

SLOC Spotlight

The Newsletter of the
Schenectady Light Opera Company
Volume 39-5
February 2006

Sullivan and Gilbert Prepares for Its Debut

826 State St.
Schenectady, NY 12307
393-5732

Web Site:
www.sloctheater.com



2005-2006 Season
Songs for a New World
October 14-16, 20-23
Nuncrackers
December 2-4, 8-11
Sullivan and Gilbert
March 3-5, 9-12
Nine
May 5-7, 11-14



Bonnie Williams
President

Board of Directors
Peter Codella
Marlene Counterline
Jennifer S. Depew
Jodi Gilman
Richard Lenehan
Michelle Sausa-Gatta
Ross Snyder
Bonnie Williams
Ken Zarnoch



Next Newsletter
Deadline:
April 6

With cast and crew in full swing, *Sullivan and Gilbert* is in its last weeks revving up for a great show! How can it miss with an ensemble cast of 17 and crew of even more, who represent more than 300 years of involvement at SLOC, not to mention another several hundred in productions around the Capital Region. "I am bowled over by the cast and crew experience for this show," said Gwen Fraser, Director. "We have 6 SLOC directors in the cast and most of the ensemble has performed opera, musicals and operettas, as well as straight plays. Sherri Strichman, Musical Director and Gwen have had their work cut out for them trying to rehearse with several cast members out at a time due to other commitments. But it just goes to show you, that when you get quality people to do quality work, they tend to be very busy people. "We are having fun," said Sherri, "and that is what it is all about. Never fear, you will hear the lush sounds of Gilbert and Sullivan without MICS! We are excited to be doing the show acoustically...as it was in the 1890's."

Sullivan and Gilbert is set in the Savoy Theater in 1890. It is the final frantic day of rehearsal for the Gilbert and Sullivan revue requested by Queen Victoria. The two men have been feuding for years, but they are forced to work together one more time. The playwright, Ken Ludwig has adorned his book with a wonderful Gilbert and Sullivan score, with songs from 9 of the 13 works of the famous team. Ludwig is known for a modern-day sense of humor.

Barry Corlew and Joe Phillips play Sir Arthur Sullivan and William S. Gilbert respectively, with Melissa Lacijan, Phil Sheehan and Christine Pickreign playing the parts of Kitty Gilbert, Richard D'Oyly Carte and Violet. Jeff Hocking, Allan Foster, Alan Angelo, Bill McColl, Ross Snyder, Mary Frances Miller, Judi Merriam, Nancy Stone, Margot Phillips, Sara Hickey, Jeremy Pickreign, and Peter Hill round out the rest of the ensemble.

The set and backdrop are inspired by the original Savoy Theater and costumes are built especially for this show. Credit for scenic design goes to Bob Farquharson and original costume design Peggy Gerardi and Pat Casey. Production staff members include Joe Fava (Assistant Director), Rich Lenehan (set construction), Ken Zarnoch (Lighting Designer), Donna Baxter (Rehearsal Secretary/Stage Manager/Props), Marcia Lenehan (make-up), John Fowler (hair and wigs), and Sally Burke (publicity).

Performances at the Opera House are March 3 through March 5 and March 9 through March 12. Thursday- Saturday shows are at 8:00pm and Sunday matinees are at 2:00pm. Ticket reservations can be made by calling Jenny Depew at 456-5504.



Melissa Lacijan and Joe Phillips rehearse.

Spotlight on...

**Etta Moore
Award Winner:
Gwen Fraser**
(See story on page three.)

President's Notes...by Bonnie Williams

♫ Semi-annual Meeting a Success

Sixty of SLOC's faithful members attended the semi-annual potluck dinner/meeting on January 28. Thanks to the tropical beach theme from Melissa Lacijan and Sean Hahn, we forgot about the cold winter for at least a few hours. Good food and conversation followed. We heard an update of finances from Brett Putnam and Mary Kozlowski, an update on the building and the master plan from Ross Snyder, and an invitation to help on the 80th anniversary committee from Deb Weiskopf. Thanks to Michelle Sausa-Gatta for taking reservations and Melinda for organizing the kitchen.

♫ Etta Moore Award Goes to Gwen Fraser

One of my more pleasant duties as president is to present the Etta Moore Award to the person chosen by the Board of Directors. Although it was difficult to keep it a secret for over a month, it was fun to "spring" the surprise on Gwen. It was very special for me, not just because she greatly deserved the award, but also because I am so very proud that I can call her my friend. I am humbled by her talent, amazed by her courage and strength, and grateful for her friendship.

♫ Looking Ahead to Annual Meeting

The Board has set the date for the annual meeting. Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 10. Additional details will be coming in the next edition of *Spotlight*.

♫ New Storage in Lighting Booth

On a recent Saturday, a new storage platform was built in the lighting booth. It will be used to store the new, round cabaret tables as well other equipment. Thanks to Ross Snyder and his team of workers: Ken Zarnoch, Richard Lenehan and Nancy Holsberger.

♫ Something to "Hang" On To

After years of discussion and postponements, we finally have a new railing for the front steps! The railing goes all the way to the bottom step (how novel). You can check it out when you come to see *Sullivan & Gilbert*. Thanks to Ross Snyder for getting this installed before the next show.

♫ New Directory Planned

An updated version of the SLOC directory is in the works. The directory includes names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of SLOC members and non-members who are a part of the local theater community.

Please let us know by e-mail, comments@sloctheater.com, if:

- * Your contact information has changed since the last edition (2003)
- * You have a recommendation for inclusion of a new name
- * You are aware of a name that should no longer be included because the person is no longer in the area.

The deadline for submission is April 15th. The new directory should be available for distribution to MEMBERS in late spring or early summer. Email communications are preferred. If you do not have access to email, call Mary at 482-1052.

Opera House Locks to be Replaced



The front and side door locks at the Opera House will be replaced in May, following the last show of the season. If you currently have an Opera House Key, it will be obsolete when the lock change occurs. If you still need a key you will have to contact Ross Snyder, VP Facilities, after May 1, 2006 to get a new key. The same key will operate both the side door and the front door. . A five dollar returnable deposit will be required on all Opera House keys. The policy to require a five

dollar deposit is being implemented to defray the cost of replacing lost keys, and to encourage returning keys when they are no longer needed. We thank you for your cooperation and apologize for any inconvenience this change may cause.

SLOC Spotlight

SLOC Spotlight is a newsletter of the Schenectady Light Opera Company, P. O. Box 1006, Schenectady, NY 12301. SLOC is a community volunteer musical and theatre arts incorporated, nonprofit organization. Governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership, SLOC's purpose is to present quality musical theater to the people in and around Schenectady County, NY.

Newsletter Staff: Jill Coloney, Tom Heckert, Greg Rucinski, Pat Endries and George Endries. Subscription Rates: \$5 per year, check payable to SLOC. Send subscription inquiries and address changes to the address listed above.

DEADLINE for submissions to **Vol. 39 Issue No. 6** of the SLOC SPOTLIGHT is **Thursday, April 6, 2006**. Issue No. 6 will be mailed by April 19.

Please submit articles to Jill Coloney at jac12661@aol.com or 92 Cooks Court, Waterford, NY 12188.

NINE Cast and Crew Announced

Director/Choreographer Thomas Dalton Bambury, Musical Director Dave Cash, and Producers Marlene Countermine and Dave Dixon are thrilled to announce the cast and crew for SLOC's final production of its 79th season, *Nine, the Musical!*

The cast is made up of several familiar faces, as well as many new ones! Heading the cast is Eric Shovah as Guido Contini. Jennifer Payeur plays Luisa, Kate Burns plays Claudia, Heather D'Arcy plays Carla, Pat Brady plays Liliane La Fleur, Leslie Maiello plays Guido's Mother, and Casey Larkin plays Young Guido.

Other featured roles are Christine Verderese (Stephanie Necrophorus), Liana D. Martino (Our Lady of the Spa), Jennifer Dickerson (Sarraghina), and Janet Stasio (Mama Maddelena). The remaining 'Italians' are played by Whitney Kaufman, Jessica Kemper, Genevieve Messak, Alyssa June Radley, and Laura Smith.

The production staff includes Donna Z. Baxter as Assistant Director, Don Countermine as the Set Designer/Construction, Mary Kozlowski as Set Painter/Artistic Designer, Mary-Ann Muth as the Costume Designer, Greg Rucinski as the Lighting Designer, Joel Lord as the Sound Designer, Loretta Romero as the Hair Designer, Thomas Bambury as the Makeup Designer, Jodi Gilman as the Properties Chairperson, Regina Baker as the Stage Manager, and Michael McDermott, Donna Baxter, and Dave Dixon as the publicity crew. Jenny Depew is serving as the Board liaison and Della Gilman is in charge of tickets.

Nine, the Musical opens Friday May 5, 2006 and runs through Sunday May 14, 2006. To reserve your tickets now, call Della Gilman at 280-8076.

If anyone wishes to help out in any capacity on the show, please contact Producer Marlene Countermine at 383-2050, or Producer Dave Dixon at 436-8295.

Semi-annual Meeting/Pot Luck a Success

This year's meeting was a filling success with a wonderful Hawaiian theme – much needed in these cold months. Many thanks go to Melissa Lacjian and Shawn Hahn as the masterminds behind the decorations. They had help setting up from Bonnie Williams and Peter Lacjian with special assistance from Sophie and Henry Lacjian (the future of SLOC).

The Etta Moore Award recipient was announced, as well as next year's season. (see related articles)

After eating and meeting, partygoers were delighted to play a little "Who's Line Is It Anyways" type of game. Thanks go to Ross Snyder for organizing this part of the evening. Overall, fun was had by all.

Sullivan and Gilbert F actoids

*In its 79 year history, SLOC has produced a G & S work 16 times: *Mikado* (1939, 1950 and 1998); *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1939, 1946 and 1986); *Gondoliers* (1938, 1949 and 1989); and *Pirates of Penzance* (1947 and 1992). *Yeoman of the Guard*, *Iolanthe* and *Patience* have all seen 2 productions and *Trial by Jury* started it all in 1933.

*In *Sullivan & Gilbert*, there are selections from two G&S works never produced by SLOC. Test your G&S knowledge - can you name them?

*Ken Ludwig wrote the book for *Sullivan and Gilbert*. Did you remember any of his previous works? They include *Crazy for You* (which won him a Tony Award), *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Lend Me A Tenor*, *Twentieth Century*, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Gwen Fraser Receives Etta Moore Award

At the semi annual meeting, the 2006 Etta Moore award was presented to longtime member Gwen Fraser.

Gwen first came to SLOC in 1975 to audition for a show so she could meet new people.

The show was *Damn Yankees*. Not knowing anything about the show,

she was (her words) nervous and unsure what to sing. Urged to come back the next night (by Ira Gilman), she auditioned again and won the role of Meg. The rest, as they say, is history.

Gwen has had many roles since then, including Salome in *The Robber Bridegroom* and Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*. She has served as Artistic VP and is of course directing our current production of *Sullivan & Gilbert*.

Gwen was truly overcome with surprise and was grateful to all her SLOC friends for the honor.

If you missed the semi-annual meeting, come to *Sullivan & Gilbert* and congratulate her in person!



SLOC Member Cast in Touring Show

Richard Gatta, a long time SLOC member and a 2005 graduate of Niskayuna Schools, has been cast in the eight month Broadway International Asian tour of the musical *Grease*. He will be performing for Phoenix Productions and will be traveling to major cities in Southern Asian, including Seoul and Singapore.

At SLOC, you saw Richard perform in *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Zombie Prom*, *Big River*, and *Shenandoah*. His favorite theatrical credits include: *Les Miserables* (Javert), *Titanic* (Thomas Andrews), *Grease* (Danny), and *West Side Story* (Diesel) with CR. Productions of Cohoes. He is also a principal dancer for Northeast Ballet Company.

He is presently rehearsing in Seoul, Korea. The show opened February 15, 2006. For more information, visit his website (richardgatta.com).

SLOC sends its condolences to Ed Graham on the recent passing of his mother.



P.O. Box 1006
Schenectady, NY 12301-1006

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sullivan and Gilbert

March 3-5 and 9-12

Thursday, Friday, and

Saturday at 8:00 PM

Sunday at 2:00 PM

TICKETS: 456-5504

Adults: \$18; Children under 13: \$9

Group rates available! Call for information.

Non-Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Schenectady, NY
Permit #120

SLOC Announces 80th Season

At the semi-annual meeting, President Bonnie Williams presented the slate of shows that were approved by the Board for SLOC's 80th season. Dates will be determined at the February board meeting.



THE FULL MONTY - book by Terrence McNally, music and lyrics by David Yazbek will be directed by Mike Mensching

OLIVER - book, music and lyrics by Lionel Bart will be directed by Thomas Bambury

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND - book and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, music by Stephen Flaherty will be directed by Laura Andruski

HELLO, DOLLY – book by Michael Stewart, music and lyrics by Jerry Herman will be directed by Suzanne Rayome

Thanks to show selection committee of Kate Burns, Heather D'Arcy (co-chairs), Brett Putnam, Melissa Lacijan, Michelle Sausa-Gatta and Eric Shovah.

Two "new" shows for SLOC + two "new" old classics = a fantastic way to celebrate our 80th birthday.



Reservations Being Accepted for Spring Bus Trip

The Board of Directors has once again approved a SLOC bus trip to New York City on April 22, 2006. The bus will leave Albany at 7:30 AM and then leave NYC at 11:00 PM, for a scheduled return at 2:00 AM. Events in the Big Apple are for you to plan, but you will note that there is time to see two shows!

Payment is due with your reservation. Please email Tom Heckert (TOMH823@aol.com) or call him (877-6777) to make your reservation. Prices remain the same – an unbelievable low \$25 for members, \$30 for non-members. We have a 55-seat bus this time and as we go to press, over half of the seats have been reserved. To avoid disappointment, make your reservations early! With gas prices remaining high, this is a great opportunity to get to the City and seats will sell out quickly!