Utopia, Limited
or, The Flowers of Progress

THE CAST
King Paramount, the First (King of Utopia) ........................................... Waldyn Benbenek
Scaphio (Judge of the Utopian Supreme Court) ........................................ Chris Lowry
Phantis (Judge of the Utopian Supreme Court) ........................................ Christopher Michela
Tarara (The Public Explorer) ................................................................. L. Peter Erickson
Princess Zara (eldest daughter of King Paramount) ............................. Betsie Feldkamp
Princess Nekaya (younger sister of Princess Zara) ............................... Sarah Wind
Princess Kalyba (younger sister of Princess Zara) ............................... Elizabeth Ghandour
Lady Sophy (their English Governess) .................................................. Lara Trujillo
Salata (Utopian maiden) ............................................................... Jamie Dix
Melene (Utopian maiden) ................................................................. Rhea Sullivan
Phylla (Utopian maiden) ................................................................. Kaila Frymire
Bold-faced Ranger ................................................................. Eric Pasternack

Imported Flowers of Progress:
Captain Fitzbattleaxe (First Life Guards) ........................................... Timothy James
Captain Sir Edward Corcoran, K.C.B. (of the Royal Navy) .......... Stephen Hage
Mr. Goldbury (a company promoter) ................................................... Isaiah Waid
Sir Bailey Barre, Q.C., M.P. ................................................................. Jim Ahrens
Mrs. Blushington (of the County Council) ........................................ Victoria Valencour
First Life Guardsmen .............................................................. Jim Brooks, Dave Eckenrode, Richard Rames

Chorus of Utopians:
Mark Alt ................................................................. Mary Gregory
Ernest Brody ................................................................. Stephen Hage
Stephanie Brody ................................................................. Shawn Holt
Jim Brooks ................................................................. Mary Mescher Benbenek
Jamie Dix ................................................................. Charlotte Morrison
Dave Eckenrode ................................................................. John Orbison
Kaila Frymire ................................................................. Eric Pasternack
................................................................. Richard Rames
Mackenzie Sherburne ................................................................. Dan Sola
................................................................. Rhea Sullivan
................................................................. Raquel J. Swanson
................................................................. Victoria Valencour
................................................................. Holly Windle
................................................................. Madeline Youngstrom

Understudies:  Mark Alt, Ernest Brody, Jim Brooks, Dave Eckenrode,
Kaila Frymire, Mary Gregory, Stephen Hage, Shawn Holt,
Charlotte Morrison, John Orbison, Richard Rames, Mackenzie Sherburne,
Dan Sola, Rhea Sullivan, Raquel J. Swanson, Holly Windle

Act I:  The South Pacific island of Utopia, the 1920s

15-Minute Intermission

Act II:  Some time later

~ Please turn off all cell phones & pagers ~
~ No eating or drinking is allowed in the theatre ~
~ No smoking is permitted in the building ~
~ The use of flash cameras is strictly forbidden ~

This production of Utopia, Limited
is dedicated to the memory of
long-time company members
Debbie Feinwachs and Marcia Hill
DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Spoiler alert: *Utopia, Ltd.* is the least performed G&S operetta and comes with a number of problems a producing organization must be prepared to solve. The show’s beginnings were not auspicious: indeed, after *The Gondoliers*, Gilbert and Sullivan were ready to call it quits on their collaboration. They had never been friends, but after a messy lawsuit (in which Sullivan took D’Oyly Carte’s side against Gilbert) even a working relationship seemed impossible. It was four years before they came back together for *Utopia*. Sullivan used the hiatus to write the grand opera he had long promised. But when *Ivanhoe* proved an expensive flop, Sullivan needed more lucrative work. Sullivan’s disappointment combined with Gilbert’s infamous ability to hold a grudge made collaboration tense. Neither was willing to offer or accept editorial advice.

In *Utopia*, Gilbert presents us with unusually long dialogue scenes. Sullivan retaliates with long orchestral interludes, scenes, dances, and extended choral sections. None of this serves the plot very well. And, by the way, what is the plot? Gilbert threw in all his favorite legal, political and social targets, but took such a long time deciding on a storyline that Sullivan finally put his foot down and declined to set any more music.

The good news is that there is considerably more wheat than chaff in *Utopia*. Two years’ work (by a number of company members) has led to our revised version. We have propped up the storyline, trimmed the verbiage, excised chunks of music (including a lovely little waltz in the first act finale … another time, maybe) and promise to have you home well before midnight. As always, the energy, intelligence, talents and collegiality of the GSVLOC make our collaborations a joy that I hope will show in every moment of this production.

—Lesley Hendrickson

SYNOPSIS

**Act I** — King Paramount, ruler of the South Pacific island kingdom of Utopia, is such an Anglophile that he has sent his eldest daughter Zara to England to be educated. Her two younger sisters, meanwhile, are being molded into showpieces of British manners by Lady Sophy, an English governess who has captured the King’s affections. Although attracted to the King, Lady Sophy is dismayed by revelations in the local scandal sheet, the *Palace Peeper*, about his disgraceful behavior. As it turns out, the King himself is the author of the newspaper’s rumors. He is being manipulated by Utopia’s two Supreme Court Judges, the “wise men” Scaphio and Phantis, who—in a quirkily Gilbertian form of government referred to as “despotism tempered by dynamite”—have the power to denounce the king to the Public Exploder, who would then dispatch him.

Princess Zara returns to Utopia, escorted by a small troop of British “First Life Guards,” one of whom (Captain Fitzbattleaxe) has gained her affection. The young couple manages to divert the attentions of Scaphio and Phantis, who have inconveniently fallen in love with the Princess themselves. Zara has also brought with her the “Flowers of Progress,” representatives (with a certain degree of satire) of all the elements that have made Britain great. Each one makes recommendations, but it is Mr. Goldbury, the “company promoter,” whose vision inspires King Paramount to do what even glorious England has not yet managed to do: turn his country into a “company limited” (based on the “Joint Stock Companies Act of Parliament ’62”). General rejoicing.

**Act II** — Utopians adjust to the new English ways, and the King holds the first meeting of the Cabinet Council (a parody of Minstrel show). Scaphio and Phantis had hoped to make a profit from the new Utopian enthusiasm for English goods, but are upset to learn that the people can claim limited liability and avoid payment. Even worse, as the King explains to them, a corporation can be “wound up” but not “blown up,” so he need no longer fear them. Zara’s sisters get their own revelations about the realities of English girlhood, and Lady Sophy learns the truth about the King, while the two Wise Men plot with Tarara to stir up a revolt against the Flowers of Progress. Fortunately, Zara remembers the vital missing element which will ensure perfection. All ends in bliss, further praise for Britain, and a stirring Utopian “Ulahlica!”
PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Director .......................................................... Lesley Hendrickson
Music Director .......................................................... Marina Liadova
Stage Manager .......................................................... Laura Bidgood
Set Designer & Scenic Painter ........................................ Larry Rostad
Costume Coordinator .................................................. Anne Forgacs
Lighting Designer ....................................................... Dan Feldkamp
Assistant Stage Managers............. Jack Kravik, Trina Morrison, Brianna Sullivan
Wardrobe Mistress ..................................................... Jo Pasternack
Set Construction ....................................................... Ernest Brody, Bob Hunter, Jack Kravik
        Dean Laurance, Larry Rostad, Feifei Wei, and cast members
Props ................................................................. Laura Bidgood, Dan Sola
Prop & Costume Workers ............... Karrie Blees (Utopian Flag), Anne Forgacs
        Mary Beth Gagner (uniforms), Lesley Hendrickson
        Bob Hunter, Jo Pasternack, and cast members
Lighting Technicians .................. Dan Feldkamp, Robert Hunter, Feifei Wei
Audio-Visual Engineer ................... Bob Johanneck
Audio-Describer ....................................................... Judy Baldwin
Poster/Program Graphic Design: ......................... Ivar Hendrickson
Lobby Display & Photography ...................... Stephen Hage
Group Photos .......................................................... Daniels Studio
House Managers .................................................... Kathryn Larsen, Holly MacDonald
        Fred Morrison, Carol Paulson
Ticket Sales ............................................................ Charlotte Morrison
Ticket helpers ......................................................... Stephanie Brody, Betsie Feldkamp, Katie Lowry
        Mary Mescher Benbenek, Fred Morrison
        Trina Morrison, Eric Pasternack, Thomas Trisko
House Staff Recruitment ................................. Rhea Sullivan

The Board:
        Producer .......................................................... Dan Sola
        Labour Pool Coordinator .................. Eric Pasternack
        Publicity ......................................................... Rhea Sullivan
        Treasurer ........................................................ Richard Rames
        Secretary ......................................................... Waldyn Benbenek
Chorus Representatives ..................... Stephen Hage, Mary Gregory
        Orchestra Representative ............................... Barb Hovey

ORCHESTRA
Conductor ............................................................... Marina Liadova
Orchestra Manager .................................................. Debbie Clapp
Violin ................................................................. Michele Anderson, Rachael Athmann, Amy Atzel, Nancy Birth
        Karen Krueger, Lorine Menzhuber, Ann Nadon, Miyuki Onishi
        Julia Salazkin, Jo Schansberg, Kristen Weeks, Theodora Wynhoff
Viola ................................................................. Emily Hagen, Arwen Hotchkiss, Scott Olsen
        Tom Rognsvoog, Aija Ronis
Cello ................................................................. Coral Bastien, Jesse Berndt
        John Dunham, Karen Rognsvoog
Bass ................................................................. Benjamin Kitt, Kristin Metz, Doug Nelson
Flute ................................................................. Kathleen Hansen, Kristen Kinnear-Ohllmann, Annie Richardson
        Kent Barth, Debbie Clapp
Clarinet ............................................................... Elizabeth Berry, Kristen Cooper, Steve Schellenberg
        TJ Blackburn, Heather Clark, Maia Hamann
Horn ................................................................. Michael Engh, Chris Hahn, Jeffrey Ohllmann
Trumpet .............................................................. Tim Killam, Betty MacKay, Andy Padula, Bob Zobel
Trombone .......................................................... Benjamin Bussey, Tim Jung, Greg Michnay, Greg Onstad
        Percussion ....................................................... John Litch

Rehearsal Pianists: .................................................... Steven Norquist, Jean Van Heel
GLOSSARY
(in order of occurrence)

ACT I:

Tarara—The Public Exploder’s name is a reference to the recent music-hall hit song imported from America: “Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay!”

Girton—a women's college at Cambridge University, founded in 1869

Lalabalele talala! etc.—Gilbert used some actual Polynesian for Tarara's raging: “Idiot, I run around screaming but can't make much more noise, since I am hoarse. Crossly I drag myself into the open and go spinning around sweating.”

Double-first in the world’s university—in British higher education, top honors in two final examinations

dynamite explodes in his auriculars—ears

song of far niente—idleness (in Italian)

To which some add (but others do not) Ireland—a reference to the long-raging debate over Irish independence

The Kodaks do their best—Kodak cameras (which came out in 1888) were advertised with the slogan “You press the button, we do the rest.”

Knightsbridge nursemaids, serving fairies, Stars of proud Belgravian airies—servant girls the Guardsmen presumably have left behind in London

ye South Pacific Island viviparians—those whose young are born live (not hatched)

Ulahlica!—The Utopian equivalent for “Hear, Hear, Hear!”

swell the county rate—increase the local taxes

what contango means and also backwardation—fees paid to postpone settlement of a stock purchase or sale, respectively

K.C.B.—Knight Commander of the (Order of the) Bath (high honor)

Q.C.—Queen's Counsel (senior lawyer)

M.P.—Member of Parliament (elected Politician)

terrify the simple Gaul—the French

Maxim gun and Nordenfelt—kinds of machine gun

thanks to coke—a fuel made from coal

Company Limited—an incorporated company (“Inc.”)

of sovereigns all the pink—the best

Joint Stock Companies Act of Parliament ’62—This act made it easier for small investors to pool their resources and incorporate with reduced personal risk (limited liability). Note: Seven was the required number of founders to establish a company, and the word “limited” (Ltd.) had to be added to the company’s name.

ACT II:

the notes of lover's lay—a poem to be sung

Court of St. James's vs. Court of St. James's Hall—confusing the royal palace with the music hall which featured the original “Christy Minstrels” (Royal audience members were not amused)

all that isn't Belgrave Square is Strand and Piccadilly—fashionable areas of London

Don't be unhappy, it's still on the tapis—under consideration

an English girl of Eleven stone two—A stone equals 14 pounds, so Goldbury's ideal girl weighs 156 lbs.—of course, she's 5 foot 10

Eleven maids out, eleven maids in, And perhaps an occasional “maiden over!”—Cricket playing references (a “maiden over” is analogous to a scoreless inning in baseball)

She’ll waltz away like a teetotum—a kind of top

short-petticoated—an indication of being a young girl (before wearing long skirts)

that asinorum pons I have crossed—actually, “pons asinorum,” or Bridge of Asses; schoolboy slang for one of Euclid's propositions, due to the difficulty of “getting over “ it
CONTRIBUTORS

Flowers of Progress ($100 and over)

Company Promoters ($50 - $99)

South Pacific Island Viviparians (up to $50)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Youth Performance Company, VSA Arts of Minnesota, Lake Harriet United Methodist Church, Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, Plymouth Congregational Church, Honey-Baked Ham, Boss Tanning of Edina, Hamline University Theater, and our bright and beautiful band of ushers, ticket sellers, and concessionaires.


In the Spring of 2009, we will present Ruddigore.

Our next Lake Harriet Bandshell performance will be The Pirates of Penzance, in July of 2008
The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company
presents

**Utopia, Limited**
or
**The Flowers of Progress**

---

**February 22 – March 16, 2008**
Howard Conn Fine Arts Center
1900 Nicollet Avenue South
Minneapolis

---

THE GILBERT & SULLIVAN VERY LIGHT OPERA COMPANY
P.O. Box 580172, Minneapolis MN 55458
Telephone: (651) 255-6947
Visit the GSVLOC home page at: http://www.gsvloc.org