



## **SACRAMENTO OPERA NEWS RELEASE**

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SACRAMENTO OPERA

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### **A SACRAMENTO OPERA PREMIERE: THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE**

**NOVEMBER 21, 23, 25, 2008**

(Sacramento, CA 8/7/08) **Sacramento Opera presents Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* at the Sacramento Community Center Theater, 1301 L Street, Sacramento, November 21, 23, and 25, 2008.** *The Pirates of Penzance* is a comic opera in two acts, with music by Arthur Sullivan and libretto by W. S. Gilbert. This Sacramento Opera premiere is sung in English with projected English supertitles.

Audiences will laugh along on this rollicking tale of pirates on the high seas and damsels in distress. Conceived in the high Victorian world of 1879, Gilbert and Sullivan's ever popular comedy, *The Pirates of Penzance*, features well-known songs "I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major-General" and "Poor Wandering One."

**Tenor Matt Morgan** will perform the role of Frederic, the Pirate Apprentice. After first joining the roster of the New York City Opera for their 2004-2005 season taking part in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and *Platée*, he has returned for three consecutive seasons. His most recent appearance came in their new production of *The Pirates of Penzance* as an "endearing and loveable" Frederic "with the right hero looks and a wonderful tenor voice." He has performed extensively with American opera companies. Most recently he made a debut as Tony in *West Side Story* with New Orleans Opera and returned to Fort Worth Opera as Curly to Anthony Dean Griffey's Lennie in *Of Mice and Men*. Other recent engagements include Laurie in *Little Women* with Dayton Opera, Paris in *La belle Hélène* with North Star Opera, Prince Karl Franz in *The Student Prince* with Skylark Opera, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* with Fort Worth Opera, Nanki-Poo in *The Mikado* with Pittsburgh Public Theater, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Opera Atelier, Don Gomez in *Die drei Pintos* with the Bard Music Festival, and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* with Pittsburgh Opera Theatre.

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**Soprano Julianne Gearhart** will perform the role of Mabel. She made her debut as Helen Niles in the premiere of Marvin David Levy's revised *Mourning Becomes Electra* at the Seattle Opera in 2003. She returned to Seattle as Zerbinetta for the 2004 production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and was acclaimed in last winter's *Opera Now* article "Who's Hot" of up and coming young singers as "poised to make a major mark in Operaland ... Gearhart's Zerbinetta had patrons' heads spinning with the buoyant charm and sparkle of her vocal action." A MacAllister finalist and a winner of the Meistersinger Competition in Granz, Austria, Gearhart recently sang Madame Goldentrill in *The Impresario* in Palm Beach; sang her first Oscar in *Gallo in Maschera* for the New Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv; and returned to Seattle twice in 2006 to sing the soprano solos in Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Bach's Cantata #51 *Jauchzet Gott in Allen Landen* for the Symphony; and to sing Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* with Peter Rose and Carol Van Ness. Her Olympia in *Tales of Hoffman* was enthusiastically received as "stellar—Julianne Gearhart as Olympia especially stood out for loveliness of tone combined with power."

**Bass baritone Donald Sherrill** will perform the role of the Pirate King. His recent performances include a San Francisco opera debut as the Notary in *Der Rosenkavalier*; Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* with the Los Angeles Opera; Sulpice in *La Fille du Regiment* with Boston Lyric Opera; *Hansel und Gretel*, *Carmen*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Dallas Opera; *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Lake George; and Mephistopheles in *Faust* with the Austin Lyric Opera. He made his international opera debut with the Hong Kong Arts Center as Timur in *Turandot* and later returned to sing all four Villains in *Les Contes D'Hoffmann*. Mr. Sherrill also toured in Russia with Sarah Caldwell conducting the Ekatarinburg Symphony, as Golaud in concert performances of *Pelleas et Melisande*. In Mexico he has sung Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Mexico City Philharmonic, appeared in Sinaloa Festival as Raimondo in *Lucia de Lammermoor* and as Ramfis in *Aida*, and sang the title role in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Saskatoon Philharmonic. He has performed across the U.S. with companies such as the Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, The Metropolitan Opera Guild, Dallas Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Greater Miami Opera, Cleveland Opera, Opera Colorado, Portland Opera, Minnesota Opera, Palm Beach Opera, the Atlanta Symphony and the National Chamber Orchestra.

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**Gary Briggie is the stage director** and will also perform the role of the Major General. Mr. Briggie was last seen with the Sacramento Opera in the 2007 cabaret performance, *A Talent to Amuse: An Evening with Noel Coward*. *The Pirates of Penzance* features **Sacramento Opera Artistic Director Timm Rolek** conducting the **Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra** and the **Sacramento Opera Chorus**.

*The Pirates of Penzance* performances are Friday, November 21, 2008 at 8 pm; Sunday, November 23, 2008 at 2 pm; and Tuesday, November 25, 2008 at 7:30 pm at the Sacramento Community Center Theater, 1301 L Street. **For tickets, call 916.808.5181 or visit [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com). Single tickets are \$15 to \$115.**

Discounted group sales (ten or more tickets) are available through the Sacramento Opera office, 916.737.1000.

The Sacramento Opera's 2008-2009 Season is sponsored by the generosity of the James Irvine Foundation, Raley's Family of Fine Stores, Barbara K. Jackson, and the County and City of Sacramento's Cultural Arts Award administered by the Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission.

The mission of the Sacramento Opera is to produce outstanding opera, to develop and cultivate a wider public interest in opera and its allied arts, and to further music education in the region.

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