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## **The Lamplighters Announce their 59th Season**

*H.M.S. Pinafore*  
July/August 2011

*The Gondoliers*  
January 2012

Lamplighters Music Theatre is delighted to announce its 2011-12 season of Gilbert & Sullivan classics plus a fun SingAlong and the Lamplighter's unique Gala event.

The season opens with Gilbert & Sullivan's much-parodied classic *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Audiences will board one of England's great Navy ships, the H.M.S. Pinafore, where the beautiful Josephine must choose between marrying the First Lord of the Admiralty - with all of the wealth, prestige and power his title affords - or the "simple sailor, lowly born" who has won her heart. Gilbert devised the plot to make fun of patriotism, social class snobbery and incompetence in high places, and over 130 years later we can still laugh! When *Pinafore* crossed the Atlantic to open in the U.S. in 1878 it was incredibly well received, becoming an instant sensation. In those days, however, copyright laws in the U.S. were barely in place and a mania of copycat productions were launched hot on the tail of the original. Many years later it is still one of the most popular operettas ever produced. Stage Director Jane Erwin Hammett and Conductor Brett Strader are at the ship's helm. This creative team plus their cast and orchestra will carry you off to as lively a *Pinafore* as exists today right from the opening notes of *We sail the Ocean Blue*.

The Lamplighters' winter production will be Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*. While most Gilbert & Sullivan operettas are strictly set within the confines of the composer's home country of England, *The Gondoliers* score was widely influenced by a visit Sullivan made to Italy in 1888. Italian folk dances such as the tarantella and saltarello jostle with other vivacious national

dances such as the cachucha (a fast gypsy dance from Spain) and operatic influences including Bellini, Bizet, Handel and Mozart. The plot line involves a pair of handsome Venetian gondola oarsmen and a mix up of identities at birth. Along the way to resolving the confusion, Gilbert skewers issues of social equality and the class system with his usual brilliant wit and groundbreaking lyrics. When *The Gondoliers* premiered in London in 1889, it was given the highest critical acclaim from local media and from England's Queen Mother, herself, who was so moved that she wrote extensively in her personal diary of the show's inescapable charm. One journalist reviewing the production wrote, plainly, "it is not opera or play. It is simply entertainment – the most exquisite entertainment we have ever seen." The Lamplighters' Artistic Director, Barbara Heroux, directs, and their Resident Music Director, Baker Peeples, conduct.

A third production will be offered in March – a *The Pirates of Penzance* SingAlong. *The Pirates Of Penzance* follows the story of an orphan boy who was mistakenly apprenticed to a pirate instead of a pilot. A hilarious farce featuring sentimental pirates, bumbling policemen, dewy-eyed daughters, and an eccentric Major General, and peppered with unforgettable melodies and tongue-twisting songs such as *I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General* and *Poor Wandering One*, *Pirates* is one of the most popular operettas ever written. Favorite Lamplighter performers will act out the entire operetta on stage and the audience is invited to sing along with however much of the show as they like!

In addition to these season offerings, The Lamplighters will perform their unique Gala & Auction show on November 6<sup>th</sup> at the Herbst Theater in San Francisco. An original, topical satire set to the music of Arthur Sullivan, a Lamplighters Gala is a unique event – more fun-raiser than fundraiser. Past titles such as *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern's Excellent Adventure*, *Apocalypse Later*, *Major General Hospital*, and *Operetta, Get Me the Police!* have won Best Original Show awards from the Bay Area Theater Critics Circle.

The season opens on Friday, July 22nd at Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek. Season tickets go on sale in May, single tickets in June.

For more information visit [www.lamplighters.org](http://www.lamplighters.org) or call the Lamplighters at 415-227-4797.

## ***H.M.S. PINAFORE***

### **Leshler Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek**

Friday, July 22           8:00 PM  
Saturday, July 23       2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, July 24         2:00 PM

### **Lincoln Theatre Napa Valley, Yountville**

Saturday, July 30       8:00 PM  
Sunday, July 31         3:00 PM

### **Novellus Theater at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco**

Friday, August 5        8:00 PM  
Saturday, August 6     2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, August 7       2:00 PM

### **Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, Mountain View**

Saturday, August 13    2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, August 14     2:00 PM

### **Bankhead Theatre, Livermore**

Saturday, August 20    2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, August 21     2:00 PM

## **OUR 46<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CHAMPAGNE GALA & AUCTION**

### **Herbst Theatre, San Francisco**

Sunday, November 6   4:00 PM

## ***THE GONDOLIERS***

### **Novellus Theater at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco**

Friday, January 20     8:00 PM  
Saturday, January 21   2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, January 22     2:00 PM

### **Leshler Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek**

Friday, January 27     8:00 PM  
Saturday, January 28   2:00 PM & 8:00 PM  
Sunday, January 29     2:00 PM

## ***THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE SINGALONG***

**The Presentation Theatre, San Francisco**

Sunday, March 11      2:00 PM

**Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek**

Saturday, March 17    8:00 PM

### **A Brief History and Bio of Lamplighters Music Theatre**

Lamplighters Music Theatre was founded in 1952 to produce the comic operas of librettist W.S. Gilbert and composer Arthur Sullivan, and is now recognized as one of the world's pre-eminent Gilbert & Sullivan companies. The Lamplighters' repertoire includes all the surviving works of these creative geniuses, as well as a select group of comic operas and classic musicals by other composers that exemplify their artistic vision.

Critically acclaimed artistic successes for the Lamplighters include honors for Best Production and Best Director at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Buxton, England and local awards in nearly every performance, direction, and design category. The hallmarks of a Lamplighters production are lavish costumes and sets, live orchestra, excellent comic acting, and gorgeous unamplified singing that showcases the beauty and purity of the human voice.

Gilbert & Sullivan created a new kind of music theatre. Their music is largely classical in style, but lyrics and music are perfectly matched; librettos are complicated, but highly literate, thought-provoking and hugely entertaining. Between 1875 and 1896 they took the world of music by storm with their 13 comic operas, including *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Mikado*. Today, their topsy-turvy, melodic creations continue to inspire, intrigue and delight performers and audiences of all ages.

In addition to an active performance schedule, The Lamplighters provide performance and training opportunities in this unique style of classic music theatre to local theatre artists, and seek to promote appreciation for the works of Gilbert & Sullivan through youth programs, school performances and other types of community outreach.