

The Mikado

A Comic Opera in Two Acts

Music by **Arthur Sullivan** • Libretto by **W.S. Gilbert**

Performances Friday, July 29 and Monday, August 1 at 7:30 p.m.

The Mikado: Premiere Performance Savoy Theatre, London, 1885

Recent Chautauqua Opera Performances 1993, 2001

This Production: Premiere Performance Opera Theatre of St. Louis, 2007

Chautauqua Opera engages 65 people each year to bring our season to life. This is in addition to the dozens of Institution employees in every department — foundation, programming, marketing, ticketing and administration — who support us throughout the year. It truly does take a village.

There are four Chautauqua Opera staff members, however, who work year-round to make our season possible, and I have leaned on each of them heavily over the past 11 months. Their patience and support as I have stepped in to lead this terrific company has been unwavering. These performances of *The Mikado* are dedicated with tremendous gratitude to my colleagues and friends — Carol Rausch, Michael Baumgarten, Sara Noble and Michael Berg.

— Steven Osgood

CAST (in order of vocal appearance)

Nanki-Poo, *A wandering minstrel (or so he claims), in love with Yum-Yum*
Quinn Bernegger*

A Noble
Ryan Stoll*

Pish-Tush, *Internet millionaire and minor noble, in love with Pitti-Sing*
Brian James Myer*

Pooh-Bah, *Lord High Everything Else, covert terpsichorean*
Daniel Belcher+

Ko-Ko, *Former Tailor, current Lord High Executioner*
Kevin Burdette+

Yum-Yum, *Ward of Ko-Ko, in love with Nanki-Poo*
Chelsea Miller*

Pitti-Sing, *Ward of Ko-Ko, in love with Pish-Tush*
Rachael Braunstein*

Peep-Bo, *Ward of Ko-Ko, in love with that guy at the mall, with the great hair*
Laura Soto-Bayomi*

Katisha, *Sorceress and Courtier, also in love with Nanki-Poo*
Deanna Pauletto*

The Mikado of Japan
Hans Tashjian*

Gentlemen of Japan, Young Persons of Japan
Chautauqua Opera Young Artists

Supers
Alex Burdette, Mariana Mathewson,
Alyssa Sheaffer

+ Chautauqua Opera Debut
* 2016 Chautauqua Opera Young Artist
** Former Chautauqua Opera Young Artist



Ned Canty



Daniel Belcher



Kevin Burdette

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION

| | |
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| Conductor | Steven Osgood |
| Stage Director | Ned Canty |
| Chorus Master | Carol Rausch |
| Set Designer | Mikiko Suzuki MacAdams |
| Lighting Designer | Michael Baumgarten |
| Costume Designer | Linda Cho |
| Wig/Makeup Designer | Martha Ruskai |
| Properties Master/Scenic Artist | Kate Brittingham |
| Original Choreography | Sean Curran |
| Coach/Accompanists | Emily Jarrell Urbanek Dorothy Randall |
| Diction Coach/Supertitles | Allison Voth |
| Technical Director | John P. Woodey |
| Assistant Director | Cara Consilvio |
| Stage Manager | Catherine Costanzo |
| Assistant Stage Managers | Cressa Amundsen Patricia Garvey Anna Reetz |
| Concertmaster | Vahn Armstrong |

CREDITS

Scenery and costumes provided by Opera Memphis

Wigs provided by Martha Ruskai

Lighting provided by Advanced Production Group

Orchestral materials furnished by Keiser-Southern Music

SYNOPSIS

Some months before the opera begins, Nanki-Poo, the son of *The Mikado*, flees his father's palace to escape being compelled to marry Katisha, an ageless and powerful witch, who is also a member of the court. He lands in Titipu, a suburb of Tokyo, where he joins the town band. There he encounters Yum-Yum, and is instantly smitten. However, he cannot marry her because Ko-Ko, a cheap tailor who happens to be her guardian, has decided to marry her himself.

As the opera begins, Nanki-Poo has learned that Ko-Ko has been sentenced to death for violating *The Mikado's* law against flirting. He arrives in Titipu, assuming that Yum-Yum is free to wed him, and is shocked to discover that his dreams of marrying Yum-Yum are further from fruition than he had previously postulated ...

—Ned Canty, Stage Director

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The Mikado, through its use of strategic meiosis and hyperbolic deconstruction of the underlying pathology of the British class system, peels back the fragile shreds of Victorian ennui to expose the pataphoric angst of the Shavian working class.

Or ... not.

Yeah, I'm gonna go with "not".

The embarrassing truth of the matter is that *The Mikado* is ... fun. So much fun, in fact, that an army of academics and scholars would be hard pressed to spoil it, even if they could stop laughing long enough to try. *The Mikado* exists to make toes tap, heads nod, and most of all, sides split. (The ritual skewering of a few of society's sacred cows is simply a bonus — one that fosters that feeling of community, of similarity, that is all too often absent in our current social discourse.)

The Mikado was born of a late 19th century British fascination with all things Japanese — a fascination that culminated in the Japanese Village in Knightsbridge, a recreation of an "authentic" Japanese village that employed over 100 Japanese artisans and laborers — think Epcot Center, 19th century-style. Less well known than the Nipponophilia that swept Britain was a similar craze for all things Western on the part of the Japanese. Japanese fashion prints of the era show full Victorian bustles and bowler hats in an atmosphere of cherry blossoms and ancient temples. It was the beginning of an aesthetic fascination that would only grow throughout the 20th century and into the present day.

This mutual love affair between Japan and the West expresses itself in manifold ways. Each generation of artists takes what they find and runs it through their particular filter, whether it is William Butler Yeats

combining Japanese Noh drama with Irish myth, or Hayao Miyazaki setting his movies in worlds that look more like 1950s Ohio than anywhere on the island of his birth. Kurosawa remade *King Lear* as *Ran*, and John Sturges remade Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* into his classic Western *The Magnificent Seven*. Today our lives are full of Japanese imports, from the sushi we eat to the TV shows that populate our airwaves (not to mention the primacy of Godzilla in our collective consciousness). As I write this, a mobile-phone game based on a Japanese cartoon, "Pokémon Go," continues its domination of both our download lists and our media. Japanese screens broadcast our movies and shows in the same fashion, and their game consoles feature American heroes and myths with the same frequency as the hundreds of millions of PlayStation and Nintendo games sold in America feature Japanese tropes.

This production was inspired by this centuries-long cultural swap-meet, and embraces it with glee. Most importantly, it approaches the whole affair with the respect and love an Ohio teenager would bring to making his costume for a Dragon-Ball Z cosplay contest, or a Kyoto post-grad might put into his dissertation on themes of rebellion and regret in the oeuvre of Clint Eastwood. And if this production makes you google Studio Ghibli, or pause for a moment at the bizarre wonder of a sushi station at a grocery store in upstate New York, well then ... mission accomplished.

—Ned Canty, Stage Director

CHAUTAUQUA OPERA ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Vahn Armstrong, *Concertmaster*
David Hult, *Assistant*
Ming Gao
Amanda Gates
Anton Shelepov
Adrienne Finet

Violin II

Simon Lapointe, *Principal*
Barbara Berg, *Assistant*
Margaret Cooper
Jonathan Richards

Viola

Thomas Dumm, *Principal*
Christopher Fischer, *Assistant*
Jennifer Stahl
Cynthia Frank

Cello

Daryl Goldberg, *Principal*
Peter Anderegg, *Assistant*
Marie Shmorhun

Bass

David Rosi, *Principal*
Caitlyn Kamminga, *Assistant*

Flute

Emma Moon, *Principal*
Kathryn Levy

Oboe

Joan Wright, *Principal*

Clarinet

Daniel Spitzer, *Principal*
William Amsel

Bassoon

Jeffrey Robinson, *Principal*

Horn

William Bernatis, *Principal*
Donna Dolson

Trumpet

Peter Lindblom, *Principal*
Les Linn

Trombone

Christopher Wolf, *Principal*
Eric Lindblom

Timpani/ Percussion

Thomas Blanchard, *Principal*

Don't miss Chautauqua Opera's final performance of the 2016 season ...

Song From the Uproar

Music: **Missy Mazzoli** Libretto: **Royce Vavrek**

Monday, August 8 @ 5 p.m.
Norton Hall

World premiere: The Kitchen, NYC, 2012

Concert performance with film, in collaboration with the Logan Chamber Music Series

19th-century Swiss adventuress Isabelle Eberhardt traveled alone to North Africa, where she dressed as a man, joined an all-male Sufi sect, married an Algerian soldier, and was drowned in a flash flood at the age of 27. Fragments of Isabelle's writing and diaries are woven into this dreamlike opera by Missy Mazzoli and Royce Vavrek, two of the most prolific and exciting writers of their generation. This uniquely theatrical performance features Abigail Fischer and the NOW Ensemble, for whom the opera was composed, and includes original film by Stephen Taylor projected above the performers.

No additional ticket purchase necessary if holding a valid gate pass.



Missy Mazzoli



Royce Vavrek



Abigail Fischer



Verdi - *La Traviata* 2016 (Photo Credit: Greg Funka)



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