

Halifax  
Gilbert and  
Sullivan  
Society  
Presents



# THE MIKADO

Halifax Playhouse

5 November – 9 November 2013



Programme £1.00

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I have great pleasure as the Society's new Chairman in welcoming you to our annual production. This year sees our fifth production of *The Mikado*, which we first performed in 1977. It is arguably Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular operetta, and is the one that is most seen abroad, particularly in German opera houses. It has survived many interpretations, too, from *The Hot Mikado* in 1939, now making a comeback, to *The Black Mikado* in the 1960s. We try to adopt a fresh approach within a broadly traditional framework, and trust that the enjoyment of the cast will spread across the footlights to you, our audience

Richard Buxton is again both Producer and Musical Director, and this year our accompanist and Assistant Musical Director Philip Sutcliffe has taken sole responsibility for several singing rehearsals, attempting to drum the notes into our heads. The costumes have come from Wakefield Gilbert and Sullivan Society, who acquired the *Mikado* stock from Homburgs Costumiers when they closed, and they make a colourful sight.

We welcome two new members into the chorus. Jeanette Kendall is a member of All Souls AOS, and Peter Skelton a member of Huddersfield G & S. They have survived their plunge into the unknown so far, and we hope that they will carry on taking part in our activities.

I trust that you, our audience, will have a very enjoyable evening and thank you for supporting us. If you already support us regularly, may you long continue to do so. If you are new to us and have enjoyed the show, please consider becoming a member or a patron and taking part in our all year round activities.

You can speak to any of our Front of House staff or visit our web site at [www.halifaxgands.org.uk](http://www.halifaxgands.org.uk) for further information.

Kelvyn Waites

### Steven Mellor, 1956 – 2013

Although he had not been fully fit for some years, it was still a shock to hear of Steven's death on 7 January 2013. He came to Halifax in the 1970's and took several principal parts, including Ko-Ko in the Society's first *Mikado* in 1977. In 1981 he took the baton for the first time with *Trial by Jury*, and conducted *The Sorcerer* the following year and *Princess Ida* in 1986.

As well as performing he developed a career as a teacher, and many of us now singing had the benefit of study with him. When he had to give up his practical music-making he remained a strong supporter and was a good friend to many.

## THE STORY SO FAR

The town of Titipu lies on the seashore in a rural area of Japan. It is some distance from the Capital, from where the benevolently despotic Mikado rules the country with a singular mixture of humour and sadism.

The local government hierarchy apparently requires all towns to possess a town band and to carry out a regular programme of executions. To make the latter condition easier to meet the Mikado has decreed that all men discovered flirting should be immediately beheaded, but the Titipu Justices have attempted to make this Draconian sentence impossible to carry out. The first person convicted of this offence (Ko-Ko, a cheap tailor) has been given the post of Lord High Executioner, so that before he executes anybody else he will have to execute himself. This subterfuge has not endeared itself to the haughty officers of state, who have resigned rather than serve under this upstart – all but Pooh-Bah, whose decision to accept all their posts (and accompanying salaries) is based on an individual notion of self-abasement.

It is graduation day at the local Ladies' Academy, and for one girl, Yum-Yum, it brings the prospect of marriage with Ko-Ko, whose duties evidently include the guardianship of wards of court. She is not overwhelmed at the prospect, and is overjoyed when a stranger whom she remembers from a fleeting encounter a year ago arrives in Titipu. This is Nanki-Poo, who has been on the run from the Imperial court to escape a matrimonial contract with a certain Katisha, an elderly lady among the Mikado's attendants. He appears in the guise of a wandering minstrel, but Yum-Yum discovers his considerably more exalted true identity. It seems, however, that there is little chance of Ko-Ko releasing her to marry Nanki-Poo.

In the meantime notice has been received from the Imperial court that the Mikado is disturbed at the absence of reported executions from Titipu, and that he threatens to reduce the town to the rank of village, with consequent ruin for all. Ko-Ko and his companions have to find a compliant head to be chopped off, and to find it quickly.

The story concerns their search for a willing victim, Yum-Yum's inner conflicts between love and survival, Katisha's arrival in search of her escaped fiancé, and latterly the Mikado's arrival to check whether his wishes have been carried out. Only after a number of unexpected changes of plan does the story reach its resolution.

Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society present their  
**Christmas Pot-pourri**

At All Saints Church Hall, Godfrey Road, Skircoat Green

On Friday 13 December at 7.45 pm

Free admission with retiring collection. Bring along your party piece!

Ring 01484 301291 for information

## THE CHARACTERS IN THE STORY

The Mikado of Japan	Martin Whitaker
Nanki-Poo (his Son, disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in love with Yum-Yum)	Stuart Sellens
Ko-Ko (Lord High Executioner of Titipu)	Leon Waksberg
Pooh-Bah (Lord High Everything Else)	Ian Moorhouse
Pish-Tush (a Noble Lord)	Colin Fine
Yum-Yum } Pitti-Sing } (wards of Ko-Ko) Peep-Bo }	Clare Williams Christine Roberts Zoë Howe
Katisha (an Elderly Lady, in love with Nanki-Poo)	Penny McGovern

### Ladies and Gentlemen of Titipu

Stephanie Bolton	Steven Greenwood
Amy Ellison	John Morgan
Jean Greenwood	Fintan O'Shea
Deborah Hammond	John Priestley
Jeanette Kendall	Trevor Roberts
Deirdre O'Shea	Peter Skelton
Sally Stopford	Leyland Smith
	Andrew Stopford
	Peter Sugden
	Kelvyn Waites
	Tim Widdop



## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### Act One

- If you want to know who we are (*Men's chorus*)
- A wandering minstrel I (*Nanki-Poo, Men's chorus*)
- Our great Mikado, virtuous man (*Pish-Tush, Men's chorus*)
- Young man, despair, likewise go to (*Pooh-Bah, with Nanki-Poo, Pish-Tush*)
- Behold the Lord High Executioner! (*Men's chorus, with Ko-Ko*)
- As some day it may happen that a victim must be found (*Ko-Ko, Men's chorus*)
- Comes a train of little ladies (*Women's chorus*)
- Three little maids from school are we (*Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Peep-Bo, Women's chorus*)
- So please you, sir, we much regret (*The same, with Pooh-Bah*)
- Were you not to Ko-Ko plighted (*Nanki-Poo, Yum-Yum*)
- I am so proud (*Pooh-Bah, Ko-Ko, Pish-Tush*)
- Finale to Act One: With aspect stern and gloomy stride ... The threatened cloud has passed away ... Your revels cease! Assist me, all of you! ... For he's going to marry Yum-Yum ... The hour of gladness is dead and gone ... Ye torrents roar! Ye tempests howl!

### Act Two

- Braid the raven hair (*Women's chorus, with Pitti-Sing*)
- The sun whose rays are all ablaze (*Yum-Yum*)
- Brightly dawns our wedding day [Madrigal] (*Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Nanki-Poo, Pish-Tush*)
- Here's a how-de-do (*Yum-Yum, Nanki-Poo, Ko-Ko*)
- Mi-ya-sa-ma, Mi-ya-sa-ma (*Chorus, with Mikado, Katisha*)
- A more humane Mikado never did in Japan exist (*Mikado, Chorus*)
- The criminal cried as he dropped him down in a state of wild alarm (*Ko-Ko, Pitti-Sing, Pooh-Bah, Chorus*)
- See how the Fates their gifts allot (*Mikado, Katisha, Ko-Ko, Pitti-Sing, Pooh-Bah*)
- The flowers that bloom in the spring (*Nanki-Poo, Ko-Ko, Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Pooh-Bah*)
- Alone, and yet alive! ... Hearts do not break (*Katisha*)
- On a tree by a river a little tom-tit [Tit-willow] (*Ko-Ko*)
- There is beauty in the bellow of the blast (*Katisha, Ko-Ko*)
- Finale to Act Two: For he's gone and married Yum-Yum ... The threatened cloud has passed away



## PRODUCTION TEAM

MUSICAL DIRECTOR AND STAGE DIRECTOR	Richard Buxton
ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR AND PRINCIPAL REHEARSAL PIANIST	Philip Sutcliffe
Members of the WEST YORKSHIRE ORCHESTRA, SQUARE CHAPEL ORCHESTRA and FRIENDS	
STAGE MANAGER	Paul Matthews
SET PROVIDED BY	West Yorkshire Savoyards Appreciation Society
LIGHTING DESIGNED BY	Karl Eaton
COSTUMES AND WIGS	Wakefield G & S Society
ORCHESTRAL PARTS	James Newby Music
TICKET SALES	Stephanie Bolton
FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER	Kathryn Buxton
PUBLICITY	Peter Sugden
FOYER DISPLAY	Kathryn Buxton
PROGRAMME	Richard Buxton



## HALIFAX GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY

PRESIDENT	Andrew Stopford
CHAIRMAN	Kelvyn Waites
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Colin Fine
SECRETARY	Kathryn Buxton
TREASURER	Richard Buxton

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Stephanie Bolton, Deborah Hammond, Christine Noble-Doyle, Marie Sugden, Peter Sugden

The advertising quack,  
Who wearies with  
tales of countless cures  
His teeth, I've enacted,  
Shall all be extracted  
By terrified amateurs



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 major public appearance, but we also offer a season of public concerts in the spring, usually between February and April. We are always pleased to perform at new venues in and around Halifax or further afield, and anyone wishing to organise a concert should contact the Secretary (see below).

The Society meets to rehearse on Friday evenings throughout the year at All Saint Church Hall, Skircoat Green, Halifax. Three or four of these Friday evenings during the year are given over to informal concerts and Club Nights, where we will sing through a complete Gilbert and Sullivan opera, or perhaps another piece from the same period, with the audience providing the chorus. Members of the public are always welcome to join us (and sing with us, although that's not compulsory!) on these occasions.

If you would like to sing with or support 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). If you don't sing yourself, but can perhaps offer organisational or other practical skills, you will be equally welcome. We look forward to seeing you in the future!



## BINGLEY GILBERT AND SULLIVAN SOCIETY PRESENTS



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## MI-YA-SA-MA

The Japanese chorus to which the Mikado eventually makes his entrance in Act 2 is based on an original song written at a time of civil war in the 1860s. The Restoration Army conscripts (opponents of the Mikado of the time) were little trained and unable to march in step, so Commanders Yajirô Shinagawa and Masujirô Ohmura respectively wrote some words and music for the troops to sing, so that they could march in a more disciplined manner.

There are four verses, which can be translated as follows:

Prince! Prince! What is it that flutters there in front of your horse?  
Chorus: Tokoton-yare, ton-yare-na.

*(According to a Japanese academic, this chorus is no more than a rhythmic chant imitating drumbeats, like our 'rum-ti-tum' or 'rataplan')*

That – don't you know? – is the Brocade Standard,  
The symbol of our orders to defeat the Emperor's foe. (Chorus)

Those forces opposing the Emperor,  
Ruler of all the land, (Chorus)

We, the soldiers of Satsuma, Chôshû, and Tosa,  
Shoot down, not missing one. (Chorus)

The original tune, which Sullivan may have got from a former Secretary to the British Legation in Tokyo, has survived with very little alteration into the score.

The song must have had some effect on discipline, because the Emperor was restored at the Mikado's expense in 1868. We will, however, only be singing the first of these somewhat belligerent verses tonight!

*(Information from 'The Japanese March in 'The Mikado', by Paul Seeley, Musical Times, Vol.126 no.1710, August 1985, pp.454-456)*



From *The Story of The Mikado, told by Sir W S Gilbert* (London, 1921)

Now, in those days there was a certain musician called Nanki Poo, who played the second trombone .... The Town Band used to play every morning at the end of the pier, and it was customary for all the visitors at Titipu to stroll up and down the pier, after bathing, just as they do today at Brighton or Weymouth. One of his audience was a beautiful young girl called Yum-Yum, who was betrothed, quite against her will, to her guardian Koko, a cheap advertising tailor in a large way of business. "Yum-Yum" means, when translated, "The full moon of delight which sheds her remarkable beams over a sea of infinite loveliness, thus indicating a glittering path by which she may be approached by those who are willing to brave the perils which necessarily await the daring adventurers who seek to reach her by those means", which shows what a compact language the Japanese is when all these long words can be crammed into two syllables or rather, into one syllable repeated.

... Now Yum-Yum, who had a delicate ear for music, detected a quality in Nanki Poo's performance on the second trombone which plainly distinguished him from the very inferior artist who played the first trombone, and who, from motives of professional jealousy, blew upon his instrument with all his might in order to divert attention from Nanki Poo to himself. But this ill-natured man defeated his own object, for though Nanki Poo, as second trombone, had nothing to do but to play *Amorosamente ma non troppo* over and over again while his jealous superior played the air, Nanki's "Too, too, too" was given with such tender delicacy and with such an exquisite appreciation of the precise shade of sentiment intended to be conveyed by the composer, that the crowd listened to him with tears in their eyes and simply regarded the first trombone, who only played the air, as an interfering and self-asserting busy-body.

... Notwithstanding the fact that she had been forcibly betrothed to her guardian, Yum-Yum, who at first was fascinated by Nanki Poo's performance, ended by being fascinated by Nanki Poo himself ; and this shows what a sensible girl Yum-Yum was. If a young lady is to yield to fascination at all, it is much wiser to begin by being fascinated by a gentleman's beautiful work and then transfer her admiration to the gentleman who created it, than to begin by being fascinated by the gentleman before she knows whether he is able to create any beautiful work at all.

Now Nanki Poo was such a conscientious musician that he devoted the whole of his attention to rendering expressively the simple but touching music he had to play, and never by any chance did he allow his beautiful purple eyes (which exactly matched his uniform) to wander from the music paper on which his notes were inscribed ; so it came to pass that while Yum-Yum was engaged in the act of transferring her admiration from his work to himself, Nanki Poo was quite unconscious of the effect that he had created. But one happy day while the band was playing as usual at the end of the pier, a drenching shower of rain fell and Nanki Poo ran for shelter, with several others, under a refreshment pavilion in

which such attractive delicacies as fried snails and scraped shark's fin were sold at a reasonable rate ; and there he saw Yum-Yum, who had also sought protection from the heavy downpour. Their eyes met, and Nanki Poo was quite as much fascinated by Yum-Yum as Yum-Yum had, for many weeks past, been fascinated by him. From that moment his performance on the second trombone perceptibly deteriorated.

Nanki Poo, upon whose sensitive heart Yum-Yum had made an indelible impression, had no Matriculation Examination to distract his thoughts, and so it happened that when his engagement .. came to an end, he found himself without any settled means of gaining a livelihood. So he bought a kind of cheap Japanese banjo, as being easier to carry than a trombone, and earned a poor subsistence by playing and singing at tea houses and other places of rest and refreshment.

*(and that's where we find Nanki Poo at the beginning of the opera, though he's kept his trombone)*

A copy of this book is available on the Gilbert and Sullivan Archive website : <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/index.html>



German characters for a toy theatre production of an adaptation of *The Mikado*, "Der Mikado oder die drei Proben : Japanisches Zaubermärchen in 5 Akten" (*The Mikado, or, The Three Samples (or Rehearsals? Answers on a postcard, please) : Japanese fairy tales in 5 acts*). [Mulum in Parvo Papiertheater]

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### Previous productions of Halifax Gilbert and Sullivan Society

1971	HMS Pinafore	1993	The Sorcerer
1972	Iolanthe	1994	Iolanthe
1973	The Sorcerer	1995	The Mikado
1974	The Pirates of Penzance	1996	Patience
1975	The Gondoliers	1997	The Pirates of Penzance
1976	Princess Ida	1998	The Gondoliers
1977	The Mikado	1999	Princess Ida
1978	Ruddigore	2000	The Yeomen of the Guard
1979	The Yeomen of the Guard	2001	HMS Pinafore
1980	Patience	2002	Ruddigore
1981	Trial by jury / HMS Pinafore	2003	The Mikado
1982	The Sorcerer	2004	Iolanthe
1983	The Gondoliers	2005	The Grand Duke
1984	Iolanthe	2006	The Zoo / Cox and Box / Trial by Jury
1985	The Mikado	2007	The Pirates of Penzance
1986	Princess Ida	2008	The Sorcerer
1987	Cox and Box / Pirates	2009	The Gondoliers
1988	Ruddigore	2010	The Yeomen of the Guard
1989	Utopia Limited	2011	HMS Pinafore
1990	The Gondoliers	2012	Princess Ida
1991	The Yeomen of the Guard		
1992	The Zoo / HMS Pinafore		

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