

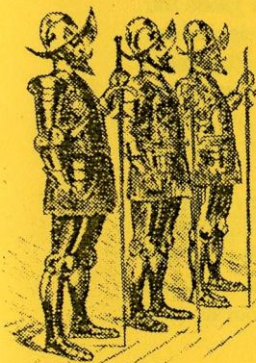
Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society  
presents

# PRINCESS

# IDA

OR, CASTLE ADAMANT

*by William S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan*



HALIFAX PLAYHOUSE  
NOVEMBER 2ND TO NOVEMBER 6TH 1999

### A note from the Chairman

*Princess Ida* is Gilbert and Sullivan's only three-act opera. It is based on a parody that Gilbert wrote of Tennyson's *The Princess*, a long narrative poem that was popular in the nineteenth century. The theme of a women's university was topical when the opera was first produced (1883) as colleges were being set up at Oxford and Cambridge to provide higher education for women for the first time.

There are some references in the opera that are obscure to modern audiences, but many of the themes and characters remain familiar today. There's plenty of fun and amusement in Gilbert's libretto, and Sullivan's music, particularly in the second act, has a carefree and buoyant quality that lifts the spirit. The more reflective and sentimental numbers balance these without lapsing into mawkishness.

Certain difficulties associated with production, such as the need for a large number of male principals, mean that the opera is not performed as frequently as some others. The quality of the work, however, is as good as in the most popular results of the Gilbert and Sullivan collaboration.

Tennyson has the last word, however, as the final lines of the libretto are taken directly from the end of *The Princess*.

Richard Fellows



**Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society** was originally formed in 1968, and gave its first public full-dress performance three years later at Halifax Playhouse. The annual production in the late autumn, still at the Playhouse, remains the Society's principal endeavour, but we also offer a winter season of public concerts, usually between February and April. We are always pleased to perform at new venues in and around Halifax or further afield.

The Society meets to rehearse on Friday evenings throughout the year at All Saints Church Hall, Skircoat Green, Halifax. Three or four evenings during the year are given over to informal concerts and Club Nights, where we will sing through a complete Gilbert and Sullivan opera with the audience providing the chorus. Members of the public are welcome to join us (and sing with us) on these occasions.

If you would like to sing with the Society yourself, you are very welcome to turn up at the rehearsal room on a Friday evening (7.45 onwards). Alternatively you may contact the Secretary, Kathryn Buxton, 34 Fir Road, Huddersfield, HD1 4JE (01484 301291).



### THE UNION OF THE TWO COURTS

Several centuries ago, two kingdoms sought to secure lasting peace between them through the betrothal of the eldest children of their two kings. Thus it was that a marriage contract was drawn up between Hilarion, son of Hildebrand, and Ida, daughter of Gama, when she was one year old and he was two. The unwitting couple then parted to be brought up in their respective courts.

Hilarion has grown up in the normal way of young princes of the time, with an entourage of courtiers, horsemen, musicians and, particularly, drinking companions. Ida, on the other hand, has been influenced by Blanche, a lady at her father's court, to turn her mind to more serious matters. In furtherance of her own ambition, Blanche has persuaded the innocent Ida to start a women's university in Castle Adamant, one of King Gama's country houses. However, Ida has taken this far more seriously than Blanche had imagined, and Castle Adamant is now a female preserve, forbidden entry by men on pain of death, with Ida herself very much in control. It is a community of women playing the parts of men (in the pre-feminist thinking of the time).

Twenty years have passed since the infant betrothal, and the time has come for King Gama to bring Ida to Castle Hildebrand for her wedding with Hilarion, accompanied by her three muscular but not too bright brothers. However, he comes with the news that she has sealed herself away from men. The surprisingly unperturbed Hilarion decides that Ida's heart can be conquered by stealth, and with two faithful companions he sets off for Castle Adamant to investigate and penetrate this female territory, if necessary by playing the parts of women. The story from now on is concerned with discovery, intrigue and direct conflict, with the wits of women set against the strength of men ... or is it the other way round?



## Characters in the story

### *At the Court of Hildebrand*

King Hildebrand		<b>John Ramsdin</b>
Queen Charlotte		<b>Kate McFarlane</b>
Hilarion (his son)		<b>Steven Holton</b>
Cyril )	<i>(Hilarion's</i>	<b>Steven Greenwood</b>
Florian )	<i>friends)</i>	<b>Richard Buxton</b>

### *From the Court of Gama*

King Gama		<b>Roly Robertshaw</b>
Arac )		<b>Stuart Summerscales</b>
Guron )	<i>(Gama's sons)</i>	<b>Colin Fine</b>
Scynthius )		<b>David Prosser</b>

### *At Castle Adamant*

Princess Ida <i>(Gama's daughter)</i>		<b>Patricia Castle</b>
Lady Blanche <i>(Professor of Abstract Science)</i>		<b>Jane Fellows</b>
Lady Psyche <i>(Professor of Humanities)</i>		<b>Kathryn Buxton</b>
Melissa <i>(Lady Blanche's daughter)</i>		<b>Christine Johnson</b>
Sacharissa )		<b>Stephanie Bolton</b>
Chloe )	<i>(Girl Graduates)</i>	<b>Christine Roberts</b>
Ada )		<b>Rachel Prosser</b>

Chorus of Courtiers, Soldiers, Girl Graduates, 'Daughters of the Plough', etc.

<b>Richard Fellows</b>	<b>Paul Matthews</b>	<b>Jan Weaver</b>
<b>Carol Fleming</b>	<b>Paul Ratcliffe</b>	<b>Kath Whitwam</b>
<b>Jean Greenwood</b>	<b>Trevor Roberts</b>	<b>Mike Whitwam</b>
<b>Kate Loughe</b>	<b>Marie Sugden</b>	<b>Rebecca Wood</b>
<b>Helen Matthews</b>	<b>Peter Sugden</b>	

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Act 1 takes place at the Palace of King Hildebrand, and Acts 2 and 3 at Castle Adamant.

## Musical numbers

### *Act 1*

Search throughout the panorama *(Chorus, with Florian)*  
 Now hearken to my strict command *(Hildebrand, Chorus)*  
 Today we meet ... Ida was a twelvemonth old *(Hilarion)*  
 From the distant panorama ... We are warriors three ... Bold and  
 fierce and strong *(Chorus, Arac, Guron, Scynthius)*  
 If you give me your attention *(Gama)*  
**Finale:** P'raps if you address the lady ... Expressive glances shall be  
 our lances ... For a month to dwell in a dungeon cell

### *Act 2*

Towards the empyrean heights *(Ladies, with Melissa, Psyche,  
 Sacharissa)*  
 Mighty maiden with a mission *(Ladies)*  
 Minerva! ... O goddess wise *(Ida)*  
 Come, mighty Must! *(Blanche)*  
 Gently, gently, evidently we are safe so far *(Cyril, Hilarion, Florian)*  
 I am a maiden cold and stately *(Cyril, Hilarion, Florian)*  
 The world is but a broken toy *(Ida, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian)*  
 A lady fair of lineage high *(Psyche, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian)*  
 The woman of the wisest wit *(Psyche, Melissa, Cyril, Hilarion,  
 Florian)*  
 Now wouldn't you like to rule the roast *(Melissa, Blanche)*  
 Merrily ring the luncheon bell *(Ladies, with Blanche, Cyril)*  
 Would you know the kind of maid *(Cyril)*  
**Finale:** Oh joy! Our chief is saved ... Whom thou has chained must  
 wear his chains ... Walls and fences scaling ... Some years ago, no  
 doubt you know ... We may remark, though nothing can dismay us  
 ... To yield at once to such a foe with shame were rife

### *Act 3*

Death to the invader! *(Ladies, with Melissa)*  
 Whene'er I spoke sarcastic joke *(Gama, Ladies)*  
 I built upon a rock *(Ida)*  
 When anger spreads his wing *(Chorus)*  
 This helmet, I suppose *(Arac, Chorus)*  
 This is our duty plain *(Chorus)*  
**Finale:** With joy abiding

## PRODUCTION TEAM

PRODUCER **Giselle Finney**  
MUSICAL DIRECTOR **Peter Cain**  
ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR **Richard Buxton**  
ACCOMPANISTS **Colin Akers, Barbara Thompson, Noreen Galley,  
Colin Fine, Philip Sutcliffe**  
MEMBERS OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE ORCHESTRA  
AND SQUARE CHAPEL ORCHESTRA

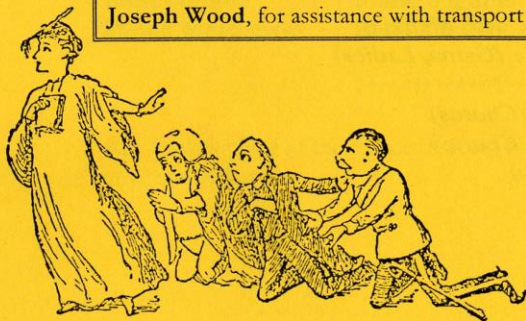


STAGE MANAGER **Andrew Stopford**  
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER **Ian Henderson**  
STAGE CREW **John WorriLOW, Matthew Ramsdin, William Fellows**  
SET BUILT AND PAINTED BY **Richard Fellows, Mike Whitwam,  
Trevor Roberts, Andrew Stopford, Christine Johnson, Kate McFarlane,  
Kath Whitwam, Ian Henderson, Simon Roberts, Richard Buxton**  
LIGHTING **John O'Rourke**  
PROPERTIES **Christine Johnson, Kathryn Buxton, Jane Fellows,  
Kate Johnson, Liam Johnson**  
COSTUMES **W.A. Homburgs, Leeds; West Yorkshire Playhouse,  
Leeds; Halifax Thespians; Halifax Actors' Workshop**  
PUBLICITY **Kathryn Buxton, Jane Fellows**  
MAKE-UP **Lorraine Needham, Gillian Wilkinson, Rosemary Cain**  
PROMPTERS **Brenda Priestley, Janice Roberts**  
ORCHESTRAL PARTS **James Newby Music**  
TICKET SALES AND FRONT OF HOUSE **Kate McFarlane, Simon  
Roberts, Saffron Stanfield**



### THE SOCIETY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES HELP FROM

**Spectrum Yarns, Spa Mills, Slaithwaite**, for providing accommodation  
for construction of the set  
**Joseph Wood**, for assistance with transport



## OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEE

Andrew Stopford

**President**

### *Executive Committee*

Richard Fellows  
Ian Henderson  
Kathryn Buxton  
Richard Buxton  
Stephanie Bolton  
Christine Johnson  
Kate McFarlane  
Rachel Prosser  
Trevor Roberts  
Stuart Summerscales

**Chairman**  
**Vice-Chairman**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**  
**Patrons Secretary**

Mr J.S. Brearley

**Honorary Auditor**



*Yet everybody says I am a disagreeable man,  
And I can't think why!*  
(George Grossmith as King Gama)



*A lady fair of lineage high  
Was loved by an ape in the days gone by*  
(Lady Psyche's lecture on evolution)

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