

Gilbert and Sullivan Festival Small Group tour

Reading List

The Operas Of Gilbert And Sullivan

by Percy Hetherington Fitzgerald, Arthur Sullivan

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Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Respectable Capers': Class, Respectability and the Savoy Operas 1877-1909

by Michael Goron

This innovative account of the Gilbert and Sullivan partnership provides a unique insight into the experience of both attending and performing in the original productions of the most influential and enduring pieces of English-language musical theatre.

In the 1870s, Savoy impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte astutely realized that a conscious move to respectability in a West End which, until then, had favored the racy delights of burlesque and French operetta, would attract a new, lucrative morally 'decent' audience.

This book examines the commercial, material and human factors underlying the Victorian productions of the Savoy operas. Unusually for a book on 'G&S', it focuses on people and things rather than author biography or literary criticism. Examining theatre architecture, interior design,

marketing, and typical audiences, as well as the working conditions and personal lives of the members of a Victorian theatre-company, 'Respectable Capers' explains how the Gilbert and Sullivan operas helped to transform the West End into the family-friendly 'theatre land' which still exists today.

The Complete Annotated Gilbert & Sullivan: 20th Anniversary Edition

by Bradley

Ian Bradley's Complete Annotated Gilbert and Sullivan has established itself across the world as the authorized and definitive 'Bible' for all those interested in the Savoy operas. Originally published in two Penguin paperbacks in the 1980's, a single-volume comprehensive compendium, hailed widely as "easily the best annotated Gilbert & Sullivan available" (Gayden Wren, New York Times) was published by Oxford University Press in 1996. This brand new 20th anniversary edition includes Thespis, Gilbert and Sullivan's first collaboration which is now being increasingly performed, despite the loss of the vocal and orchestral scores. It also features a completely new introduction, reflecting on the state of Gilbert and Sullivan nearly 150 years after the pair began their legendary collaboration, and new annotations addressing recent performance history, newly discovered 'lost' songs and dialogue, and, for the first time, Gilbert and Sullivan references in contemporary popular culture. Scholars, performers, and fans are sure to rejoice in this indispensable companion to the Gilbert and Sullivan repertoire, newly updated for the present day.

Gilbert and Sullivan: A Dual Biography

by Sullivan

'A Gilbert is of no use without a Sullivan.' With these words, W.S. Gilbert summed up his reasons for persisting in his collaboration with Arthur Sullivan despite the combative nature of their relationship. In fact, Michael Ainger suggests in Gilbert and Sullivan the success of the pair's work is a direct result of their personality clash, as each partner challenged the other to produce his best work. After exhaustive research into the D'Oyly Carte collection of documents, Ainger offers the most detailed account to date of Gilbert and Sullivan's starkly different backgrounds and long working partnership. Having survived an impoverished and insecure childhood, Gilbert flourished as a financially successful theater professional, married happily and established himself as a property owner. His sense of proprietorship extended beyond real estate, and he fought tenaciously to protect the integrity of his musical works. Sullivan, the product of a supportive family who nourished his talent, was much less satisfied with stability than his collaborator. His creative self-doubts and self-demands led to nervous and physical breakdowns, but it also propelled the team to break the

successful mode of their earliest work to produce more ambitious pieces of theater, including *The Mikado* and *The Yeoman of the Guards*. Offering previously-unpublished draft libretti and personal letters, this thorough double-biography will be an essential addition to the library of any Gilbert and Sullivan fan.

Gilbert of Gilbert & Sullivan: His Life and Character

by Andrew Crowther

The author of *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *HMS Pinafore* and the other great Savoy libretti, W S Gilbert, witty, caustic and disrespectful, was one of the celebrities of the late Victorian age. In his time he had been many things: journalist, theatre critic, cartoonist, comic poet, stage director, writer of short stories, dramatist. A political satire he wrote was banned by the Lord Chamberlain at the personal insistence of the Prince of Wales. He wrote the most brilliantly inventive plays of his time. With Arthur Sullivan he wrote comic operas that defined the age. He became richer and more famous than he could have imagined, but at the price of his artistic freedom. This is the story of an angry and quarrelsome man, discontented with himself and the age he lived in, raging at life's absurdities and laughing at them. In this book his glorious, contradictory character is explored and brought vividly to life.

Gilbert and Sullivan: Gender, Genre, Parody

by Carolyn Williams

Long before the satirical comedy of *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report*, the comic operas of W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan were the hottest send-ups of the day's political and cultural obsessions. Gilbert and Sullivan's productions always rose to the level of social commentary, despite being impertinent, absurd, or inane. Some viewers may take them straight, but what looks like sexism or stereotype was actually a clever strategy of critique. Parody was a powerful weapon in the culture wars of late-nineteenth-century England, and with defiantly in-your-face sophistication, Gilbert and Sullivan proved that popular culture can be intellectually as well as politically challenging. Carolyn Williams underscores Gilbert and Sullivan's creative and acute understanding of cultural formations. Her unique perspective shows how anxiety drives the troubled mind in the Lord Chancellor's 'Nightmare Song' in *Iolanthe* and is vividly realized in the sexual and economic phrasing of the song's patter lyrics. The modern body appears automated and performative in the 'Junction Song' in *Thespis*, anticipating Charlie Chaplin's factory worker in *Modern Times*. Williams also illuminates the use of magic in *The Sorcerer*, the parody of nautical melodrama in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, the ridicule of Victorian aesthetic and idyllic poetry in *Patience*, the autoethnography of *The*

Mikado, the role of gender in Trial by Jury, and the theme of illegitimacy in The Pirates of Penzance. With her provocative reinterpretation of these artists and their work, Williams recasts our understanding of creativity in the late nineteenth century.
