The Gondoliers
or, The King of Barataria

THE CAST
The Duke of Plaza-Toro (a Grandee of Spain)..........................Joseph Andrews
The Duchess of Plaza-Toro....................................................Kathryn Larsen
Casilda (their daughter).....................................................Betsie Feldkamp
Luiz (their attendant).........................................................Eric Mellum
Don Alhambra del Bolero (the Grand Inquisitor)....................Waldyn Benbenek
Inez (the King’s foster-mother).............................................Maria Cofrancesco

Gondoliers and Contadine:
Marco Palmieri .................................................................Christopher Silsby
Giuseppe Palmieri .............................................................Eric Selle
Gianetta..................................................................................Krista Sandstrom
Tessa......................................................................................Katie Crawford
Fiametta ................................................................................Kristen Husby
Vittoria..................................................................................Karen Bindewald
Giulia .................................................................................Sarah Reger
Francesco (Restauranteur, father of Tessa & Gianetta)................Ethan Edwards
Antonio ................................................................................Terry Helland
Giorgio ...................................................................................L. Peter Erickson
Tessa & Gianetta’s Little Sister ...............................................Madeleine Hage
Tourist Boy ...........................................................................Luke Thomley, Matthew Benbenek

Chorus of Contadine, Mafia Tourists, and Showgirls:
Karen Bindewald Michelle Jackson Sarah Reger
Margaret Burton Leann Kispert Irene Saponara-Gottwalt
Maria Cofrancesco Holly MacDonald Julie Seykora
Mary Gregory Mary Mescher Benbenek Elinor Strandskov
Virginia Haggart Charlotte Morrison Rhea Sullivan
Kristen Husby Maisi Pedersen Holly Windle

Chorus of Gondoliers, Mafia Tourists, etc.:
Mark Alt Peter Erickson Warren Loud
Ernest Brody Stephen Hage Eric Pasternack
Jim Brooks Terry Helland Jonathan Proctor
Ethan Edwards Danny Keasler Richard Rames
L. Peter Erickson Dean Laurance Charles Segal

~ 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 ~
Gilbert wrote to Sullivan the morning after opening night of *The Gondoliers*: “I must thank you for the magnificent work you have put into the piece. It gives one the chance of shining right through the twentieth century with a reflected light.”

In some ways *The Gondoliers* stands as the “supreme achievement” of Gilbert and Sullivan’s distinct yet united talents. A case, for once, of a librettist and composer “who act in perfect unity.”

In the United States, however, reception to the 1890 D’Oyly Carte production of *The Gondoliers* was markedly cooler. Lack of box office success earned the opera the nickname “The Gone Dollars,” and D’Oyly Carte himself came out to revamp the production.

During the first half of the 20th century, Venice, California was considered to be the “Coney Island of the Pacific.” This town was built to resemble Venice, Italy with its network of canals and a business district built in the Venetian architectural style (complete with two huge amusement piers!). Venice, California soon became the finest amusement resort on America’s West Coast and it is here we begin our production, finding our way to the Barataria Hotel and Casino located in Las Vegas, Nevada in Act II.

Our production started with the “supreme achievement” of Gilbert and Sullivan. It continues, “shining right through the twenty-first century” with new “reflected light” produced by a group of talented, dedicated, and caring theatre artists. These are individuals, both on stage and behind the scenes, who strive to “act in perfect unity.” I know Gilbert and Sullivan would be as proud of their accomplishments as I am.

—Grif Sadow

**SYNOPSIS**

**Act I** — Among the merchants and idlers along the canals of Venice, a group of contadine (peasant women) are making bouquets of roses, in preparation for the great event — the selection of brides by the two most eligible bachelor gondoliers, Marco and Giuseppe Palmieri. When the brothers arrive, they at least make a show of indifference, making their selection blindfolded (of course, they wind up with their intended mates, Gianetta and Tessa, anyway). All dance off to prepare for the wedding.

An impoverished Spanish noble family, the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro, now arrive with their daughter, Casilda, “and suite” (one servant, Luiz, who plays the drum). They have come to find the noble husband to whom Casilda was betrothed in infancy, the heir to the throne of Barataria (a mythical island kingdom). The prince is now to succeed to the throne, with Casilda as his queen. When the Duke and Duchess leave, it is revealed that Casilda is in love with Luiz. Her parents return with The Grand Inquisitor, who explains that as a result of the plot to conceal the infant prince (in order to raise him in the proper religion), there is now some slight difficulty in identifying him. The old gondolier who raised him had mixed him up with his own baby, so all that is now known is that the new King is either Marco or Giuseppe Palmieri. The only person who can identify the true heir is the prince’s old nurse, Inez, who is now being sought. Until she names the true king, both gondoliers will be sent to Barataria to rule jointly.

The Grand Inquisitor gets a rude shock when he discovers that not only have the two gondoliers just married, but they are anti-royalist “republicans.” When told they will rule Barataria, they imagine how to improve monarchy so all are equal. The Grand Inquisitor insists that the kings leave their wives behind; but they can take all the other gondoliers and give them positions in government. The act closes as the men take a tearful leave of the women and sail away.

**Act II** — Three months have passed, and the new order of government in Barataria seems to involve the two kings’ performing most of the work themselves. The women, tired of waiting in Venice, arrive suddenly, occasioning great rejoicing. The Grand Inquisitor now must explain to the kings that one of them is “an unintentional bigamist.” Tessa and Gianetta overhear, and are understandably upset; additionally so, since it is now clear that neither of them will be queen.

The Duke and Duchess now appear, in resplendent attire, having parlayed their rank into a fortune through a stock offering (The Duke of Plaza-Toro, Incorporated). Alone with Marco and Giuseppe, Casilda confesses that she is in love with someone else, and the gondoliers admit that is their condition, too. As they are fuming over their predicament, the old nurse, Inez, is announced. She reveals the identity of the true king, to the satisfaction of all.
PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Director .........................................................Grif Sadow
Music Director ............................................................Jeffrey Stirling
Artistic Director .........................................................Wendy Evans
Costume Designer ..................................................Annette Ozer
Lighting Designer ......................................................Rob Rettig
Stage Manager .........................................................Phyllis Thorne
Set Designer & Scenic Painter ..................................Kathy A. Stewart
Assistant Music Director ........................................Shari Speer
Assistant Stage Managers ....................................Sophie Benbenek, Samantha Bostwick
                       Peggie Kennedy, Chris Rusin
Set Construction and Painting ............................Ernest Brody & Dean Laurance, with
Alicia Corts, Mark Ellenberger, Allen Gregory
              Alyssa Gregory, Robert Hunter, Andrea Larsen, Doug Larsen
Dick Sorensen, Kathy A. Stewart, Feifei Wei, and cast members

Props .................................................................Roxanne Skarphol
Prop construction .............................................Sophie Benbenek, Martha Kieffer
Costume Assistant .................................................Shirley Alt
Costume Workers ...........................................Marlene Doll and cast members
Light Board Operators ...................................Dan Feldkamp, Feifei Wei
Spotlight Operators ........................................Robert Hunter, Cindy Edmon
Audio-Visual Engineer .........................................Bob Johanneck
Audio-Describer ...................................................Judy Baldwin
Poster Graphic Design ..........................................Mary Bergherr
Lobby Display & Photography .........................Stephen Hage
Group Photos .....................................................Daniels Studio
House Managers ..................................................Paul and Char Hardt
Ticket Sales .....................................................Charlotte Morrison, Fred Morrison
Ticket helpers ..................................................Stephanie Brody, Virginia Haggart, Kathryn Larsen
                       Holly MacDonald, Richard Rames, Nikki Strandskov
House Staff Recruitment ..................................Kathryn Larsen, Rhea Sullivan

The Board:
Producer ....................................................................................Ethan Edwards
Labour Pool Coordinator ........................................Kathryn Larson
Publicity .................................................................................Waldyn Benbenek
Treasurer ..............................................................................Richard Rames
Secretary ..................................................................................Mark Alt
Chorus Representatives ........................................Stephen Hage, Sarah Wind
Orchestra Representative ........................................Barb Hovey

ORCHESTRA

Conductor .................................................................Jeff Stirling
Assistant Conductor ................................................Shari Speer
Orchestra Manager ................................................Debbie Clapp
Violin .................................................Racheal Athmann, Amy Atzel, Will Bartruff, Lorine Bidgood
                                        Nancy Birth, Janey Christofferson, J Michael Compton
                                        Debbie Feinwachs, Kate Kelly, Jill Lestina, Myuki Onishi
                                        Sheri Peterson, Theodora Wynhoff, Eva Zorn
Viola ...............................................................Emily Hagen, Tom Rognsvoog, Aija Ronis, Ed Wharton
Cello ..............................................................Coral Bastien, John Dunham, John Litch
                                        Karen Rognsvoog, Ute Zahn
Bass .................................................................Ann Baumann Johnson, John Kaplan
Flute ..............................................................Brock Besse, Kristen Kinnear-Ohlmann, Julie Lindstrom
Clarinet ...............................................................Kent Barth, Andrea Estrem, Barb Hovey
Oboe .................................................................Anita Aarstad, Steve Schellenberg
Bassoon ...........................................................Debbie Clapp, Rebecca Totzke, Tim Wells
Horn ...............................................................Michael Engh, Judy Heimerman, Jeffrey Ohlmann
Trumpet ............................................................John Gunkler, Bob Hirte, Betty MacKay, Bob Zobal
Trombone .........................................................Daniel Engh, Nathanael Engh, Greg Michnay
                                        Greg Onstad, Lawrence Perry
Percussion .................................................................John Litch, Paul Madore

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

Act I:
Till then, enjoy your 

doce far niente - delightful idleness
With pleasure, nobody 

contradicente - if nobody disagrees
Ben venuti - welcome
Gondolieri carissimi! Siamo contadine! - Dear gondoliers! We are peasant girls!
servitori umilissimi! - most humble servants!
Per chi questi fiori bellissimi? - For whom are these most beautiful flowers?
Per voi, bei signori, O eccellentissimi! - For you, dear gentlemen, oh most exellent ones!
O ciel! - oh, heaven!
Buon giorno, cavalieri - Good morning, gentlemen
Siamo gondolieri / poveri gondolieri - We are gondoliers / poor gondoliers
Signorina, io t'amo! / Contadine siamo - Lady, I love you! / Peasant girls are we.
Castilian Hilalgo of 95 quarterings - Spanish nobleman, with 95 families in his heraldic shield, representing a fabulous array of noble ancestry.
The halberdiery are mercenary people - Guardsmen armed with ax-like spears
Married by proxy - with someone acting on your behalf, in your absence
very knowing, overflowing, easygoing Paladin - heroic, chivalrous knight of old
To men of grosser clay - of less distinguished and noble blood (clay = body)
Jimp, isn't she - Slender and elegant
Teach him the trade of a Timoneer - fr. French timonier, helmsman or steersman
Lying a corpse on his humble bier - the stand on which a corpse or coffin is placed
your objections are not insuperable - impossible to overcome
'tis a glorious thing, I ween, to be a regular Royal Queen! - I fancy, or believe
She'll bear sway the bell - take first prize; win the contest
the Chancellor in his peruke - powdered wig
Aristocrat who banks with Coutts - old London bank, used by royalty
the noble lord who cleans the plate - silver or gold tableware or ornaments

Act II:
Of happiness the very pith in Barataria you may see - essence
This form of government we find / The beau ideal of its kind - model of excellence
we may hold a Royal Levée - a court reception, in morning or early afternoon
spend an hour in the titivating all our Gentlemen-in-Waiting - sprucing up
the Garter or the Thistle or the Bath - high orders of knighthood
toddle off in semi-state - dressed for ordinary ceremonial occasions; no crown, etc.
having passed the Rubicon - point of no return; river Caesar significantly crossed
Take a pretty little cot - cottage
Dance a cachueca, fandango, bolero - lively Spanish dances
Xeres we'll drink Manzanilla, Montero - Xeres is sherry; others are varieties of it
Tuck in his tuppenny - schoolboy slang used in leapfrog, meaning "duck his head,"
tuppenny meaning two-penny coin, referring to the head
at junket or at jink - words for merrymaking
must be content with toddy - drink of distilled spirits, sugar, and hot water. Rich people drank wine, while beer and spirits were drunk by the less well-off.
Lord Chancellors were cheap as sprats - small fish, like anchovies or sardines
up goes the price of shoddy - cheap fabric made from reclaimed wool
I tried to tame your great progenitor - father
with double-shotted guns and colours nailed unto the mast - cannons loaded with twice the usual shot and flag nailed so it cannot be lowered in surrender
MPs baronetted, sham colonels gazetted - Members of Parliament raised to the rank of baronet (above knight); The London Gazette listed government appointments
Quote me as their great double-barrel - one with a hyphenated name, signifying status
I sit ... upon the direction of several Companies bubble - a delusive scheme merrily crying our "premé," "stali" - calls gondoliers use, to avert collisions
CONTRIBUTORS

**Right-Down Regular Royal Queens & Kings ($100 and over)**


**Spanish Grandees ($50 - $99)**


**Gondolieri and Contadine (up to $50)**


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We will not be performing at the Lake Harriet Band Shell this summer.

In the Spring of 2006, we will present **Princess Ida**.
The Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company
presents

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or
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February 25 - March 20, 2005
Howard Conn Fine Arts Center
1900 Nicollet Avenue South
Minneapolis

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