

The Jersey Gilbert & Sullivan Society Presents

PRINCESS IDA



TICKETS
AVAILABLE
FROM
JERSEY ARTS
CENTRE

23rd-27th May 2023 7.30pm
THE GREAT HALL
HIGHLANDS COLLEGE

KINDLY SPONSORED BY
**ANNE
CROSSLAND**

DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION
**SUSAN
LINTELL**

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act I : The Court of King Hilderbrand

1. "Search throughout the panorama" (Florian and Chorus)
2. "Now hearken to my strict command" (Hildebrand and Chorus)
 3. "Today we meet" (Hilarion)
 4. "From the distant panorama" (Chorus)
5. "We are warriors three" (Arac, Guron, Scynthius and Chorus)
 6. "If you give me your attention" (Gama)
7. Finale Act I (Gama, Hildebrand, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian and Chorus)

Act II : Inside the Castle Adamant

8. "Towards the empyrean heights" (Lady Psyche, Melissa, Sacharissa and Ladies Chorus)
 9. "Mighty maiden with a mission" (Ladies Chorus)
10. "Minerva! oh, hear me!" ... "Oh, goddess wise" (Princess)
- 10a. "And thus to Empyrean Heights" (Princess and Ladies Chorus)
 11. "Come, mighty Must" (Lady Blanche)
 12. "Gently, gently" (Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)
13. "I am a maiden, cold and stately" (Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)
14. "The world is but a broken toy" (Princess, Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)
15. "A lady fair, of lineage high" (Psyche with Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)
16. "The woman of the wisest wit" (Psyche, Melissa, Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)
 17. "Now wouldn't you like to rule the roast" (Melissa and Blanche)
 18. "Merrily ring the luncheon bell" (Blanche, Cyril and Ladies Chorus)
 19. "Would you know the kind of maid?" (Cyril)
20. Finale Act II (Princess, Hildebrand, Melissa, Psyche, Blanche, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian, Arac, Guron, Scynthius and Chorus)

Act III : Outside Castle Adamant

21. "Death to the invader" (Melissa and Ladies Chorus)
 22. "I built upon a rock" (Princess)
23. "Whene'er I spoke" (King Gama with Ladies Chorus)
 24. "When anger spreads his wing" (Chorus)
25. "This helmet, I suppose" (Arac with Guron, Scynthius and Chorus)
 26. "This is our duty plain" (Chorus)
 27. "With joy abiding" (Ensemble)

There will be a brief intermission between Acts 1 and 2 followed by a 15-minute interval between Acts 2 and 3.

CAST

King Hildebrand	Phillip Le Claire
Hilarion, King Hildebrand's Son	Richard Joynt
Cyril, Hilarion's Friend	Joseph Barette
Florian, Hilarion's Friend	William Millow
King Gama	Michael Blackie
Arac, King Gama's Son	Stephan Gough
Guron, King Gama's Son	David Frank
Scynthus, King Gama's Son	Mark Godel
Princess Ida, King Gama's Daughter	Liz Shea
Lady Blanche, Professor of Abstract Science	Judy Egge
Lady Psyche, Professor of Humanities	Liberty Spears
Melissa, Lady Blanche's Daughter	Nicola Austin
Sacharissa, Girl Graduate	Megan Barette
Chloe	Cerys Thompson

Gentlemen of the chorus

Graham Austin, Mike Halsey, Seb McNeilly, Mark Brignell,
Stanley Richard Dit-Leschery, David Fosse, Peter Routier, Dominic Wilson.

Ladies of the chorus

Alison Bishop, Rosemary Langlois, Judy Dingle, Jean Drydale, Gill Gibault, Kathy Gillen,
Elaine Heuston, Anne Platts.

Junior chorus

Aelia Farrow, Ava Cadoret

Production Team

Director	Simon Thomas
Musical Director	Annette Blanchet
Choreographer	Michelle Brignell
Accompanist	Grace Garnier
Production Manager	Scott Douglas
DSM	Gemma Cavey
Lighting	Sam [insert??]
Poster, programme and set artwork	Susan Lintell
Prompt	Michael Pallot
Costumes	Berenice Costume Hire
Wardrobe co-ordinator	Alison Bishop

Acknowledgements

Jersey College Prep, St Martins Methodist Church, St Aubin's Methodist Church, Georgetown Methodist Church and Baker & Partners for rehearsal facilities. The JADC, Penny Arden and members of the company for assistance with props, Peter Winn for publicity distribution. SGB Hire for transport, and all the partners and families of the cast and production team who have patiently tolerated the absence of their loved ones during the rehearsal and production period.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Nicola Austin (Melissa) is enjoying playing a young character in this year's production, having been a member of the society for too many years to count. She has recently celebrated a significant birthday!

Joseph Barette (Cyril) is performing in his second G&S production after thoroughly enjoying taking part in last year's Yeomen of the Guard. Joseph is relishing in the challenges of playing Cyril, but thankful to have many fewer lines to learn this year.

Megan Barette (Saccharissa) has been part of many shows with the JADC and Samares Players, but Princess Ida is her first time on stage with the Gilbert & Sullivan Society. She has enjoyed exploring a new style of musical theatre and is excited to play Saccharissa in this production.

Michael Blackie (King Gama) had his first outing with the Society was forty years ago as Pish Tush in its first production of The Mikado. He has since played roles in all the operas that the Society has presented and has been its chairman twice.

Judy Egge (Lady Blanche), alto, is much enjoying being involved in yet another G & S production, having previously taken principal roles in Yeomen of the Guard, Pirates and Ruddigore. As Professor of Abstract Philosophy, she is still waiting for an explanation of what the subject encompasses. When not rehearsing with G & S, Judy sings with the Amity Singers who this year are celebrating their 50th anniversary.

David Frank (Guron) sings baritone most of the time and has been performing with the society since 1989 in such costumes as pirate, gondolier, policeman but never a suit of armour until this year. He was very surprised to be offered the part of a warring, aggressive unintelligent soldier son of King Gama. David has also dabbled in JADC and Green Room productions over the years and is currently Chair of the Harmony Men.

Mark Godel (Scynthus), shower quality Baritone, had always wanted brothers and is delighted to find his two identical twins on this stage this year. Mark is usually to be found lurking happily in the chorus or taking minor roles in local Am Dram.

Stefan Gough (Arac), bass-baritone, has been with the Society since the end of the last century and has played a few minor principal parts. He's mostly found at the back of the chorus being naughty.

Richard Joynt (Hilarion), tenor, has been a member of the Gilbert & Society since 2011 and in that time has played various principal roles, as well as supporting roles in the ensemble. He also sings with various other vocal groups in Jersey. He is passionate about the stage, and especially opera.

Philip Le Claire (King Hildebrand), Bass, is a semi-pro-musician with a love of all music - especially jazz - and this is his third outing onto a stage and as a light opera singer, having been in the chorus for Pirates and then in the principal role of Wilfred Shadbolt in last year's Yeomen of the Guard. He says "...being on the stage is very different to being in the pit!"

CAST BIOGRAPHIES

Will Millow (Florian), Bass-baritone, first joined the Society in 2005 and has taken part in most productions since then, playing a variety of roles. Away from G&S, he has sung with several choirs in the Island and is musical director of the Jersey Festival Choir.

Liz Shea (Princess Ida) Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

Liberty Spears (Lady Psyche), mezzo-soprano, recently sang in the chorus of La Traviata with Hampstead Garden Touring Opera in Sicily. Prior to this, she attended Trinity Laban Conservatoire and Chethams School of Music. Liberty joined the Society last year and performed Phoebe in Yeomen of the Guard. She is thoroughly looking forward to performing with this talented group of people this year and in years to come.

Cerys Thompson (Chloe), Soprano, is new to the Gilbert and Sullivan society this year. Outside of G&S, Cerys is part of the JADC where she has played a number of roles in pantomimes and musicals. She has loved pushing herself out of her comfort zone and trying something new this year.

The Principals



The Cast



PRODUCTION TEAM

Simon Thomas (Director) has a passion for musical theatre and had directed productions throughout the UK before moving to Jersey. This is his third show for the Society following Pirates of Penzance in 2019 and The Yeomen of the Guard in 2022. As well as directing Ida, this year he has also taken the role of Chairman of the Society. His future plans include directing Evita for the JADC in July 2024 as well as his day job as an Advocate of the Royal Court.

Annette Blanchet (Musical Director) Annette is very much looking forward to this opportunity to perform Princess Ida, a show which has not been fully staged locally before. She is passionate about the importance of bringing the island's musical community together and providing everyone with the chance to experience the joy and sense of wellbeing that can come from singing, a passion which is reflected in her involvement with the Jersey Music Association. In addition to looking after the Jersey G&S chorus, Annette conducts Les Conteurs Singers and the Harmony Men, and is also organist at St Aubin's Methodist Church. Together with her job as Operations Manager for the National Trust for Jersey all this keeps her very busy, which is just how she likes it. This is Annette's 25th year with the society which means that she is no longer as young as she tends to think!

Michelle Brignall (Choreographer) Princess Ida is Michele's third outing as choreographer for Jersey G&S and she can safely say that there is not a Pirate in Penzance nor a Yeoman in the Tower who would be a match for the ladies of Castle Adamant in 2023. Michele gets as much pleasure from seeing the cast bring her ideas to life as she does from performing herself and has thoroughly enjoyed helping with the movement in this joyous show.

Grace Garnier (Accompanist) was born and raised in Jersey, originally learning the piano from the age of six with Timothy De Quetteville. When she was thirteen, she gained a place at the prestigious Chetham's School of Music, Manchester, where she had the opportunity to further her musical education as a pianist under the tutelage of John Gough. Whilst studying at Chetham's, Grace was lucky enough to perform at national venues such as The Royal Northern College of Music, The Bridgewater Hall, The Royal Festival Hall and, most memorably, The Royal Albert Hall as part of the 2011 BBC Proms. Now based in Jersey, Grace is an active participant in the musical community of the island. She is a busy and enthusiastic accompanist as well as the musical director of an all-female choir, 'Vocalize'. Grace has been teaching piano on the island for nine years and would say that although her specialty (and one true love) is classical music, she also enjoys playing and teaching jazz/contemporary styles too.

Scott Douglas (Production Manager) a production and stage manager with over 20 years experience, Scott has had the opportunity to work with a range of directors and artists including TV personalities, professional dancers, award winning musicians, West End production companies and many more. This is Scott's second Gilbert and Sullivan Society show having been a stage manager for 'The Sorcerer' in 2008.

Susan Lintell (Artwork) Susan is an artist, illustrator, painter, and graphic designer, as well as a Chartered Marketer, and a member of the Institute of Directors.

She has many years of experience, and a wide range of skills, including: design & illustration, theatre design & scenery, murals, portraits, book & cover design, presentations, and fine art.

Recent works include illustrations for "Meet Hammerhead and Captain Stinky Pants", and "Hammerstorm", both by author Colin Macleod. Susan has completed a commission for two large acrylic paintings on linen canvas.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Topsy Turvy, Mike Leigh's 1999 masterpiece study of the tempestuous relationship between Gilbert & Sullivan, opens with members of the D'Oyly Carte company struggling their way through a performance in the blistering heat of the 1884 London summer. They all seem fed up and demotivated.

The show was *Princess Ida*. It was not regarded as a success by contemporary critics, and some have blamed that on the hot weather at the time it opened. As the years have passed it has been performed less frequently than G&S big hitters such as *Pirates*, *Yeomen* and *The Gondoliers*.

The piece has its devotees, including the film-maker Ken Russell who staged production for the English National Opera in 1992 with a contemporary setting, involving an American Japanese theme park version of Buckingham Palace, with a chorus of Madonna lookalikes in conical bras. Rightly or wrongly, we have not sought to replicate that concept in our production.

Ida is based on a 1847 narrative poem *The Princess* by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, in which the title character escapes an arranged marriage to found a women's university. Gilbert used this as a springboard for a satire on women's education. This was a hot topic at the time, with the founding of Girton and Newnham Colleges at Cambridge in 1869 and 1871 followed by Somerville and Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford in 1878. But what was hugely relevant in the 1880s is an anachronism that presents one of the biggest challenges to staging *Ida* today.

The Jersey G&S Society, like many others, has tended to overlook *Princess Ida*. It performed a concert version in 2015 but, until now, never a fully staged version. Annette Blanchet first suggested to me that we consider the show after a performance of *Pirates* back in 2019. We didn't pursue it, choosing instead to stage *Yeomen* last year. The success of *Highlands* as a venue led us to think about other shows that would fit comfortably into the space and *Ida* soon returned to mind. We're very glad it did.

The music from *Ida* is not instantly recognisable. With the possible exception of King Gama's "I can't think why", it doesn't tend to feature on G&S compilation recordings. However, a newcomer to the piece soon appreciates the quality of the music. The series of numbers in Act 2 from "Gently Gently" to "The Woman of the Wisest Wit" have been referred to as "Sullivan's string of pearls" and regarded as among his best, including as it does the exquisite quartet "The World is but a Broken Toy". Four months immersed in rehearsals has left me genuinely puzzled as to why the music is not better known.

Staging the production brings its challenges, including its three Act structure (where do you put the interval?), but what we have tried to offer is something that goes beyond Gilbert's original satire on feminism. To that end, we have used some subtle but significant revisions to the text devised by the Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company of Minneapolis to build upon the relationship between *Ida* and Hilarion and to significantly alter the tone of the final scene. If we laugh at the characters, it should be regardless of gender.

