

OPERA A LA CARTE

in

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN'S

THE MIKADO

or

THE TOWN OF TITIPU

Director: RICHARD SHELDON

Conductor: ALEXANDER RUGGIERI

CAST

in order of appearance

Nanki-Poo.....CRAIG GILMORE
The Mikado's son, disguised as a wandering minstrel and in love with Yum-Yum

Pish-Tush.....JESSE MERLIN
A noble lord

Ko-Ko.....ELI VILLANUEVA
Lord High Executioner of Titipu

Pooh-Bah.....MICHAEL GALLUP
Lord High Everything Else

Yum-Yum)CAROL WINSTON
) Three Sisters -

Pitti-Sing)ANN NORIEL
) Wards of Ko-Ko

Peep-Bo)DIANE SAWYERS

Katisha.....ADELAIDE SINCLAIR
An elderly lady, in love with Nanki-Poo

The Mikado of Japan.....RICHARD SHELDON

Schoolgirls:

MARJORIE CUNNINGHAM
AMBER JANAY DAVIDSON
LEILANI HAYASHI
CAITLIN LOPEZ
KELSEY NAMARA
MEGAN O'TOOLE
ASHLEI ROMANOWSKI

Nobles:

NICHOLAS BARTHELEMY
MARC GOLDSTEIN
GREGORY IRIART
CHRISTOPHER NOBLE
STEVE O'DONNELL
JOSH SHAW
MICHAEL UPWARD
JOSEPH VON BUHLER
GARY WHITE

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Overture

ACT I

"If You Want to Know Who We Are"(Chorus and Recitative).....	Nanki-Poo and Men
"A Wand'ring Minstrel, I"(Solo and Chorus).....	Nanki-Poo and Men
"Our Great Mikado, Virtuous Man"(Solo and Chorus).....	Pish-Tush and Men
"Young Man, Despair"(Song).....	Pooh-Bah, Nanki-Poo and Pish-Tush
"And Have I Journeyed for a Month"(Recitative).....	Nanki-Poo and Pooh-Bah
"Behold the Lord High Executioner"(Chorus and Solo).....	Ko-Ko and Men
"As Some Day It May Happen"(Solo and Chorus).....	Ko-Ko and Men
"Comes a Train of Little Ladies"(Chorus).....	Girls
"Three Little Maids from School Are We"(Trio and Chorus).....	Yum-Yum, Peep-Bo Pitti-Sing and Girls
"So Please You, Sir, We Much Regret"(Quartet and Chorus).....	Yum-Yum, Peep-Bo, Pitti-Sing Pooh-Bah and Girls
"Were You Not to Ko-Ko Plighted"(Duet).....	Yum-Yum and Nanki-Poo
"I Am So Proud"(Trio).....	Pooh-Bah, Ko-Ko and Pish-Tush
"With Aspect Stern and Gloomy Stride"(Finale-Act I).....	Ensemble

ACT II

"Braid the Raven Hair"(Chorus and Solo).....	Pitti-Sing and Girls
"The Sun, Whose Rays Are All Ablaze"(Song).....	Yum-Yum
"Brightly Dawns Our Wedding Day"(Madrigal).....	Yum-Yum, Pitti-Sing, Nanki-Poo and Pish-Tush
"Here's a How-De-Do"(Trio).....	Yum-Yum, Nanki-Poo, and Ko-Ko
"Mi-Ya Sa-Ma"(March of the Mikado's Troops, Chorus, and Duet).....	Mikado, Katisha & Ensemble
"A More Humane Mikado"(Solo and Chorus).....	Mikado, Girls, and Men
"The Criminal Cried As He Dropped Him Down"(Trio and Chorus).....	Ko-Ko, Pitti-Sing Pooh-Bah, Girls, and Men
"See How the Fates Their Gifts Allot"(Glee).....	Mikado, Pitti-Sing, Pooh-Bah Ko-Ko and Katisha
"The Flowers That Bloom in the Spring"(Song).....	Nanki-Poo, Ko-Ko, Yum-Yum Pitti-Sing and Pooh-Bah
"Alone, and Yet Alive!" (Recitative and Song).....	Katisha
"Willow, Tit-Willow"(Song).....	Ko-Ko
"There Is Beauty in the Bellow of the Blast"(Duet).....	Katisha and Ko-Ko
"For He's Gone and Married Yum-Yum"(Finale-Act II).....	Ensemble

SYNOPSIS

The MIKADO (or The Town of Titipu)

Before the action of the opera begins, Nanki-Poo has fled from the court of his father, the Mikado of Japan, to escape marriage with an elderly lady, named Katisha. Assuming the disguise of a musician, he has then fallen in love with a fair maiden, Yum-Yum; but he has been prevented from marrying her by her guardian, Ko-Ko, who wishes to marry her himself. Ko-Ko, however, has been condemned to death for flirting; and, when Act I opens, Nanki-Poo is hastening to the court of Ko-Ko in Titipu to find out whether Yum-Yum is now free to marry him.

From Pooh-Bah (a corrupt and proud public official) and Pish-Tush (a noble man), Nanki-Poo learns that Ko-Ko has, instead, become Lord High Executioner, thus preventing the sentence of decapitation from being carried out. Ko-Ko is, in fact, going to marry Yum-Yum that very afternoon.

Everything seems to be going well for Ko-Ko, but suddenly a letter comes from the Mikado ordering him to execute somebody or else lose his position of Lord High Executioner. He is in a quandary to find someone to execute, when Nanki-Poo appears, bent upon suicide because he cannot marry Yum-Yum. By conceding to him the right to marry Yum-Yum for a month, Ko-Ko persuades Nanki-Poo to be the subject for the public execution when that month is up. There is general rejoicing in this apparent solution to the problem, marred only by the unexpected appearance of Katisha, in quest of the vanished object of her affections, Nanki-Poo. She is driven away, but threatens to go to the Mikado about the matter.

Act II opens with Yum-Yum preparing for her marriage with Nanki-Poo. As all are singing a "merry madrigal", Ko-Ko comes in with the news that he has just discovered a law stating that when a married man is executed his wife must be buried alive. To save Yum-Yum from that fate, Nanki-Poo decides to kill himself at once. But this again throws Ko-Ko into a quandary to find some one to execute (especially as he has heard that the Mikado is at that moment on his way to Titipu). Nanki-Poo magnanimously offers himself for immediate decapitation, but Ko-Ko is unable to perform the act without some practice.

Another way out of the difficulty presents itself: Ko-Ko has Pooh-Bah make a false affidavit that Nanki-Poo has been executed, and bids Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum leave the country.

The Mikado soon appears. Ko-Ko thinks that the object of this visit is to see whether the execution has taken place. He accordingly produces the affidavit and describes with gusto the execution. But the Mikado has actually come at the prompting of Katisha in search of his lost son. When the fact transpires that the person whom Ko-Ko has supposedly executed is really the Mikado's son, Ko-Ko and his accomplices are declared guilty of "compassing the death of the Heir Apparent". The only hope for them is to admit the falsehood of the affidavit and produce Nanki-Poo alive. But, as Nanki-Poo has already married Yum-Yum and so cannot marry Katisha, Katisha will surely insist on the execution of Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum. Ko-Ko solves the problem by offering his hand to Katisha; and after he sings her the ballad of "Willow, tit-willow," she accepts him as the son of the Mikado.

THE MIKADO – Historical Note

Rated by many as the most popular of all the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, The Mikado enjoyed an initial record-breaking run of 672 performances at its first production in London in 1885. Its instant triumph far exceeded all expectations and elevated its creators to even loftier musical and literary heights. As in previous years, the news was quick to travel across the Atlantic and a "pirated" American production was soon in the planning. Such plans, however, were subsequently foiled when Richard D'Oyly Carte transported his company from London to New York in what may best be described as a "cloak and dagger" maneuver. Each member of the company had been sworn to secrecy, and at midnight on August 16, 1885, the passenger vessel Aurania anchored off Staten Island. The authentic version of the new opera opened three days later at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, forestalling the rival unauthorized production.

Sullivan had landed in New York several weeks earlier but his visit was short as he was anxious to reach California, being concerned for the welfare of his sister-in-law's children after the death of Sullivan's brother, Frederic, his widow, Charlotte, remarried and eventually settled in Los Angeles. While at work on The Mikado early in 1885, news came that Charlotte had died suddenly (she is buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in East Los Angeles). Sullivan's travels to the West Coast took him via Chicago, Denver, Salt Lake City-where he was invited to play on the great organ in the Mormon Tabernacle, San Francisco and finally Los Angeles. He found Charlotte's children to be in good health and took them on a trip to Yosemite.

Sullivan made his way back to New York, his journey not being without incident. He was mistaken for John L. Sullivan, the pugilist, but on learning his true identity, his interrogator asked, "Oh, you're the man as put Pinafore together?" "Yes, I am," replied Sullivan, whereupon they both had a drink in the name of lasting friendship. During that eventful summer, Gilbert had remained at home in London.

The Mikado is probably still the most well-known Savoy opera. It exemplifies the brilliance of both composer and librettist and clearly demonstrates the unique style that is truly Gilbert and Sullivan.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Opera A La Carte was founded in 1970 by noted British Gilbert and Sullivan specialist Richard Sheldon. Starting out as a small concert ensemble, giving its first performance on March 28th of that year at the Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts in southern California, the company soon opened at a dinner theatre in Santa Monica, where instant success justified a five-month residency. Thereafter, the ensemble expanded its activities into schools and colleges with specially designed educational programs for all levels-still a prominent company feature.

Five years later, Opera A La Carte mounted its first full-scale production-The Mikado-which gave its initial performance at the Concord Pavilion in northern California with the Oakland Symphony Orchestra on September 12, 1975.

With several productions now in the repertoire as well as a wide variety of concert programs, the company is especially known for its authentic style. Through its nationwide tours, Opera A La Carte is constantly winning new audiences and rapidly earning recognition as the foremost Gilbert and Sullivan touring repertory company in the country.