



**Gilbert & Sullivan's *Trial by Jury* and "The Trials of Love in the Spring!"
– Favorite Light Opera Excerpts**

Video showing on JUNE 2, 2021 at 3:00 PM at The Moviehouse, Millerton, NY
of May 5, 2024 performance at Saint James Place, Great Barrington, MA
Tickets and Info: <https://www.themoviehouse.net/events>



THE PROGRAM

Trial by Jury and excerpts from *Ruddigore*, *The Mikado*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Iolanthe*, *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Princess Ida*, *The Gondoliers*

THE CAST

Principals: Stephen Quint, Rebecca Palmer, Igor Ferreira, John-Arthur Miller, Joseph Klebanoff, Gabriel Garcia, Kevin Ray, Sarah Bleasdale, Christiane Olson, Max Rook, Margaret O'Brien, Douglas Schmolze
Crescendo Chorus

David Baranowski, piano

Co-Directed by Christine Gevert and John-Arthur Miller



ABOUT THIS PERFORMANCE

The final performance of Crescendo's 20th anniversary season in early May 2024 was a semi-staged performance of light opera compositions by the famous English librettist/composer duo: Sir W.S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan at Saint James Place in Great Barrington, MA.

The award-winning Crescendo Chorus of 18 amateur and 12 professional singers performed with soloists and actors from New York City to Europe who specialize in this genre. The production was co-directed by John-Arthur Miller, an experienced Gilbert & Sullivan performer and long-time soloist and section leader at Crescendo, and Crescendo's founding artistic director, Christine Gevert.

Gilbert and Sullivan's works feature intentionally absurd plots in which authority and the rigid norms of society are cleverly made fun of, as the music combines elements of the parlor ballad, Victorian church music, and the operas of Donizetti, Bellini, and Verdi. The program showcases some of their most beloved choral numbers, and a few of the most famous solo roles from several of their fourteen operettas, loosely tied together by brief narration, and the complete one-act operetta *Trial by Jury*.

Trial by Jury is a satirical setting for a "breach of promise" trial, ridiculing the British judicial system and the double standards of Victorian society. The second half of the program will feature popular selections from *The Mikado*, *Patience*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Iolanthe*, *Ruddigore*, *Princess Ida*, and *The Gondoliers*. The change of scenes will be enhanced by costumes and props designed by Kathleen DeAngelis.

Among the principal soloists is comic baritone Stephen Quint as The Learned Judge. Quint is a long-time New York Gilbert and Sullivan performer, described as "a comedian: elfin, waspish, agile, and blessed with a pleasantly lean-textured voice that articulates notes and words with absolute clarity," in a review by *New York Magazine*. Austria-based soprano, Rebecca Palmer, plays the role of Angelina (The Plaintiff). Ms. Palmer, who has performed both opera and sacred music in the U.S. and Europe, is described as having "impeccable technical aptitude complemented by smooth and mature tone, displaying a level of communication unparalleled among her fellow soloists" by *The Boston Musical Intelligencer*. The lyric tenor, Igor Ferreira, playing Edwin (The Defendant), has performed in many productions of *Carmen*, *Lucia de Lammermoor*, *Porgy and Bess*, *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *The Flying Dutchman*, and *Norma* in his native country, Brazil. The cast of soloists also includes – among others – tenor Kevin Ray, who has appeared as a soloist with The Metropolitan Opera, Portland Opera, Arizona Opera, and New Orleans Opera, and was praised by *Opera News* for his "commendable style" and abilities with "subtle coloristic nuance."

“It seems that we all need a bit of levity and just plain fun in our lives,” says artistic director Gevert, who collaborated with the Salisbury CT Light Opera Company (LOCOS) for five years, and was able to gain members and followers for Crescendo through them in those early years.

Part of Miller’s background was with the Ohio Light Opera Company, where he sang the entire Gilbert & Sullivan collection. “Performing this repertoire,” he says, “is a wonderful way for young singers to gain stagecraft experience and to develop good and lasting vocal technique.”

Gevert continues, “The music is lighthearted, lyrical, sometimes martial, and always melodious. Sullivan knew how to write for the voice, and uses the chorus as an integral part of the action. Its singing emphasizes the drama, whether responding in dialogue with the principals, or commenting on the action. In addition to major orchestral works, operas, and ballets, Sullivan wrote some very well-known church hymn tunes, including ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’ and the Christmas carol, ‘It Came Upon the Midnight Clear.’” Gilbert’s mastery of the English language, together with Sullivan’s skilled composition of serious music and beautiful melodies, changed the English theater during the Victorian era with the added talents of producer and impresario Richard D’Oyly Carte. This triumvirate’s 20-year collaboration is unique and still remains a popular form of entertainment in many circles.

This performance was dedicated to the memory of Georgia Nunnally Johnson McEver, a lyric light opera soprano who founded the Light Opera Company of Salisbury (LOCOS). This performance has been made possible with support from Bruce McEver, and also counts with support from funding provided by the Connecticut State Department of Economic and Community Development/Connecticut Office of the Arts (COA) from the Connecticut State Legislature.