bess* (in Mexico City and the 75th Anniversary Tour in 2010-2011), Coalhouse Walker Jr. in *Ragtime* (Broadway World nomination, Best Actor), Mr. Bumble in *Oliver!* (2008-2009 National Tour), Zaza/Albin in *La Cage aux Folles*, and roles in *Sweeney Todd*, *Into the Woods*, and *Merrily We Roll Along*.
www.chazmondpeacock.com



*"Oh joy unbounded!
Oh joy, oh rapture unforeseen"*
– The Grand Duke Chorus

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Principal Bios

Opening Cast

The Prince of Monte Carlo



Richard J. Miller has been a member of the Troupe since 1992 when he appeared as Strephon in *Iolanthe*. He has appeared in Troupe productions as Luiz

in *The Gondoliers* (2000, 2010), Marco in *The Gondoliers* (2019), the Duke of Dunstable in *Patience* (2001, 2015), Nanki-Poo in *The Mikado* (2002, 2013), Dick Dauntless in *Ruddigore* (2003, 2014), Lord Tolloller in *Iolanthe* (2004, 2016), Ernest Dummkopf in *The Grand Duke* (2005), Fairfax in *The Yeomen of the Guard* (2007, 2018), Hilarion in *Princess Ida* (2008), Sparkeion in *Thespis* (2008), Alexis in *The Sorcerer* (2009), Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (2011, 2024), and Fitzbattleaxe in *Utopia, Limited* (2012). Rich has also appeared numerous times as a principal artist at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival, and in 2003 was named Best Male Voice for the Festival Season. Rich is a Managing Director of the Metropolitan Opera, a Director of Chanticleer, and a Director of the American Liver Foundation. By day, he is a partner in the law firm of Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP where he practices as a trusts and estates lawyer. He is forever grateful to his anonymous liver donor for allowing him to appear in Act II of his life.

B. Tyler Parker is delighted to bombard a fresh audience with his terrible French accent, having most recently performed the role at the International G&S

Festival in Harrogate, UK. Last seen with BHT as the Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance*, other favorite roles include Sir Roderic in *Ruddigore* (2023, International G&S Festival with SavoyNet, Best Male Voice nominee) and his upcoming turn as Count Carl-Magnus in VLOG's *A Little Night Music*. Outside of theater, Tyler explores the intersection of technology and the arts, particularly in virtual reality and 3D printing prop-making. He thanks Laura, Aurora, and his family and friends for their endless support.



Ben Hashbaz (Both Casts)

Gregory Peterson, a Troupier since 1986, Gregory has appeared in many, many Troupe productions. In this *The Grand Duke*, he is amazed to be reprising the infinitesimal role of

the Costumier for the third time (the first two having been the Troupe's 1987 production and its 2005 productions in New York and Buxton, England), which, he believes, likely makes him the first and only person ever to have played the role in three original productions and on two continents. Guinness Book, are you listening?



"Nothing is more annoying than to feel that you're not equal to the intellectual pressure of the conversation."



**BHT Harvard Alumni salute the
cast and crew of *The Grand Duke*
and the outstanding work of
Young People's Chorus of NYC**

*Joe Arnow, Bill Barrett, Stu Bevan,
Seth Cunningham, Deborah Doroshow, Holly Evarts,
Erik Hanson, Nancy Havens-Hasty, Ryder Kessler,
John Leonard, Matt Levine, Randy Lindel,
Rachel McGregor, Betsy King Militello, Drew Quale,
Lauren Willig Ratcliffe, Peter Rossow,
Francesca Serritella, Jon Stoddard, Susan Wallach*



Principal Bios

Opening Cast



Geoff Gaebe is excited to return to the Spring Show stage after appearing as Dick Deadeye in the 100th anniversary production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Stalwart

Troupe audience members will recognize him from past appearances in *Anything Goes* (Captain), *The Addams Family* (Lurch), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Robert), *Grand Hotel* (Preysing), *Brigadoon* (Jeff Douglas), and *Into the Woods* (Cinderella's Prince). By day, Geoff works for Jones Day as the Supervisor of the IP Imaging and Records Department. He is also "hoomandaddy" to an ever-expanding roster of foster cats (145 and counting) with his wife, Alison, through Advocat Rescue (www.advocatrescue.org). Geoff would like to thank Alison for allowing him a few nights per week away from the kitties to work on this remarkable show. #adoptdontshop

Harold

Matt Levine A BHT member since 2001, Matt last appeared as Senator Fipp in *Urinetown*. Other Troupe roles include Florian in *Princess Ida*, Lieutenant

Cholmondeley in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Samuel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Narrator/Mysterious Man in *Into the Woods*, and Ben Stone in *Follies*. But by far his favorite roles are husband to Capron (BHT '04), and father to Zachary (14) and Olivia (12).



Dr. Tannhäuser (Both Casts)

Michael Macaione last seen as Sebastian in *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, *The Grand Duke* caps Michael's 17th season with the Troupe. Some BHT favorites include

Little Shop of Horrors (Seymour), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Hysterium), *A Little Night Music* (Henrik), *Urinetown* (Tiny Tom), *Anything Goes* (Purser), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (George), *Grand Hotel* (The Gigolo), Gilbert & Sullivan gems like *The Sorcerer* (Alexis), *The Gondoliers* (Marco), *The Mikado* (Ko-Ko), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Frederick), and our 100th Anniversary production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Boatswain). Originally from St. Charles, IL, Michael has called NYC home for the last 27 years and licenses musicals and plays with Concord Theatricals.



*“Wreaths of bay and ivy twine,
Fill the bowl with Lesbian wine,
And to revelry incline!”
Eloia!*

Alan Abrams
David Baxter
Larry Beers
Andja Budincich
John Burkhardt
Amy Cerullo
Martin Overall
Tom Gibbons
David Goodman
Ken Harmon

Matt Hughes
Jonathan Jacobsen
Ryder Kessler
James McKibben
Kevin Murray
Rachel Naugle
Kyle Nickens
Christine Nolan
Manuel Ordoñez
David Pastelnick

Gregory Peterson
David Pohler
Layton Sanders
Gary Slavin
Christian Smythe
Angel Vail
Brian Wagner
David Walczak
Paul Mitchell Wilder
Sam Mitchell Wilder



Principal Bios

Opening Cast



Jennifer Dorre Last seen as Marie (a.k.a. The Fairy Godmother) in BHT's Fall '24 production of *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, Jen is excited to flex

some diva muscle and wreak havoc as the new leading lady of Pfennig Halbpennig. A project manager by day, she enjoys leveraging those skills to Co-Chair the New Members Committee and Co-Executive Produce *The Grand Duke*. Favorite roles include Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Bobbi/Gabby in *City of Angels*, Angela in *Patience*, Josephine and Cousin Hebe in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Fiona in *Brigadoon* and Phoebe and Kate in *The Yeomen of the Guard*. Much love and thanks to her husband, Glenn, for his unwavering support of her theater habit and unrelenting schedule; to Katy and Christine for keeping me fit to sing; and to friends and family who continue to support her in this avocation and annual effort to raise money for very deserving NYC charities.

Julia Jellicoe

Capron Hannay Levine is thrilled to return to *The Grand Duke*, which marked her first onstage role with the Troupe 20 years ago. Favorite past roles with BHT

include Morticia (*The Addams Family Musical*), Purity (*Anything Goes*), Helena Landless (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*), and Tessa (*The Gondoliers*). She's delighted to be performing alongside her husband Matt for the first time in 14 years and with their kids (and reason for the hiatus) Zachary and Olivia cheering from the audience!



Closing Cast

Baroness Caroline von Krakenfeld



Suzanne R. Taylor is drunk with the joy of being able to grace the BHT stage again in this splendid production! Favorite onstage Troupe roles include Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (twice), Princess Puffer in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Mrs. Partlet in *The Sorcerer* (twice),

Dena Cubbin Last seen as Hebe in BHT's 2024 production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Dena is delighted to be playing the Baroness, a lady who knows how to party on a budget. Since joining the Troupe in 2004, she has performed numerous roles including Tessa in *The Gondoliers*,



Blue Hill Harbor, Maine



From our Grand Duchy to yours...

New England Troupers Salute *The Grand Duke*

Jane Barnes
Bill Barrett
Karen & Stuart Bevan
Jocelyn & Fred Bowne
Jane Brendler Büchi
John Burkhardt
Matthew Charity
John Chase
Miranda & Richard Chung
Chuck Goldberg
Peter Kiok
Nancy & Randy Lindel
Barbara Mahon
Lavinia Meeks
Mary Ann Miles
Liz & Robin Montgomery
Cathleen Noland

Judy Orlando & Jack Tamagni
Sally & Drew Quale
Kate Rogers
David Romaine
Ron Romaine
Katy Rossow
Peter Rossow
Nancy & Ernst Rothe
Kate Sawchuk
Peyton & John Sise
Judy Smith
Ed Smythe
Holly Stevens
Greg Suss
Liza Tague
Ed Tiffany
Tilda Romaine White

Principal Bios

Opening Cast

Closing Cast

Baroness Caroline von Krakenfeld (continued)

The Fairy Queen in *Iolanthe*, Lady Jane in *Patience* (twice), Mad Margaret in *Ruddigore*, Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Vera Charles in *Mame*. Since 1997, she has served twice as BHT Board President, and on nearly every committee, as Costume and Prop Designer, Production Stage Manager, and Producer. By day, she plans events for young entrepreneurs at NFTE.com. She is thankful that her own wedding to fellow Trouper John C. Taylor 25 years ago went off beautifully, without any unpleasant surprises!

Phoebe in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, Peep-Bo in *The Mikado*, Lady Psyche in *Princess Ida*, Constance and Mrs. Partlet in *The Sorcerer*, Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Little Becky Two-Shoes/Mrs. Millennium in *Urinetown* and Rosemary in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Her all-time favorite role is being wife to Trouper Ted Cubbin and mother to Arthur and Millie.

Lisa



Amy Hughlett is delighted to perform as Lisa with the Opening Cast. Previous Troupe productions include *The Addams Family* (Alice, Fall 2022),

The Sorcerer (Aline, Spring 2022) *Urinetown: The Musical* (Pennywise, Fall 2021), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Fall 2019), *The Gondoliers* (Fiametta, Spring 2019), and *The Mikado* (Spring 2013). Other roles performed include Mimi in Puccini's *La Boheme*, Alice Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*, and Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*. Amy is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and Manhattan School of Music. Deepest love to Chris, Sequoia (future Trouper), and Mr. Pippin the Cat.

Lauren Cupples is excited to raise a sausage roll with her fellow conspirators in this production of *The Grand Duke*. She was most recently seen as Josephine in



BHT's 100th anniversary production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, a role she will be reprising this summer in Buxton, UK as part of the International G&S Festival. Other recent credits include Teacher in *The Baker's Wife*, Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Hope Cladwell in *Urinetown: The Musical*. She was a 2019 finalist in the Don't Tell Mama's summer cabaret competition, and she won the 2023 International G&S Festival Award for Best Female Voice for her portrayal of Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*. Visit her online at www.laurencupples.com.

*Best wishes to Phoebe
and the entire “theatrical team”
for a grand “Duke”!*

Eloia!

Helen Lessner

We salute the **Blue Hill Troupe’s** cast and crew of
The Grand Duke in support of **Young People’s Chorus of NYC**



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Physical
Therapy

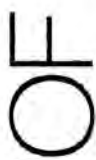
BETTER. BEGINS. HERE.

**CONGRATU
LATIONS**



TO
THE

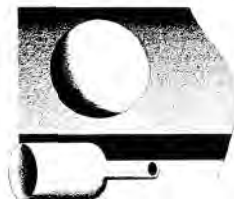
CAST & CREW



**THE GRAND
DUKE**

THE CARMİ AMNON ('23)

FAMILY REBECCA ('24)

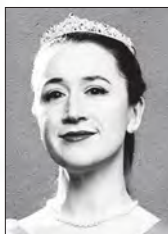


Principal Bios

Opening Cast

The Princess of Monte Carlo

Closing Cast



Julia Farina is thrilled to add another Gilbert & Sullivan show to her repertoire, marking her fourth overall and her first return to the canon since playing Celia in

Troupe's 2016 production of *Iolanthe*. In addition to her work with G&S, Julia has performed in fall musicals with the Troupe, including Hope Harcourt in *Anything Goes*, Anne Egerman in *A Little Night Music*, the Angel City 4 alto in *City of Angels*, and a dead bride in *The Addams Family*.

Francesca Serritella hit the jackpot getting to play the Princess and be in the ensemble, so she never misses a performance of this delightful, deep

cut G&S operetta with this fabulous cast and crew! She last appeared in BHT's centennial production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Past roles include Katisha in *The Mikado* with the Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert & Sullivan Players. Offstage, Francesca is a NYT bestselling "lady novelist" with a new book, *Full Bloom*, coming this August! All her love and gratitude go to her family and friends, especially the super-est supernumerary, her castmate and friend of twenty-one years, Ryder Kessler. FrancescaSerritella.com



Elsa




Julie Feltman is so grateful to join *The Grand Duke*! BHT member class of '22, you last saw Julie in *The Pirates of Penzance* as Isabel. For the last

decade Julie has performed comedy, storytelling, and musical improv in basements across the five boroughs to tens of people. Favorite credits include: GrandSLAM at *The Moth*, Dana in *Ghostbusters an Unauthorized Parody Musical*, Truvey in *Steel Petunias an Unauthorized Parody Musical*, Julie in

Phoebe Rosenblum is a proud third generation Trouper playing her first principal role in her second Troupe show! She's also been in the ensembles of

Carmen, *L'enfant et les Sortilèges*, and *The Sound of Music*, and played the title role in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Phoebe graduated from the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where she received a B.A. in music with a classical voice concentration as well as a minor in contemporary songwriting.





*Always ready to enjoy
“Jolly, Jolly Jinks”*

New Jersey Troupers
salute the cast and crew of
The Grand Duke

Principal Bios

Opening Cast

Closing Cast

Elsa (continued)

From *New York You Don't Get a Divorce*, and Judy Garland in her one-woman parody of the Judy Garland show. She performs regularly with her Musical Improv Team VERN, one of NY's longest running Musical Improv teams, at the People's Improv Theater. Julie is the founder of @themakersshow, and loves her village who makes this life possible.

Phoebe performs and releases original pop rock music as Phoebe Zara. Her debut album *Tomorrow Problems* is available for streaming on all platforms! Instagram: @phoebezaramusic

Bertha



Lesley Berry, an active Trouper for three decades, last played Lady Sangazure in *The Sorcerer*. Her BHT roles include: Ruth in *The Pirates of*

Penzance; Lady Angela in *Patience*; Cleo in *The Most Happy Fella*; Helena Landless in *Drood*; Petra in *A Little Night Music*; Amy in *Company*. Recent NYC roles: Denise Tramontano-Sheehan in *Death in Autumn* (MCS Theater); Verna/Dr. Merkle/Miss Hatchard in *Summer* (a development reading of a new musical); Luchia in *The Long Christmas Dinner* (The Century Club). Other roles: (The St. Bart's Players) Sally in *Follies*; Mrs. Gibbs in *Our Town*; Sister Mary Hubert in *Nunsense*; Joanne in *Company*. (The Amateur Comedy Club) Sarah in *Table Manners*. Broadway: *Grease*, (Understudy); in performance appeared as Sandy, Patty, Marty, Frenchy, and Jan. Congratulations to BHT on 101 fabulous years!

Alice J. Lambert is very excited to be part of her second performance with BHT! She joined the Troupe in the 2023-24 season, where she made her BHT debut in the ensemble of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Favorite past roles include Evangeline Barley in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, Phyllis in *Iolanthe*, Celeste #2 in *Sunday in the Park with George*, and Kate in *The Yeomen of the Guard*. Other past productions include *Ragtime* (Ensemble), *Ruddigore* (Ruth), and *On the Twentieth Century* (Ensemble). Love always to her father Phil and to Maddy.



*Former Cornellians now Consorting
with Actors and Musicians –
“Here we perceive one of the
advantages of a neglected education.”*



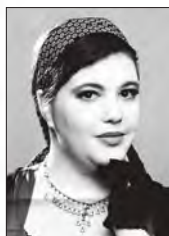
The Big Red Bears from Cornell
send all good wishes to the Young
People's Chorus of New York City and
the cast and crew of *The Grand Duke!*



Bob Bernstein
Danny K Bernstein
Nancy King Bernstein
Rick Churchill
Meg Dooley
Tom Groves
Nancy Havens-Hasty
Peter LaVigne
Chris Podd
Mark Weigel
Judith Weis

Principal Bios

Opening Cast



Manya Gaver-Holmes is a rookie Trouper excited to be joining in on the jolly jinx of Pfennig Halbpennig. A cat sitter by day and opera singer by night, she has

recently been seen as Katisha (*The Mikado*), Madame de la Haltiere (*Cendrillon*), and various comprimario roles with Regina Opera. She looks forward to debuting as Buttercup in Buxton this summer with Savoynet and many fellow troupers. Love to her family, friends, and husband Michael.

Olga

Alex Elkins is back onstage after her most recent BHT performance this fall in *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. This is her first Gilbert & Sullivan operetta. She has previously been in the Troupe's concert series and cabaret, and sang the national anthem with the Troupe for the Knicks at MSG. She holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Emory & Henry College and an MSW from Hunter College. Off-stage she works in the Manhattan Criminal Court's Felony Alternatives to Incarceration program. Love to LAQ @thealexelkins

Closing Cast



Gretchen



Sarah Rhoads is truly, truly, truly, truly delighted to be in her fourth G&S show with the Troupe, and first with a name! Since joining in 2019, Sarah has appeared

as a lady with a baby (*Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*), a sister of Sir Joseph (*H.M.S. Pinafore*), a daughter of Major General Stanley (*The Pirates of Penzance*), a designer of ocean liners (*Anything Goes*), a wig assistant (*The Addams Family*), and a flower girl (*The Sorcerer*). Sarah is an architect and has lent her art and graphic design skills to every BHT show since *The Addams Family*.

Debbie Doroshow is thrilled to have her first named role in a BHT show! She has particularly enjoyed sharing the role with the opening cast Gretchen, Sarah

Rhoads. You may have seen her last fall as a drunken ball attendee in *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. *The Grand Duke* also marks the first time she has tap-danced since middle school. It's surprisingly aerobic. Previous roles include Celia in *Iolanthe* and Marilla in *Anne of Green Gables* (Harvard College). Hobbies include singing unnecessary soprano descants at karaoke and at Marie's Crisis. Love to hubby Todd Olszewski, marking his fourth turn in the BHT pit orchestra.





It All Began With Smith Women

**Alida King Leese Milliken
Class of 1900**

**Alida Donnell Milliken Camp
Class of 1930**

Blue Hill, Maine, Summer 1924

**and Dede Brown, class of 1951
BHT's first female President**

**And We're Still Here
Supporting the Troupe**

**Sally Ellis Quale
(BHT '66)**

**Coco Hoguet Neel
(BHT '72)**

**Shirley McLane
Putnam
(BHT '78)**

**Anne Lounsbury
Ekstrom
(BHT '78)**

**Michele K. Linen
(BHT '70)**

**B. J. Maclean
(BHT '81)**

**Beth Pfaltz Welsh
(BHT '82)**

**Pam Eustis Miller
(BHT '84)**

**Anne Marie
Small Podd
(BHT '89)**

**Gretchen Good-
Pingel
(BHT '91)**

**Nancy Morgan
(BHT '91)**

**Jacalyn Yang
(BHT '98)**

**Meihui Chen
(BHT '24)**



Congratulations to the Blue Hill Troupe on its 101st season!

**Join the men of the UGC for an unforgettable evening
of choral music with special guests, the Grammy-winning
men's a cappella chorus Chanticleer!**

THE UNIVERSITY GLEE CLUB OF NEW YORK CITY

260th Members' Concert May 17, 2025 at 8 PM

Rose Hall at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Columbus Circle

Experience a dynamic program that spans genres – from stirring spirituals and American folk classics to the rhythmic energy of African folk, the heartfelt melodies of contemporary choral works, and the soaring harmonies of Broadway, including a showstopping *Guys and Dolls* medley.

Info & tickets: ugcofnyc.org

Ensemble

Allison Benko is a first-year Trouper making her Gilbert & Sullivan debut! A writer and director, Allison has developed world premieres across New York City including as the assistant director for *Oslo*, which won the Tony for Best Play. Writing projects include *Dear Ruth*, a children's musical about the Kindertransport, and *Carcinization*, a musical about the convergent theory of crab evolution. Allison works full-time as the Associate Producer at Off-Broadway's Theatre for a New Audience. In her spare time, she volunteers with The School of Leadership Afghanistan in Rwanda.

Matt Berry is a senior immigration paralegal who aims to secure visas for artists and performers. Before moving to New York, he lived in Paris for three years. This is his third show with BHT. He was previously in *Anything Goes* as the French Bartender Fred and in the ensemble of *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. When not on the stage, he can be found quoting random Taylor Swift, Barbra Streisand, or Showtunes. Here is to the Harem!

Nancy Blagman has been in the Troupe a long time and has performed many roles on and off the BHT stage (favorites include Inez in *The Gondoliers*, and co-producer of the wildly successful *Anything Goes*). Nancy has the distinction of being one of the few winners of both the Golden Glove and coveted Center Stage Awards. She hopes Gary and Janet will someday choreograph her in a dream ballet. It could happen.

Michael Bodsworth is thrilled to be making his BHT debut in *The Grand Duke*! While by day he designs and builds hotels, he's proud to let his childhood self know he's found his way on stage in NYC, a promise he made himself many years ago and while Michael is no stranger to the stage, this performance does mark his official return to musical theatre in over twenty years, and he looks forward to more productions in the years to come!

Edwardyne Cowan is delighted to make her BHT debut! A seasoned actress, she starred in fellow trouper Joanne Lessner's *Fermat's Last Tango* at the York Theatre and appeared in the 1993 Broadway revival of *My Fair Lady*. She also toured Europe as Eliza in *My Fair Lady* and Christine in *Phantom of the Opera*. Offstage, Edwardyne is the founder of Presence Coaches (www.presencecoaches.com), where she helps business leaders enhance executive presence through mindfulness, voice training, storytelling, and improvisation to communicate with confidence and impact.

Rachel Goodman has previously performed in BHT productions of *Iolanthe*, *The Pirates of Penzance* (Dance Captain), *The Boy Friend* (Moon Girl) and *The Gondoliers*. When not onstage, she can be found teaching music to elementary school students at PS 150 in Queens. Love to Scott and Sadie.

*Drink a highball – or a glass of Pomméry '74 –
and be jolly*

Here's a toast to
The Grand Duke
and the
Young People's Chorus
of New York City
from the Troupe's Penn Alumni



Rebecca Brown, BHT 2015

Constance McCaffrey, BHT 1984

Peter Cohen, BHT 1985

Lore Monnig, BHT 1977

Jonathan Jacobson, BHT 1994

Frances Peters, BHT 2015

Miranda Knowles, BHT 2002

Emily Ruderman, BHT 2016

Doug Larson, BHT 1993

Jennifer Smith, BHT 1991

Matt Levine, BHT 2001

Gregory Suss, BHT 1986

Ensemble

Katie Holler is thrilled to add the role of Ensemble in *The Grand Duke* to her list of G&S principal roles (IYKYK). A Philadelphia native (and die-hard Eagles fan), Katie made her professional opera debut as Iris in Handel's *Semele* at the Skylight Opera Theatre (Milwaukee, WI). Gilbert & Sullivan roles include Aline, Angelina, Casilda, Iolanthe, Josephine, Patience, Princess Ida, Rose Maybud and Yum Yum.

Haley Huxley is thrilled to be a part of her first BHT production! Previous work includes *Devotion* (Goodspeed Musicals), *Legally Blonde* (Richter Summer Theatre), *Play On!* (Somerset Valley Playhouse), *All The World's A Stage* (Keen Company), *Guard Bitches* (Villagers Theatre), *She Kills Monsters: Virtual Realms* (All in Theatrics), and Red Bull Theater Company's *Short New Play Festival: Renewal*. She is a proud graduate of The Hartt School.

Ryder Kessler is thrilled to be returning to the BHT stage in "many various" roles, and this time in tap shoes! He debuted in the 100th Anniversary *H.M.S. Pinafore*, a sailor on Fifth Avenue promoted to Carpenter somewhere en route to Maine. He is again delighted to be performing alongside Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert & Sullivan Players friends Francesca Serritella and Debbie Doroshow. HRG&SP: Sir Roderic Murgatroyd (*Ruddigore*); Major Murgatroyd (*Patience*); Foreman of the Jury (likely a Muragtroyd) (*Trial by Jury*); and ensemble roles in *The Pirates of Penzance* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

John Leonard, a Troupe bass-baritone since 1981, finally makes his on-stage debut in *The Grand Duke* this year, after thoroughly enjoying the Troupe's most recent performance from the audience in Buxton (UK) in 2005. Other Troupe roles: Notary in *The Sorcerer* (2022), Giorgio in *The Gondoliers* (2019), and numerous ensembles. Offstage, John is a retired financial services equity analyst and portfolio manager, and lives in Rye with his wife, Trouper Doree Hummel Leonard, where they enjoy gardening, bridge, and working with local nonprofits.

Ian McGrath now appears in his third consecutive BHT show, following a 33-year absence from the theatrical stage. Previously seen fronting his NYC band, Anomaly, back in the late 90s, he has worked in technology since the early Clinton administration. In his youth, Ian appeared in shows such as *The Pirates of Penzance*, *West Side Story*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and *Anything Goes*. Ian would like to thank his wonderful family for their love and support.
<https://mcgwink.com>.

Sam Militello, a Frontstage Trouper since 1991, is delighted to be appearing in his first *Duke*, having done the rest of the canon with BHT twice (save *Utopia*, once). This may be his 43rd or 44th Troupe show onstage, but who's counting. He sends a shout-out to cast and chorus members old and new for putting up with him. Another shout-out to wife Betsy, who keeps us all in the best light.

Princeton in the Troupe's Service



*“As before you we defile, Eloia! Eloia!
Pray you, gentles, do not smile
If we shout in classic style, Eloia!”*

Byron Bell BHT '66

John Leonard BHT '81

Matthew Charity BHT '01

Mac McMorris BHT '80

Ted Cubbin BHT '05

Bob Miller BHT '91

Kathy Fox Franklin BHT '90

Jamie Murphy BHT '76

Chuck Goldberg BHT '77

Nancy Raditz BHT '92

Eli Gottlieb BHT '00

John Rafferty BHT '74

Tom Groves BHT '87

Win Rutherford BHT '69

Rick Hamlin BHT '83

Ellen Simsarian BHT '02

Michael Kiesel BHT '81

Todd Sollis BHT '72

Lily Rutherford Kinlin BHT '93

**In support of the Blue Hill Troupe
and Young People's Chorus of NYC**

Ensemble

Cameron Moser is thrilled to be making his BHT debut with *The Grand Duke*! He can be seen as a recurring character in the History Channel show *Food That Built America*. Other previous favorite credits include *Twelfth Night* (Sir Andrew), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Leaf Coneybear), *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (Melvin P. Thorpe), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), plus many other original works and readings.

Maria Plantilla was last seen as the lamentable Charlotte in this past fall's production of *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Previously, she appeared in the ensembles of BHT's *City of Angels*, *The Yeomen of the Guard*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Sorcerer*, *The Addams Family*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Anything Goes*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Other favorites include *South Pacific* (Bloody Mary) and her one woman show *Where in the World is My Prince?* Maria is currently Co-Chair of the Troupe's DEI Committee.

Sigourney B. Romaine, Jr. (Ron) is delighted to be doing his fourth (sic) *The Grand Duke* with BHT, having been a fellow second-story man with his father in the 1972 *Duke* and a supernumerary in BHTs production at the international G&S festival in Buxton in 2005. He has sung at least twice in the BHT chorus of all but one of the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas and also appeared in four non-Savoy BHT productions. A son of stalwart Troupers Sig and Laura, Ron also sings with the University Glee Club of New York.

Dan Rosenbaum appeared as the Raccoon in the Troupe's Fall production of *Rodgers + Hannerstein's Cinderella* and was an ensemble member in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Anything Goes*, and *Patience*. A one-time professional background zombie on the SyFy Channel's "Z Nation," Dan has performed on Broadway with Peter Paul and Mary, at Town Hall with Pete Seeger, in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and with the chorus Essential Voices USA supporting the New York Pops' Christmas concerts at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops. Recordings: Sisters of Mercy, Mandy Patinkin, Peter Paul and Mary, Jessye Norman. Other TV: CNN networks, ABC, CNBC, PBS Live from Lincoln Center, Peter Paul and Mary Holiday Celebration, Donahue. Espoused to Olivia (c.f.)

Olivia Sohmer Rosenbaum is overjoyed to be performing in her 9th G&S with BHT. Choral stage credits include: *Peter, Paul & Mary* "A Holiday Celebration" (1989); *The Events* (New York Theatre Workshop 2015); New York Pops Holiday Concerts with Essential Voices USA (since 2018). Recordings: *Carmina Burana SYNTHESIZED!*; *DeCormier: Legacy*, *Four Sonnets To Orpheus / Levi: Mark Twain Suite*; *Reflections: Four Contemporary American Composers Look Back*. Offstage, Olivia is plighted to Troupers Dan Rosenbaum, and she is an attorney looking for less "dramatic" ways to fight despotism.



**Columbia Alumni
“who boast intellectual graces”
are proud to be “a first-rate part”
of the Blue Hill Troupe and
salute the Young Peoples Chorus of New York City.**

Andrew Bauer, BHT '77

Nancy King Bernstein, BHT '86

Harry Bickford, BHT '17

Rebecca Ariel Brown, BHT '15

Carla Camp, BHT '01

Lorraine B. Cates, BHT '77

Matthew Charity, BHT '01

Anthony Cockcroft, BHT '02

Alice McGown Concagh, BHT '77

Kenneth Daniel, BHT '82

David Epstein, BHT '79

Sarah Moulton Faux, BHT '13

Cornelia Iredell, BHT '76

Peter Junker, BHT '87

Kaarel Laev, BHT '11

Helen Rees Lessner, BHT '99

Sam Militello, BHT '91

Ben Moore, BHT '92

Amy Morris, BHT '23

David Pasteelnick, BHT '08

Gregory Peterson, BHT '86

Maria Plantilla, BHT '17

Jonathan Rabb BHT '94

Ron Romaine, BHT '66

Angela Scorese, BHT '22

Samuel Silvers, BHT '85

Gracey Stoddard, BHT '94

Liza Tague, BHT '93

D'juro Villaran-Rokovich, BHT '08

Jacalyn Yang, BHT '98

Ensemble

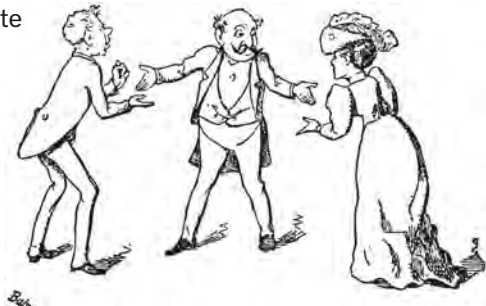
Sami Sallaway is a new member with BHT. She was most recently seen as Reggie Fluty in *The Laramie Project* with St. Bart's Players. She has performed with New York City Opera in *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, *Concert for Sugihara* at Carnegie Hall, and as a featured soloist in *From Vienna to Broadway!* at Bryant Park. She's also held principal roles in *RENT*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, and *Seussical* with Unified Theatre Company.

Yosra Thabet is delighted to join BHT and perform for the second year in a G&S opera. She is a self-taught soprano and a rock and metal vocalist. She is also an avid fan of arts and photography and is currently finishing her Master's thesis on CRT in African American horror TV shows.

Jonathan Tilley is ecstatic to be performing with this phenomenal cast for his BHT debut. Jonathan has performed nationally and internationally, including at the Vienna State Opera, the Buxton Opera House, and the Lyric Theatre of San Jose. Some of his favorite roles include Frederic (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Dr. Falke (*Die Fledermaus*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), and Ferdinand (*Love's Labour's Lost*). When not performing, Jonathan works as a software engineer and has a dangerous appetite for soup dumplings.

Judy Weis started singing G&S choruses in public with the Cornell Savoyards, a-many years ago. Subsequently she spent many years with the Village Light Opera Group, and some with the Ridgewood NJ G&S group. She has participated in many Savoynet Performing Group productions at the G&S festival in England, where she first met Gary Slavin and other BHT folks. Now, in the autumn of her life, she joined BHT and is delighted to play her usual role in the chorus. In real life she is a marine biologist.

Jessica Zhang is excited to make her BHT debut as the keeper of the secret sign (aka sausage roll caterer extraordinaire). Prior to BHT she did musical theater research at Emory University, was a part of the ensemble in *Coppelia* (ballet), and performed a traditional Chinese Fan Dance in Beijing's Spring Festival Gala. Outside of the arts, she enjoys trying new foods, reading a good book, or exploring the great outdoors! Much love and thanks to my friends and family <3





*" Oh, it's quite clear he knows
how to rule a Grand Duchy!"*

**BHT President
David Pastelnick**



Welcome BHT Class of 2024

Alison Banks	Arlene Klotzko
Allison Benko	Alexis Kurtz
Michael Bodsworth	Qq Ma
Nicolette Boillotat	Joe Marx
Sheree V. Campbell	Jovani McCleary
Rebecca Carmi	Alyssa Mener
Meihui Chen	Patti Meringo
Olivia Coughlin	Rebecca Milzoff Silverstein
Edwardyne Gowan	Shirley Mowery
Leah Darby	Sami Sallaway
Melissa David	Elizabeth Strader
Charlotte Detrick	Jonathan Tilley
Manya Gaver-Holmes	Cesar Vera
Ameya Grant	Heidi Wenzler
Henry Horstmann	Jessica Zhang
Haley Huxley	

We are so happy to have you!

BHT
BROWN UNIVERSITY & RISD



David Epstein, BHT '79
Tyler Parker, BHT '19
Sarah Rhoads, BHT '19
Kim Grutman, BHT '22
Rebecca Carmi, BHT '24

Salute Blue Hill Troupe,
The Cast & Crew of *The Grand Duke*
& Young People's Chorus of
New York City!

THE
SUNSHINE
STATE

FLORIDA TROUPERS
Salute the BHT's Production of
The Grand Duke
and the
Young People's Chorus of NYC

John Burkhardt BHT '01
Nancy Bushnell BHT '63
David Epstein BHT '79
Matt Hughes BHT '03
Tamara Jacobs BHT '79
Carolyn Kohn BHT '76
Andrew Quale BHT '73
Salley Ellis Quale BHT '66

The Grand Duke Crew



Sandy Dickinson (Co-Executive Producer) was "born Blue," the son of Troupers Jeanne and Jerry Dickinson, nursed at *H.M.S. Pinafore* rehearsals and raised at Hunter College

Playhouse. He has held numerous Troupe positions, including President (twice), Vice President, producer (numerous times) and a gazillion other things. He has even crossed over to the Frontstage and performed! In the alternate reality that some call real life, he is married to Troupier Sylvia Dickinson. Sandy is a Senior Vice President at Corner Property Management in New Jersey and the father of four sons, some of whom have also served time in the Troupe.



Jennifer Dorre (Co-Executive Producer): As a believer that there is no such thing as too much time on stage (front or back), Jen couldn't help but partner with her favorite co-producer,

Sandy, for another round of BHT spring show fun. An almost 20-year veteran of the Troupe, she's picked up a few skills in stage management, costuming, set and prop building, rigging, the proper way to load a truck and she even served as President of the organization for the 2016-17 season. Additional producing credits include *Rogders + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, the Troupe's Centennial Production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Mikado*, *The Merry Widow*, *My Favorite Year* and *The Most Happy Fella*.



David Baxter (Co-Associate Producer) is continuing a year of *Eat* (a sausage roll), *Pray* (observe the magnanimity), *Love* (is a plaintive song) with the backstage crew for *The Grand*

Duke. Previously, his credits as a Frontstager include roles in *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Anything Goes*, and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Mostly recently, David was the costume designer for BHT's production of *Rogders + Hammerstein's Cinderella*. He co-hosts a podcast, *Thank You, Five with David and Matt* all about musical theater.



Emily Ruderman (Co-Associate Producer) is thrilled to be back producing a Troupe show after assistant producing *Rogders + Hammerstein's Cinderella* this fall. Since joining

BHT in 2016, Emily has been Props Designer for *The Yeomen of the Guard* and Assistant House Manager for *Urinetown: The Musical*. She has also been on the Board, the chair of numerous committees, and produced the 100th Anniversary Celebration Weekend in May 2024. Additionally, Emily is a Frontstager and has performed in many productions and concerts. Special thanks to Sandy and Jen for taking her under their wings.



Mark Justin (Production Stage Manager) was convinced by his wife, Nancy Raditz ('92), to join her as a Troupe member in 2000, just in time to run the slides for our fall show, *Company*.

*Better than Pommery '74,
“they throw themselves into their parts!”*



Big Ben takes his ease in his eponymous Yale residential college, accompanied by his familiar.

The Troupe's Yale Alums salute the BHT and Young People's Chorus of NYC

Shannon Barr BHT '18	Edgar Masters BHT '76
Stuart Bevan BHT '78	James McKibben BHT '94
Roberts Brokaw BHT '82	Betsy King Militello BHT '83
Angela Cason BHT '91	Todd Olszewski BHT '22
John Chase BHT '69	Craig Oxman BHT '81
Deborah Doroshow BHT '21	Stewart Palmer BHT '99
Abigail Huffman BHT '93	Jonathan Rabb BHT '94
Jonathan Jacobson BHT '94	Lauren Willig Ratcliffe BHT '08
Lily Rutherford Kinlin BHT '93	Sigourney Romaine BHT '66
Joanne Lessner BHT '97	Julian Rosenblum BHT '18
Harvey Loomis BHT '57	Charles Stone BHT '73
John Madden BHT '88	Noelle Teagno BHT '19
Richard Massimilian BHT '78	Brooke Willig Wagner BHT '16

The Grand Duke Crew

He has followed her lead by serving a two-year term on the BHT Board as Treasurer, another stint as Member-at-Large, and numerous committees. Mark has also stage-managed several Troupe productions including Fall Shows *Urinetown: The Musical*, *Grand Hotel* and *Into the Woods* and Spring Shows *Iolanthe*, *Gondoliers* and *The Grand Duke*. Mark is also a frequent Spotlight Operator for the Lighting team.



Nora Beard
(Assistant Production Stage Manager): This is Nora's fourth production with the Troupe. Her mother was also a Backstager. Past credits include sound technician

and props for *Anything Goes* and *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, and props for *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Many thanks to Sandy for his continued support and guidance.



Cornelia Iredell
(Assistant Production Stage Manager) is enjoying her seventh stint on the stage-management team. During her many years with BHT, Cornelia has played

principal roles in 33 productions. Favorite G&S contralto roles include the *Fairy Queen*, *Katisha*, and the *Duchess of Plaza-Toro*, all performed multiple times. Her last outing was as Evangeline Harcourt in *Anything Goes*. Cornelia is happiest in the role of grandmother to Finnegan, Felix, and Alex.



Pen Stanton
(Assistant Production Stage Manager) has been a member of BHT since 2022, with *The Grand Duke* clocking in as her fourth show. Before joining BHT, Pen was

no stranger to the backstage, having spent most of high school and college designing sets, stage managing, and running lightboards for upwards of 15 productions. During daytime working hours Pen runs strategy and operations for tech and innovation start-ups. She lives in Manhattan and spends her remaining spare time taking advantage of the endless distractions NYC has to offer.



Ted Cubbin
(Set Design) has had various Backstage and committee roles, including Set Designer (*Anything Goes*, *The Addams Family*), producing (*Into the Woods*),

Head of Construction (*Brigadoon*, *Little Shop of Horrors*), Stage Manager (*H.M.S. Pinafore*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*), and two stints on the Board as Treasurer and President. Ted's last role in BHT's *The Grand Duke* was in 2005 as a supernumerary in Buxton, England. By day, Ted is the Chief Analytics Officer of an insurance company and above all else is cohead of the Cubbin family (children Arthur and Millie) with fellow Trouper and wife of 24 years, Dena Cubbin.



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**Best wishes to the
Blue Hill Troupe
in its 101st year!**



Lucy Kirk's CIA career
memoir is finally out.
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The Grand Duke Crew



Rick Churchill
(Technical Director)
With 65 years of set design and set construction, including 48 Gilbert and Sullivan productions, Rick is particularly excited by this year's *The*

Grand Duke, the only G&S show he has not yet worked on. He proudly points out that it was a G&S reunion at his alma mater, Oberlin College, which prompted his move to New York City 25 years ago to join his Obie girlfriend Marianne Barcellona, who is also a member of BHT ('09). Since coming to NYC, he has worked on more than two dozen Troupe productions as well as six productions with Troupers Light Opera in New Canaan, Connecticut. Besides building more than 150 stage sets and designing and building more than 12 houses, for the last 40 years, Rick has considered himself primarily a professional cabinetmaker with hundreds of kitchens, bookcases, and other built-ins to his credit. Obviously, making sawdust is his passion, a trait that co-workers constantly encourage him to control. Ah, but he does love the snow of wood chips and the rain of sawdust.



Bob Miller (Co-Head of Construction) has been a Trouper since 1991. In his more than 30 years backstage, Bob has headed construction numerous times, produced three road

shows (two at the Onteora Club in the Catskills, and one at the Bronxville High School theater, which he knew very well having gone to high school there), been Treasurer of the Board, and on too

many committees to count. He handles financial management for the New York City Public Housing Preservation Trust, and thus is well acquainted with not just the nuts and bolts of construction, but with the financial structure of rebuilding just about anything, from flooded cities, to sets for the Troupe, to antique camps and cabins in the mountains. Bob is an avid outdoorsman, riding his bike to work and the Troupe in all sorts of weather, and is now on his third round of happily climbing all 46 High Peaks of the Adirondacks with his son Ben, and Trouper wife, Pam ('84).



Carey Ngai (Co-Head of Construction) is thrilled to be the construction co-head of *The Grand Duke* set in his eighth year in the troupe. He is delighted to be a part of the team that

figures out how to make a floor rotate around a column and how to support a platform eight feet in the air. By day, he makes a living designing building beams, columns, and walls but you can often find him on a swing dance floor or behind a piano figuring out new melodies and lyrics. Carey thanks all his family and friends for their love and support.



Al Loomis (Construction Logistics) is thrilled to be in the shop making dreams come true one two-by-four at a time. As a member of the Backstage for over 40 years, Al enjoys

the many perks his seniority entitles him to: overcommitting to Troupe committees, working weekends in set construction and painting, enforcing safety rules, and telling people what to do! When not covered in sawdust,



**THE MOUNTAINS! THE MOUNTAINS!
WE GREET THEM WITH A SONG!**



Congrats to the Cast &
Crew of *The Grand Duke*



From the Troupe's
Williams College Ephs

• Rich Miller (BHT '92) • Phoebe Geer (BHT '01)
Ken Harmon (BHT '13) • Maria Plantilla (BHT '16)

*“By the mystic regulation of our NANCY
association, we must place our yearly ad!”*

Bernstein	Havens-Hasty	Moore Simpson
Blagman	Hayward (Sunny)	Morgan
Bushnell	Johnson	Raditz
Chamberlain	Lindel	Rothe

BHT Nancys Salute *The Grand Duke*

NANCY

Mazel Tov

**Best wishes to the cast and crew of *The Grand Duke*.
*But what's in those sausages, anyway?***

Amnon Carmi '23	Dan Rosenbaum '00
Rebecca Carmi '24	Olivia Sohmer Rosenbaum '97
Rachel Goodman '15	Emily Ruderman '16
Joe Levine '23	

The Grand Duke Crew

Al likes playing tennis and hiking in the Adirondacks with the love of his life, and fellow Trouper, Emily.



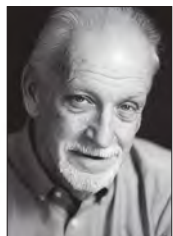
Lorenzo Contessa (Painting), originally from France, has worked as an illustrator and scenic artist in New York City for 35 years. Prior to his retirement this year, he was involved

mostly in set painting with various TV shows, feature films and theater productions. He is happy to continue using his skills for BHT.



Amanda Callister (Rigging) is in her third year with BHT. Involved in backstage from an early age, she is thrilled to be able to continue doing what she loves with the Troupe. Outside

of her time with BHT, she works as the Director of Building Services at Carnegie Hall and as a Logistics Officer in the US Air Force Reserves. Any remaining free time is usually spent at the gym, running in the park, or on her couch diving into her favorite nerdy shows and hobbies.



Ken Rush (Costume Design) is a retired high school teacher. He has directed over 200 productions many of which have won state titles in Texas and Florida and some that won

national titles as well. His award-winning directorial credits include *42nd Street*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *The Elephant Man*,

Macbeth, *Children of a Lesser God*, *Hair*, *Amadeus*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Fences*, *Anne of a Thousand Days*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Rush is also a successful playwright and his script *Independence Pop. 301* garnered first-place titles on every level of competition including the national first-place title at the Southeastern Theatre Conference. A performer as well, his credits include the national tour of *Jekyll and Hyde* (Sir Danvers) and *A Christmas Carol* (Christmas Present). His regional credits include featured roles in *My Fair Lady* (Doolittle), *Camelot* (Arthur), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Tevye), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Major General), *Lend Me a Tenor* (Saunders), and *Broadway Bound* (Jack). Upon his retirement, Rush and his wife Sara relocated from Florida to New York City to be closer to their grown children. His daughter Jessica and son-in-law Eric are presently Broadway performers, and his son Benjamin is the Artistic Director of the Wellesley Theatre Project. Ben, his wife Jennie, and their two sons, reside in Massachusetts. However, the stars of their family are their three talented grandchildren: Elliot (10), Archie (3) and Indy (8 months).



Nancy Johnson (Assistant Costume Design) has been working with BHT since 1989. Nancy designed costumes for last year's *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Sorcerer* (twice), *Urinetown*:

The Musical, *City of Angels*, *Patience*, *Princess Ida*, *Ruddigore* (twice), *Little Shop of Horrors*, *High Society*, *Lady, Be Good!*, *1940's Radio Hour*, *Mr. Cinders*, and *Something's Afoot*, and she created patterns for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. She was



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Hail poetry!

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SHARON GORDON '22
JEFF GRANDIS '13
NANCY HAVENS HASTY '72
DAVID LOEWY '14
IAN MCGRATH '23
CHRISTINE NOLAN '18
DAVID PASTEELNICK '08
DAN ROSENBAUM '00
OLIVIA SOMMER ROSENBAUM '96
SYDNEY SCOTT '22

Congratulations from Brooklyn to the
cast and crew of The Grand Duke.
Just remember: Kings beat everything!

The Grand Duke Crew

an Assistant Stage Manager for *The Gondoliers*, Production Manager for *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Assistant Lighting Designer for *The Grand Duke* and *Iolanthe*. Nancy has been designing and constructing dance and theater costumes for over thirty years for such groups as Twyla Tharp Dance and Roundabout Theatre.



Betsy King Militello (Co-Lighting Design) is a current Board Member-at-Large and past many-things-in-the-Troupe. These days Betsy dedicates most of her BHT time to working on various

behind-the-scenes committees and lighting our productions. A Troupe member since 1983, by day she serves as Executive Director of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT). She is married to Co-Lighting Designer (and *Grand Duke* ensemble member) Sam Militello. Betsy and Sam (affectionately known as "The Militelli"), are frequently found cooking for the Troupe when they're not shedding light.



Sam Militello (Co-Lighting Design) After winning a Platinum Glove in 1996 for best Frontstage performance as a Backstager (Troupe double-speak), Sam became the

Troupe's principal Lighting Designer in 1997. Somewhere along the way Sound Designer was added to the moniker. Sam loves a challenge. His best MacGyver moment was at a road show, after a company had acquired, but did not install, an entire new lighting system. Arriving the day before the show, confronted with unopened boxes,

he began frantically installing, and set out to search for 200 amps of power for the new gear. With no electricians watching, he and a cohort grabbed two 80-amp lines from a golf-cart charging bay, bravely twisted them together and held their breath. The theater is still standing. There's more but no more space!! Enjoy the show.



Rachel Seitz (Properties Design) is thrilled to be back with the amazing props team for *The Grand Duke*! This is her lucky 13th show with BHT and her fifth time heading the

props department. When she's not busy overseeing a fake sausage roll factory or looking for the right ink ribbon to fit a vintage adding machine from the 1950s, you can most likely find her working her day job in marketing, reading murder mystery novels, or conducting very important research on which is the most effective late-night food to get at the bodega after an event.



Katherine Moon (Hair & Makeup Design) has been involved in Gilbert and Sullivan since her middle school days in London. She was head of Hair & Makeup for BHT's 2023 production of

The Pirates of Penzance and is thrilled to be returning to head Hair & Makeup now for *The Grand Duke*! When not painting faces and gluing eyelashes, she spends her days as an interior designer and event producer. She lives in NoMad with her husband Paolo and their dog, a white Shiba Inu named Anjelica Huston.

Grand Duke Production Committees

Spring Show Committee

Sandy Dickinson, Jennifer Dorre (Co-Executive Producers); David Baxter, Emily Ruderman (Associate Producers)

Casting

Win Rutherford (Chair), Amy Cerullo, Maria Plantilla, Emily Ruderman, Sara Rafferty

Costumes

Ken Rush (Designer); Nancy Johnson (Assistant Designer); Elyn Amron Austin, David Baxter, Kate Blackhouse, Meghan Burns, Sandy Dickinson, Sylwia Dickinson, Susanne Eaton, Paula Gerden, Nicky Gottlieb, Jeff Grandis, Renee Lasher, Leslie McDonald, MJ McLoughlin, Denise Paglina, David Pohler, Layton Sanders, Elizabeth Strader, Suzanne R. Taylor, Timmy Wasley

Hair & Make up

Katherine Moon (Designer); Jane Büchi, Kate Backhouse, Diahne Grosjean, Casey Keeler, Denise Paglina

House Management

Jackie Yang, Timmy Wasley

Lighting

Betsy King Militello, Sam Militello (Co-Designers); Frank Bull, Amanda Callister, Peter Cohen, Emily Freed, Timmy Wasley, Jackie Yang

Orchestra

Christian Smyth (Contractor); Beth Wright Rooney, Jeff Rooney (Management)

Properties

Rachel Seitz (Designer); Nora Beard, Jane Brogan, Amanda Brown, Andja Budincich, Meghan Burns, Peter Cohen, Olivia Coughlin, Dana Fairbarn, Emily

Freed, Chris Kidd, Betsy King Militello, Christine Nolan, Justin Perri, Steven Petrucelli, Shannon Scallon, Sydney Scott, John C. Taylor, Suzanne R. Taylor, Cesar Vera

Rehearsal Stand-ins

Valerie Browne, Jane Brendler Büchi, Erik Hanson, Allison Plotkin, Emily Ruderman, Rachel Seitz

Rigging

Meghan Burns, Valerie Browne, Amanda Callister, Christine Nolan, Suzanne Stamm

Set Design

Ted Cubbin (Leading Designer); Rick Churchill (Technical Designer)

Set Construction

Bob Miller, Carey Ngai (Co-Heads); Al Loomis (Logistics); Peter Branscombe, Valerie Browne, Meghan Burns, Amanda Callister, Rick Churchill, Ted Cubbin, Seth Cunningham, Melissa David, Sandy Dickinson, Roddy Hickey, Tim Lavin, John Leonard, Audrey Steinburg, Ed Symthe, D'Juro Villaran- Rokovich, Jackie Yang

Set Painting

Lorenzo Contessa (Head); Jennifer Dorre, Nicky Gottlieb, Al Loomis, Ben Moore

Stage Management

Mark Justin (Production Stage Manager); Cornelia Iredell, Pen Stanton, Nora Beard (Assistant Stage Managers)

Tickets

Sylwia Dickinson (Chair); Michelle Noonan, Sam Mitchell Wilder

*This page has been graciously underwritten by
Pam and Bob Miller, and Sylwia and Sandy Dickinson*



THE GRAND DUKE: An Opera for the End of the World

By Natan Zamansky

Decadence - From Latin, *decadere*; De- ("from", "off") + -cadere ("to fall" or "to decline") See also: Decay

There has never been a moment in human history when someone has not complained of widespread societal decline. Humanity is in a state of perpetual degradation, they would have you believe, latching on to whatever recent developments might signal the end of days. In France in the late 1800s, it was the *fin de siècle*—the end of the century—the sense that the change of so many digits in the calendar must also signify the end of an era. From France, this thinking spread throughout Europe, where it mingled with other local anxieties and gave rise to the late-19th-century brand of societal decline known as Decadence.



"Decadence" in this context refers to both an artistic movement and a cultural panic, related but not interchangeable. The artistic movement grew out of, among other influences, the aesthetic movement, and emphasized many of the same ideas. The cultural phenomenon describes society's decline by way of increasing leisure and material indulgence, particularly among the middle classes, made more prosperous by the industrial revolution.

Gilbert frequently addressed tensions between the inherited upper-class nobility, whose power was on the decline throughout the Victorian era, and the upwardly mobile middle classes, with no inherited rank but increasingly able to come into money and the status that money brings. (One example is in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, with the tension between the family-rich Captain Corcoran and the middle-class Sir Joseph, who has been promoted above him.) And in *The Grand Duke*, at the *fin de siècle*, Gilbert gave his most direct answer to the question of decadence.

Ludwig attempts to lead his life, and a Grand Duchy, by the priorities of the decadent movement: extravagance, debauchery, art—only to be undercut by reality. When Ludwig's hedonistic reign leads to a collapse of order, the status quo is restored by a ruler who shuns such excess.

The trajectory of excess leading to decay is set as early as the Sausage Roll song. In this thinly veiled metaphor for the forthcoming opera, Ludwig explains how he had initially thought that sausage rolls were a food of which he could never tire, yet now finds that too many of them have made him sick. Nevertheless, he continues to eat them. Likewise, the one thing we know that Ludwig wants at this point—a lavish wedding—is the very thing of which he will come to find himself with far too much.

An Opera for the End of the World

"The piece will be produced upon a scale of unexampled magnificence," he says of *Troilus and Cressida*, the costumes from which he wants to use in his dream lavish wedding. His love of fashion bleeds into his understanding of what it is that a Grand Duke does. As he expresses (in an oft-cut monologue) it is his understanding that to get the most out of the part of a Grand Duke, one might put on a different character with a different costume each day. Ludwig is uninterested in governance and power, but only attracted by the lavish lifestyle that he associates with the "role" of a Grand Duke.

As it turns out, the actual Grand Duke does not live so lavishly—despite desiring that his wedding presents should be "on a scale of extraordinary magnificence," mirroring Ludwig's earlier language. The unabridged libretto features more instances of such mirroring, inviting the audience to juxtapose the two characters in their similarities and differences. This contrast between Rudolph and Ludwig is at the center of the opera and its commentary on decadence, as an often-cut verse states: "How fleeting are the glutton's joys!"



A photo of the lavish original Act II set from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Grand Duke*

Gilbert sets the opera around 1750 to make his point: The height of the lavish Late Baroque style, also a high time for neoclassicism in art, facilitating the *Troilus and Cressida* scenes. It was the Age of Enlightenment, on the verge of the Age of Revolution. This contrast exists in the brutish, militaristic language with which Ernest and Ludwig challenge one another, before abruptly dropping into the tranquil quintet, "Strange the views," (omitted from this production) a paean to the statutory duel's Enlightenment-era values of humane conflict resolution. Yet Ludwig does not know how to wield it humanely, as he shows in his display of aggression in both duels. Ludwig misuses the statutory duel to overthrow the established order, which he promptly leads into ruin.

An Opera for the End of the World

Panic over decadence was often an upper-class anxiety about the growing power of the middle classes, and if this framing seems unusually Royalist coming from the author of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, Gilbert's apology for that comes in the character of Ernest. In Ernest, Gilbert provides ground between Rudolph's self-serving miserliness and Ludwig's self-serving prodigality. In one stroke, he indicts the competent but unempathetic ruling class, indicts the pleasure-seeking populists, and almost immediately writes out the one character who seems competent and well-meaning.

At the beginning of the opera, Ernest is planning a revolution—a very mid-1700s proposition. He wishes to depose the old Grand Duke but does not seek to appoint himself as Rudolph's successor. When Ernest first appears, he is campaigning for election. This plan becomes sidelined when Ludwig fights the statutory duels and seizes power unilaterally. The company doesn't seem to mind, so long as one of their own is in charge, but Ludwig, who has no managerial strategy but to indulge them with parties, mismanages at every turn.

Ludwig doubts Ernest's leadership, principally on the basis that Ernest will not allow Ludwig to do whatever he wants. Ludwig wants to use company's costumes for his wedding, and Ernest, like any sensible theatrical manager, denies this request. But Ludwig interprets this refusal as a slight, a sign that Ernest is unfit to rule. Ludwig embodies a comingling of envy, pride, and vanity which is lampooned in *Troilus and Cressida* itself.

It is perhaps that he plays a King in Shakespeare's play that leads Ludwig to believe he is qualified to rule. Ludwig quotes Shakespeare frequently; he aspires to appear cultured, but cares mostly for the costume—he does not realize that "King Agamemnon in a Louis Quatorze wig" is a figure of ridicule. Ludwig is so focused on the superficial aspects of the character that he plays that he misses the larger political reality.

Some have speculated that Rudolph—called Wilhelm in early drafts—was inspired by various real-life Wilhelms. I submit that Ludwig may have been inspired by Ludwig II of Bavaria, whose Decadent 12-year reign was characterized by lavish expenditure and patronage of the arts. Uninterested in politics, he preferred to spend his time attending the theater and building castles. He accrued immense debt, and was deposed by his ministers in 1886, 10 years before *The Grand Duke*.



Ludwig II of Bavaria

From the Enlightenment-era setting and the use of *Troilus* as a literary touchpoint, Gilbert imbues *The Grand Duke* with societal-scale importance: the collapse of an order and the perpetual anxieties of societal decline. Gilbert brings the fears of the *fin de siècle* to the stage, presenting the decadent apocalypse in all its lavish absurdity. If not as precisely targeted as earlier librettos, *The Grand Duke* is a politically ambitious work, which, coming right on the heels of the similarly ambitious *Utopia, Limited*, suggests that the oft-maligned late plays of Gilbert may still have something meaningful to say.



This article has been adapted from a longer piece.
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Remember, oh, our pets...



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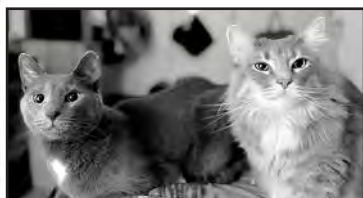
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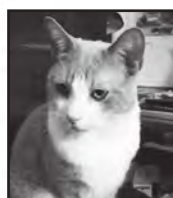
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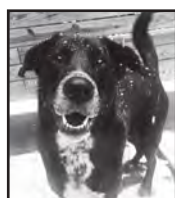
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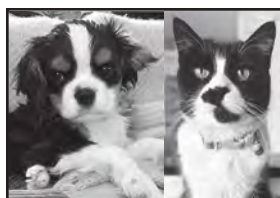
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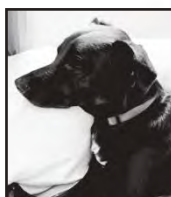
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publisher of the historic Brooklyn Daily Eagle
is proud to salute the Blue Hill Troupe, this year
celebrating its centennial and their seasonal
beneficiary, Young People's Chorus of NYC.

Founded in 1841, Brooklyn Daily Eagle featured Walt Whitman as an editor in the years 1846-1848. Today, Brooklyn Daily Eagle is affiliated with numerous long-standing weekly newspapers that, collectively and continuously, have been publishing for more than 600 years.

Coverage of the Blue Hill Troupe has increased in recent years, and will continue to do so as numerous key Troupers have moved to Brooklyn ... where they search for good sausage rolls.

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