



PRESS RELEASE

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The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin Presents Its Summer 2014 Grand Production

H.M.S. Pinafore

Set sail for laughs o'er the bright blue sea with Captain Corcoran, Little Buttercup, and Dick Deadeye. Opening in Austin June 12th.

WHO: The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin
WHAT: *H.M.S. Pinafore*
WHEN: June 12-22 / Thursdays-Sundays / 9 Performances.
Evening performances Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays at 7:30pm.
Matinees at 2pm June 15, 21 & 22.
Special Children's Activities Sunday, June 15 at 1pm.
WHERE: Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School / 11908 N. Lamar
TICKETS: Tickets \$7-\$25
Purchase tickets at www.gilbertsullivan.org or call (512) 474-5664.
For group sales of 10 or more contact Michael Meigs at (512) 420-0888 or michael@gilbertsullivan.org

AUSTIN, TX – The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin presents its summer 2014 grand production of *H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass That Loved a Sailor*. Nine performances will be presented at the Worley Barton Theater at Brentwood Christian School, June 12-22, 2014. This immensely popular classic was W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's fourth comic opera of their fourteen, and was their first international sensation. Gilbert's plot is full of his hallmark topsy-turvy humor and memorable lyrics and Sullivan's music displays his inexhaustible gift of melody, with bright and cheerful tunes that leave audiences humming.

Artistic Director Ralph MacPhail, Jr., returns for his 14th summer with the Society, along with Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, enjoying his 18th season as Music Director and conductor of the Gillman Light Opera Orchestra. The outstanding cast is headed by B. Iden Payne multiple nominees Janette Jones (Little Buttercup), Holton Johnson (Ralph Rackstraw), and Russell Gregory (Sir Joseph Porter), and features Carol Brown as Josephine.

H.M.S. Pinafore satirizes the snobbery and hypocrisy of the English social system of the day, as the beautiful daughter of the ship's captain falls in love with a lowly seaman. This groundbreaking musical also pokes good-natured fun at patriotism, party politics, the Royal Navy, and the appointment of unqualified people to positions of authority.

The gentlemanly Captain of the Pinafore, who claims that he would never swear at his crew (what, never?), does not know that his daughter has fallen in love with a common sailor serving on her father's ship. Meanwhile, the Captain has arranged for her to marry the First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir Joseph Porter. Sir Joseph himself has risen from humble beginnings to gain his office by political acumen, despite having never



gone to sea! And the Captain himself fancies a poor bumboat woman. Fear not: it all works out in the end. "Oh joy, oh rapture unforeseen!"

H.M.S. Pinafore opened at the Opera Comique in London on May 25, 1878, for a run of 571 performances, and since that time it has never been out of the standard repertory of Gilbert & Sullivan (or Savoy) operas throughout the English-speaking world. The first authorized production of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in America opened on December 1, 1879, with, according to legend, Gilbert on stage in the chorus. Its unprecedented popularity fostered an American audience for musical theatre, while the show itself became a model for form and content for musicals that followed. *H.M.S. Pinafore* influences in popular culture include movies and television, with references appearing in, for instance, *Chariots of Fire*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Star Trek: Insurrection*, *The West Wing*, *The Simpsons*, and *Family Guy*.

A complementary buffet with the cast follows the Friday, June 13 performance. Special children's activities precede the performance on June 15 at 1pm. All performances will have supertitles for dialogue and lyrics.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Austin was founded in 1976 with the purpose of education by preserving and presenting the works of Gilbert & Sullivan. Known for its highly acclaimed annual grand productions from the G&S repertoire, the Society is also dedicated to spreading and teaching the joys of G&S through school and community presentations.

Media sponsors for *H.M.S. Pinafore* are Time Warner Cable News and Classical 89.5 KMFA. This project is funded and supported in part by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and in part by the City of Austin Economic Development Department/Cultural Arts Division believing an investment in the Arts is an investment in Austin's future. Visit Austin at NowPlayingAustin.com

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