

## Biographies

### Laura Schatz—*Katisha and Artistic Director*

Despite Laura's successes as a director, she is first and foremost a performer. She is known as the soprano who can (and does) sing any role Gilbert and Sullivan wrote and she is doing her best to sing her way through the entire canon. Katisha is one of her favourite roles, and she is delighted to be performing it again this year with her good friend Marc Potvin as Ko-Ko. They first met performing these roles together, a many years ago, in university! MADS has always been a part of Laura's life and she loves being able to perform with both her father and her two children on stage with her.

### Todd Sherman—*Go-To*

Todd joined MADS in September, 2010. Before that, Todd spent over 20 years singing in community choirs around Toronto. These included the Toronto Gay Men's Chorus, the Ryerson Choir, Kammermusik, and the Counterpoint Chorale. Todd's first show with MADS was *HMS Pinafore* (2011), followed by *The Yeomen of the Guard* (2012). He played Giorgio in *The Gondoliers* (2013) in Toronto and Buxton, England, and Arac in *Princess Ida* (2014). Last summer, Todd spent some time in Japan but, regrettably, he never crossed paths with a Mikado or a Wand'ring Minstrel, and he never had occasion to say "O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!"

## St. Anne's, a National Historic Site

St. Anne's is an active church with 10:30 a.m. Sunday services. Its main building is a National Historic Site featuring the only religious art of members of the Group of Seven. Much effective preservation work has been carried out, but there is a major need currently. The dome's leaded windows are starting to collapse, threatening leakage on Fred Varley's paintings of the Prophets and on the sculptures by Loring and Wyle.

**Financial assistance would be greatly appreciated.**

### — SPECIAL THANKS —

Special thanks to Stage Centre Productions, Alexander Showcase and Toronto City Opera for the loan of props. Many thanks also to members of St. Anne's Parish, friends of the cast and cast members who volunteered to help with the countless jobs essential to this production.

*We are especially indebted, as ever, to the extraordinary efforts of Diana and Roy Schatz.*

**Our cast and crew come from all walks of life and musical backgrounds and we are very welcoming to new members! If you might like to appear in the show or help in its production, please contact Laura Schatz at 416.922.4415.**

**Add your name to our mailing list by calling 416.922.4415**

**Join us next year,**

**January 29, 30, 31 and February 4, 5, 6, 7, 2016**

**for our presentation of**

***Iolanthe***



## Presents Gilbert and Sullivan's



**January 30, 31 & February 5, 6, 7, 8, 2015**

Artistic Director:

Laura Schatz

Music Director:

Brian Farrow

Choreographer:

Jennie Friesen Garde

## Historical Notes

*The Mikado*; or, *The Town of Titipu* was Gilbert and Sullivan's biggest hit. In the 130 years since its premiere in 1885, when it ran for an unprecedented 672 performances, it has remained one of the most profitable theatre pieces on the English-speaking stage. It may therefore be a surprise to learn (unless you have seen *Topsy-Turvy*, Mike Leigh's wonderful and largely accurate account of its creation) that it almost wasn't written at all.

After the relatively poor box-office performance of *Princess Ida* (1884), their partner and business manager Richard D'Oyly Carte reminded Gilbert and Sullivan that they were contractually bound to provide a new piece to take over when *Ida* closed. Gilbert suggested (not for the first time) a story in which the characters would take a magic lozenge, and be turned into whoever they were pretending to be at the time. Sullivan, recently knighted and stung by criticism that he was wasting his musical gifts on frivolous works, rejected the lozenge story as artificial (again, not for the first time) and demanded a chance to set "a story of human interest and probability." Gilbert defended his original idea, and matters seemed to be at a stalemate. The stalemate, of course, didn't last. *The Mikado* was soon in the works, and though it is hardly, perhaps, "a story of human interest and probability", at least there are no magic lozenges. Furthermore, a craze for all things Japanese was sweeping Britain, so the setting looked like box-office gold (and neither Gilbert nor Sullivan was averse to money).

It is almost certainly not true, by the way, that Gilbert got the idea for *The Mikado* when a Japanese sword, purchased at the Japanese Exhibition in Knightsbridge, fell from his study wall. The Knightsbridge exhibition didn't open until Act I was almost written, and though Gilbert owned such a sword and admitted that it did inspire him, he never said that it fell.

Gilbert and Sullivan called their new piece "An Entirely Original Japanese Opera". How Japanese, though, is it? True, the Mikado himself enters to a real Japanese imperial march, the music only slightly altered by Sullivan, and Gilbert, a meticulous and exacting taskmaster in rehearsal, insisted that the sets, costumes and even mannerisms of his actors be Japanese to the last detail (he even hired a Japanese woman from the Knightsbridge exhibition to instruct his cast in Japanese deportment; they called her "Miss Sixpence Please" because that was the only English phrase she knew).

In reality, Titipu (though its name may refer to Chichibu, a real Japanese town) is no more Japanese than Lilliput or Gilbert's own Utopia. It serves the same purpose: to make fun, not of Japan, but of England, or, perhaps, of life in general. That may be why, of all the Savoy operas, *The Mikado* is the one most likely to be staged outside the English-speaking world. It has even been performed in Japan, in Japanese.



Ron Orenstein

## Biographies

### Jennie Friesen Garde—*Pitti-Sing and Assistant Director/Choreographer*

It's been many years since Jennie was involved in any production of *The Mikado*, so a treat to come back to it. What a happy surprise to be finally performing as Pitti-Sing for the first time! Nothing so fun as to be fully immersed performing and choreographing. Thanks to the awesome chorus who always look so great and are willing to try anything. Some of Jennie's favourite roles have been Charlotte (*A Little Night Music*), Katie (*Meet Me In St. Louis*) and Judy (*A Chorus Line*). Thanks to the unsung heroes Chris, Maggie, and Jan. Enjoy the show!

### Jay Lambie—*Pish-Tush*

Jay is tickled pink to be making his MADS bass-baritone debut. Pish-Tush is his 4th G & S role, having previously sung the tenor roles of Ralph Rackstraw (*Pinafore*) and Richard Dauntless (*Ruddigore*) in various Ottawa area productions, and Cyril (*Princess Ida*) with MADS last year. Jay sang his first Pish-Tush in 2014 with the Etobicoke Centennial Choir with Roy Schatz as Ko-Ko, Marc Potvin as Pooh-Bah and Laura Schatz as Katisha. His off-stage life includes working as a library technician at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music (now in his 30th year) and looking after his dear old Dad.

### Constantine Meglis—*The Mikado*

Constantine is a professional opera singer and more recently, a film and TV actor. He first performed the title role of the Mikado at the age of 15 at Woodstock Collegiate Institute, then again at Western University and at the Drayton Festival for an entire summer. He has performed all the basso roles in most of the G & S repertoire, including the Pirate King, Sergeant of Police, Captain Corcoran, Sir Marmaduke, and Don Alhambra Del Bolero. He studied at Huron College and later in New York City. Constantine was the House Basso of the National Opera of Greece for over a decade before returning to Canada a few years ago. He has made a number of recordings and performed at the opening ceremonies of the Athens 2004 Olympics. He has worked with some great singers and directors over the years, including the great Franco Zeffirelli and Ghena Dimitrova. Currently, he sings with the Canadian Opera Company and can be seen in various TV roles, commercials, etc.

### Marc Potvin—*Ko-Ko*

It was 30 years ago that Marc and Laura teamed up as Ko-Ko and Katisha while undergraduate students at York University. Thus began Marc's long and wonderful friendship with Laura and eventually (or more like inevitably) his involvement with St. Anne's Anglican Church and MADS. Over the past 22 seasons, Marc has enjoyed his journey through the G & S canon as MAD's resident funny man and sardonic harasser of the stage and music directors (how Laura has kept her sanity over these years is a complete mystery). Ko-Ko is one of Marc's favourite roles. The comedy is Gilbert at his best and Ko-Ko's pathetic nature is a perfect match for Marc's natural temperament (i.e., this will not be a stretch). This production will bring back so many good memories. So here's to Ko-Ko and Katisha and another 30 years!



## Biographies

### **Tonatiuh Abrego—Nanki-Poo**

Tonatiuh is thrilled to be making his debut with MADS. His previous credits include: the leading role Male Chorus in Calgary Opera's production of *The Rape of Lucretia*; Nemorino in Opera Nuova's *L'Elisir d'amore*; Don Ottavio in Banff Centre for the Arts' *Don Giovanni* and Count Almaviva in Captial City Opera's *Il Barbiere di sviglia*. After having completed his Master's degree in Voice Performance at McGill University under the tutelage of Maestro Stefano Algeri, Tonatiuh graduated from Calgary Opera's Emerging Artist program; he is also a laureate of the Jeunesse Ambassadeurs Lyriques du Canada. Look for him next as Romeo in Jeunesses Musicales du Canada's 2015-2016 national tour of *Roméo and Juliette*.

### **Beth Armstrong—Yum-Yum**

Beth likes to boast that she is a strange collection of opposites. She is a fierce urbanite who is happiest when paddling Ontario's wilderness. She adores cooking, but can't abide a mirepoix due to its unfortunate inclusion of celery. She hates to lose, but is an unwavering Maple Leafs fan. Her recent degree in History from U of T has taught her many things, although she did once confuse the great Canadian historian George Ramsay Cook with bad-boy chef Gordon Ramsay. Despite all of this, there are two constants in Beth's life that are far from contradictory: her love of singing and the stage, and her affinity for Gilbert and Sullivan. These two passions fit seamlessly together. Beth is overjoyed to be returning to MADS for a second year and is thrilled to work with such a talented cast and crew!

### **Loris Buzdon—Pooh-Bah**

Loris has been singing with St. Anne's Music and Drama Society as a chorister and soloist on and off for the last 25 years. He's pleased to be back again playing the role of Pooh-Bah which he did with St. Anne's Music and Drama Society 15 years ago. Loris performs throughout the GTA at various venues. He teaches music in Mississauga and loves working with his choirs both in school and at his parish.

### **Brian Farrow—Music Director**

Brian is delighted to return as Music Director for a fourth show with the MADS crew. He debuted several years ago directing *Ruddigore*, and accompanied MADS on their initial Buxton excursion, with *The Pirates of Penzance*. *Gondoliers* was his most recent work with the group, both here and in England. Much like the rest of the directorial team, Brian has grown up with music theatre and more specifically G & S in his life. Between the Scarborough G & S Society, MADS, NTP and Alexander Singers, Brian has performed on stage, in the pit and as director, for over 50 productions. It has been another wonderful year marveling at the creativity of both Laura and Jennie as the show matured. Lastly, MUCH thanks, and love, to Susanne for her support and picking up the slack at home. Kids, I'll be home next weekend!

### **Angela Forbes—Peep-Bo**

Angela has been performing in community theatre for many years and considers it a great privilege to be given so many opportunities to do the thing she loves best. This year she is especially thankful to the people in her life who have encouraged her to perform. (You know who you are, yes I'm talking to you!)

## ACT I—Courtyard of Ko-Ko's Official Residence

The show opens in the town of Titipu. Nanki-Poo, disguised as a minstrel, is looking for Yum-Yum, the ward of Ko-Ko, whom he met and fell in love with a year ago when he was a member of the town band. Yum-Yum was betrothed to her guardian Ko-Ko, Ko-Ko was condemned to death for flirting, so Nanki-Poo has hurried back to claim Yum-Yum; however, far from being dead, Ko-Ko is out on bail, and has been appointed Lord High Executioner. Pooh-Bah, who holds every major office of state, informs Nanki-Poo that Yum-Yum and Ko-Ko are to be married that very day.

Yum-Yum and her sisters, Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo, appear with their schoolfellows. When Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo are alone, he reveals that he is the son of the Mikado, and she admits she does not love her guardian. The lovers realize that their cause is hopeless, and Yum-Yum leaves Nanki-Poo, who then tries to kill himself. Meanwhile, Ko-Ko has received a letter from the Mikado, who intends to abolish the post of Lord High Executioner and reduce Titipu to the rank of a village unless a beheading takes place within a month. On seeing Nanki-Poo about to 'terminate an unendurable existence,' Ko-Ko points out that suicide is a capital offence, and offers to do the job professionally. Nanki-Poo agrees, on the condition that he can marry Yum-Yum and enjoy one month of married life before he is beheaded. After the execution Ko-Ko will then be free to marry the widowed Yum-Yum. Amidst the celebrations, in storms Katisha, having tracked down the object of her affections, Nanki-Poo, and threatens to reveal his true identity. She is outshouted by a chorus of Japanese syllables: "O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!" The town dwellers are not to be deterred, and 'joy reigns everywhere around.'

## ACT II

Yum-Yum, preparing for her wedding, soon learns that under the Mikado's law the widow of a beheaded man must be buried alive. Nanki-Poo is in a dilemma: if he holds Yum-Yum to this marriage, she dies a hideous death, and if he releases her she must marry Ko-Ko at once. The marriage is off, and Nanki-Poo determines to kill himself that afternoon unless Ko-Ko will kill him at once. But it seems that Ko-Ko can't kill anything. To make matters worse, the Mikado and his suite are approaching the town and will arrive in ten minutes. In desperation, Ko-Ko arranges to draw up an affidavit of Nanki-Poo's supposed execution.

The Mikado arrives with Katisha, who makes much of being his daughter-in-law elect. Ko-Ko presents his certificate of execution. The Mikado reads it and says, 'My poor fellow, in your anxiety to carry out my wishes you have beheaded the heir to the throne of Japan!' Ko-Ko and Pooh-Bah find Nanki-Poo and beg him to present himself, alive, to his father, thereby absolving them of his death. But Nanki-Poo, now married to Yum-Yum, is afraid of Katisha's wrath. Unless Ko-Ko will agree to marry the old hag himself, they will leave on their honeymoon at once. Katisha, meanwhile, is mourning the death of Nanki-Poo, and when Ko-Ko tries to woo her, she is at first reluctant, but he wins the formidable lady with a pack of flattering lies and a sad, lovelorn song. Katisha then adds her powerful pleas to the Mikado for everyone to be pardoned. The Mikado, a bit bewildered by it all, nonetheless pronounces that 'Nothing could possibly be more satisfactory!'

For more information about *The Mikado*, please visit: <http://diamond.boisestate.edu/gas/mikado/html/index.html>

**Artistic Director:** Laura Schatz  
**Music Director:** Brian Farrow  
**Choreographer:** Jennie Friesen Garde

### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>The Mikado of Japan</b>   | Constantine Meglis*  |
| <b>Nanki-Poo</b> ( <i>his Son, disguised as a wandering minstrel</i> ) | Tonatiuh Abrego*     |
| <b>Ko-Ko</b> ( <i>Lord High Executioner of Titipu</i> )                | Marc Potvin          |
| <b>Pooh-Bah</b> ( <i>Lord High Everything Else</i> )                   | Loris Buzdon         |
| <b>Pish-Tush</b> ( <i>a Noble Lord</i> )                               | Jay Lambie           |
| <b>Go-To</b> ( <i>a Nobel Lord</i> )                                   | Todd Sherman         |
| <i>Three Sisters—Wards of Ko-Ko</i>                                    |                      |
| <b>Yum-Yum</b>   | Beth Armstrong       |
| <b>Pitti-Sing</b>  | Jennie Friesen Garde |
| <b>Peep-Bo</b>   | Angela Forbes        |
| <b>Katisha</b> ( <i>an elderly Lady</i> )                              | Laura Schatz         |

**Chorus of Nobels, Guards and Coolies:** Adrian Alder, Michael Archer, Roland Binkley, Nicholas Cotton, Phil Cox, John Federchuk, Edward Follows, Robert Follows, Victor Freidin, David Garde, Evan Garde, Philip Garde, David James, Stephen Jones, François Labbé, Cliff Lingwood, Mark McDermott, Merv Pickering, Frank Remiz, David Roeder, Roy Schatz, Fred Silk, J. Bev Stainton, Jeremy Weeks

**Chorus of School Girls:** Michelle Binkley, Wendy Boyd, Marnie Bradshaw, Shifra Cooper, Claire-Marie Fortin, Heather Friesen, Saffi Friesen, Shirley Huntley, Liisa Kallasmaa-Davis, Ruth Lambert, Janie Maruschak, Elizabeth McLeod, Rhonda Pelshea, Ann Rand, Candace Robbins, Nancy Robichaud, Roberta Rothwell, Barbara Zulis

\*Constantine and Tonatiuh appear with the kind permission of Association of Canadian Radio and Television Artists and Canadian Actors' Equity.

### — REFRESHMENTS —

AVAILABLE DOWNSTAIRS DURING INTERMISSION

### ORCHESTRA/TECHNICAL CREW

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Violin                                   | 1st Violin: Gerry Burford (Concertmaster), Meghan Cheng, David Colpitts<br>2nd Violin: Gina Maenhaut, Terry Robbins  |
| Viola                                    | Senan Whelan   |
| Cello                                    | Cheryl Ockrant   |
| String Bass                              | Kerry Johnston   |
| Flute                                    | Carolyn Ricketts, John Barrett, Cathy Whiteside  |
| Oboe                                     | Wendy Bornstein  |
| Clarinet                                 | Ken Fudurich, Jerry Atrix, Menno Mosso   |
| Bassoon                                  | Kenneth Hodge  |
| French Horn                              | Elizabeth Bowes  |
| Trumpet                                  | Margaret Wolf  |
| Trombone                                 | Robert Ketchen   |
| Percussion                               | Justin Han   |
| Orchestra Manager                        | Terry Robbins  |
| Producer                                 | Diana Schatz   |
| Production Manager                       | Maggie Newell  |
| House Manager,<br>Communications         | Jan Mahood   |
| Original Set Design/<br>Painting         | John Guy, Warren Hughes  |
| Lighting Designer/<br>Technical Director | Chris Humphrey   |
| Set Manager                              | David Garde  |
| Production Crew                          | Keith Ferrell, Edward Follows, Angela Forbes, Roger Friesen, Stephen Jones, Jacob Philips, Marc Potvin, Barb Zulis   |
| House and Refreshments                   | Carolyn Archer, Helen Cox, Karen Dunk-Green, Audrey Forbes, Kathryn Lingwood, Marg Moffat, Yvonne Motley, Ryan Price, Michael Rand, Brenda Robbins, Arlene Roeder, Laurie Rogers, Vicki Stainton, Jan Wainwright |
| Lighting Technician                      | Sally Roberts  |
| Prompter                                 | Paula Boma-Fischer   |
| Répétitrice                              | Tanya Paradowski   |
| Photography                              | Martin Chai  |
| Program                                  | Heather Friesen  |
| Original Art                             | Wendy Boyd   |
| Costumes                                 | Theatrix Costume House   |
| Musical scores                           | Counterpoint Musical Services  |