

The Victorian Lyric Opera Company

Presents

A staged concert of

The Desert Song



Music by
Sigmund Romberg

Book and Lyrics by
Oscar Hammerstein, II
and Otto Harbach

F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre
603 Edmonston Drive
Rockville, Maryland

October 9 & 10, 2004 at 8 PM

Get Involved

The VICTORIAN LYRIC OPERA COMPANY, based in Rockville, is primarily devoted to authentic productions of the comic operas of Gilbert & Sullivan and other operettas of that era, and encourages the promotion of these evergreen works of the Musical Theater. The company is a community-based group and derives its operating finances from ticket sales, member dues, and individual donations. VLOC is always pleased to welcome new members to the organization. If you would like to join VLOC as a performer, technical staff member, or donor, or if you would just like to be kept informed of our activities, please sign up for our mailing list during Intermission or after the show or call us at 301-879-0220.

Coming Next Season!

VLOC is pleased to present

Gilbert & Sullivan's

The Mikado

February 2005

&

Yeomen of the Guard

June 2005

For audition information please call 301-879-0220

To reserve tickets please call 240-314-8690

The Desert Song

Director
Deborah Neizgoda

Music Director & Conductor
Joseph Sorge

Artistic Director
Rosalie Santilano

Lt. LavergneEd Byrdy
Clementina Elaine Dalbo
Ali Ben Ali.....Blair Eig
Edith.....Lisa Freese
Pierre/The Red Shadow Michael Galizia
Bennie KiddRichard Gorbutt
SusanRachael Goldman
General Birabeau..... Ira Haber
Mindar Lyle Jaffe
Captain Paul FontaineMatthew Kessel
AzuriKitty Knowles
Sid El Kar Paul McIlvaine
Neri.....Deborah Peetz
Hassi Tom Pondolfino
Hadj/Guard William Weiss
Margot Bonvalet.....Denise Young

Special Girls

Heather Brown, Kiersten Drumm, Lisa Freese,
Michelle Hastings, Suzanne Luft, June J. Morris,
Deborah Peetz, Shaina Vatz

Chorus

Stephanie Brigham, Fran Fleming, Tom Fuchs,
Donna Jaffe, Kathy Nieman, Ron Nieman, Gina Nowacki,
Susan Porter, David Roethel, Charlie Sheridan,
Julie Stevens, Rusty Suter, Mary Anna Vineyard,
Howard Weinstein, Kent Woods

Setting - Morocco, Northern Africa in 1925

Production Staff

Producer
Lisa Freese

Director Deborah Niezgoda
Music Director & Conductor Joseph Sorge
Artistic Director Rosalie Santilhano
Stage Manager Pete Krueger
Lighting Designer Ayun Fedorcha
Technical Director (Rockville Civic Center)..... Kim Haug
Running Crew..... Tony Dwyer, William Kolodrubetz
Todd Whitehead
Rehearsal Pianists Jenny Bland
Gay Hill, Deborah Jacobson
Costumer..... Denise Young
Program..... Leta Hall
Publicity Sandy Rovner
House Management Merle Haber
Set Storage Rockville Civic Center & City of Gaithersburg
Printing Quick Printing, Inc., Wheaton, Maryland

Visit VLOC on the World Wide Web at
<http://www.vloc.org>



VLOC Recycles

If you don't wish to keep your program,
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Thank you!

Members of the Orchestra

Violin I

Steve Natrella*
Bonnie Barrows

Violin II

Martin Brown
David Friedlander
Irv Berner

Violin III

Carolyn Larson
Edwin Schneider
Erin Grace

Viola

Amanda Laudwein
Victor Ontiveros

Cello

Thurston Griggs
Katie Harris
Andrew Schneider

Bass

Alice Mignerey

Flute

Jackie Miller

Oboe

Lori Guess

Clarinet

James Bensinger
Laura Langbein

Bassoon

Brett Louis

Horn

Kristen Zempolich
Lora Katz

Trumpet

Bernie Rappaport
Curt Anstine

Trombone

Steve Ward

Percussion

George Huttlin

Harp

Meredith Mancini

* *Concertmaster*

The Forgotten Opera Company
presents

Opera Goes to Hell

This ghoulish evening will include scenes and arias from
Faust, Mephistopheles, Don Giovanni, The Crucible,
Macbeth and more. Join Forgotten Opera for a devilishly
good time this Halloween weekend!

Friday & Saturday, October 29th & 30th
Bethesda Presbyterian Church
Tickets available online at www.ticketleap.com.
ForgottenOperaCompany.org

Production Staff

Producer
Lisa Freese

Director Deborah Niezgoda
Music Director & Conductor Joseph Sorge
Artistic Director Rosalie Santilhano
Stage Manager Pete Krueger
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The Story of the Opera

Pierre Birabeau, son of the general of all French troops in Morocco, is secretly sympathetic to the local Riffs. Disguising himself in a red costume and red mask, he leads the Moroccans against his own countrymen, but at the garrison he pretends to be a weak simpleton. His behavior with his fellow Frenchmen does not help further his desire for romance with the beautiful Margot. She prefers dashing, but fickle, Captain Paul Fontaine.

Pierre has no choice but to go to Margot in his other identity, the notorious Red Shadow, and carry her off to his desert camp. Complications arise when Azuri, a dancing girl, reveals the camp's location to the French.

Musical Numbers

Act 1

Scene 1 – The Red Shadow's Riff Mountain Retreat (Evening)

Prelude

High on a hill is our stronghold Riffs
The Riff Song Red Shadow, Sid, Riffs
Finaletto Red Shadow, Sid
Margot Paul & Soldiers

Scene 2 – Outside General Birabeau's House (Later)

I'll be a buoyant girl Susan, Edith

Scene 3 – A Room in General Birabeau's House (A few minutes later)

Why did we marry soldiers? Women
French Military March Margot, Women, soldiers
Romance Margot, Special Girls
Then you will know Pierre, Margot
I want a kiss Margot, Paul, Pierre
It Susan, Bennie
The Desert Song Margot, Red Shadow
Finale Ensemble

Act II

Scene 1 - The Harem of Ali Ben Ali

(Afternoon of the following day)

My little castagnette..... Clementina, Special Girls, Women
Song of the brass key..... Clementina, Special Girls, Women
Song of the brass key (reprise) .Clementina, Margot, Women
One good boy gone wrong..... Bennie, Clementina

Scene 2 - A Corridor (A few minutes later)

Eastern and western love)..... Red Shadow, Sid, Ali, Riffs

Scene 3 - The Room of the Silken Couch

(A few minutes later)

The Sabre Song..... Margot, Red Shadow

Scene 4 - Edge of the Desert

(The following morning, half an hour before dawn)

Farewell Red Shadow, Riffs

Scene 5 - Courtyard of General Birabeau's House

(Two days later)

All hail to the General Women, Birabeau, Paul, Margot
It (Reprise) Bennie
Dance of Triumph Riffs
Finale.....Soldiers, Margot, Paul
The Desert Song (reprise).....Ensemble



In honor of our men and women in uniform

Under the Lights and Behind the Scenes

Stephanie Brigham (Chorus) is happy to be reconnecting with VLOC after the untimely death of her husband Gordon. This is the group in which they met and subsequently performed in many shows together. She has two daughters and teaches first grade.

Ed Byrdy (Lt. Lavergne) has been in the chorus of nearly all of the G&S operas several times. He steps out of the chorus for a brief cameo role after which he vanishes back into the chorus like a red shadow.

Elaine Dalbo (Clementina) marks her third VLOC production with *Desert Song*, following *Iolanthe* (Iolanthe) and *Pinafore* (Buttercup). Upcoming engagements include WS and OBC and when not performing, this Buffalo native spends her days toiling as a press secretary for a Member of Congress.

Kiersten Drumm (Special Girl) was last "seen" with VLOC as assistant stage manager for *Magic Flute*. Recently, she was found tripping as Leila in WS's *Iolanthe* and as a punk 16-year old boy (Cherubino) in FOC's *Marriage of Figaro*.

Blair Eig (Ali Ben Ali) has appeared in eight productions with VLOC, including performances as Spokesman in *Magic Flute*, Sergeant of Police in *Pirates*, and the title role in *Mikado*. He has logged over 20 productions with WS and was most recently was seen in FOC's inaugural production of *Marriage of Figaro* (as Bartolo and Antonio). When not singing, Dr. Blair is Chief Medical Officer at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring.

Ayun Fedorcha (Lighting Designer) is delighted to return to VLOC, where she has previously lit *Pinafore*, *Pirates*, *The Zoo & Trial by Jury*, *Patience*, *Mikado*, *Ruddigore*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Merry Widow*. She freelances in the metro DC area, and is a member of the United Scenic Artist union - local 829.

Fran Fleming (Chorus) has been performing in G&S operas for over 30 years, as a charter member of WS and later when VLOC was established. She is enjoying singing a non-G&S opera and especially appreciates having fewer rehearsals.

Lisa Freese (Edith/Special Girl) continues to enjoy her association with VLOC that has lasted more than 10 years. Previous roles include Eliza, *The Zoo*; Sally, *Die Fledermaus*; Celia, *Iolanthe*; Peep-Bo, *Mikado* with VLOC. When not onstage, backstage, or in the planning stages, she spends her time with her wonderful husband and almost 3-year old son, both of whom are great 'performers,' though not usually in public. Thanks to Denise, Gaye, and Leta!

Michael Galizia (Pierre/The Red Shadow) was Figaro in FOC's inaugural production of *Marriage of Figaro*. This is his seventh show with VLOC. Previous appearances are: *Gondoliers* (Guiseppe), *Trial* (the Learned Judge), *Pirates* (Major-General Stanley), *Iolanthe* (Lord Chancellor), *Magic Flute* (Papageno), *Pinafore* (Dick Deadeye); with WS he has performed in *Gondoliers* (Don Alahambra), *Mikado* (Pooh-Bah), *Yeomen* (Wilfred Shadbolt) and *Iolanthe* (Lord Chancellor).

Rachael Goldman (Susan) is very excited to do another show with VLOC. Rachael has appeared in VLOC's *The Magic Flute*, as the Second Lady, *La Vie Parisienne*, as Pauline, and in *Gondoliers* in the chorus. She has also appeared in MTA's *State Fair* as Emily. Rachael is thrilled to play the role of Susan opposite her husband, Bennie.

Richard Gorbutt (Bennie Kidd) is pleased once again to be allowed to do what he does best, playing the idiot. In his seventh show for VLOC, he is chuffed to bits in being allowed to work again with a talented team and despite being resident in the states for over four years, he still hates root beer. Thanks to Rachael for her love and support and advice on hitting those high notes.

Ira Haber (General Birabeau) has lost count of the number of VLOC shows he has been in, but thinks the number is in the upper teens. Most recently, he was seen on stage as Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe*, and not seen (he hopes) as

the stage manager for *The Magic Flute*. Other favorite roles include Frosch in *Die Fledermaus*, Major Murgatroyd in *Patience*, Mercury in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and [Mr. Olga] Kromov in *The Merry Widow*.

Michelle Hastings (Special Girl) is delighted to make her VLOC debut. Some recent credits include: Sister Mary Leo in *Nunsense*, Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore* and ensemble in *HMS Pinafore*, *Trial by Jury* and *Iolanthe*. This winter, Michelle will play Belle in *A Christmas Carol* with CMH in Annapolis.

Donna Jaffe (Chorus) either sings or knits when she isn't at work, and her husband Lyle aids and abets her at every turn. Besides VLOC, she sings in her temple choir. Her knitting wins blue ribbons at the county fair.

Lyle Jaffe (Mindar) took a break two years ago to preside over his temple's brotherhood. Both he and Donna are excited to be back on stage with old and new friends.

Matthew A. Kessell (Capt. Paul Fontaine) is making his debut with VLOC, after relocating from Los Angeles. He has appeared in the following rolls: Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Don José in *Carmen*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Edgardo in *Lucia Di Lammermoor*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, B.F. Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, Ferrando in *Così fan Tutte*, Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Camille in *The Merry Widow*. Matthew holds a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance from Chapman University.

Kitty Knowles (Azuri) appeared in June as a "sister" in *Pinafore*. Later this month she will appear as una Conversa and una Sorella Cercatrice in the American Center for Puccini Studies' production of *Suor Angelica*. Kitty is a member of the Thomas Circle Singers and has performed locally with the OBC, TAP, and FP.

Suzanne Luft (Special Girl) is a voice instructor and freelance graphic designer. She has performed solos most recently with the Celebrated String Quartet and the Springfield Chorale Arts Society. Suzanne received a

Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Maryland at College Park.

Paul McIlvaine (Sid El Kar) last appeared with VLOC as Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* – a role he reprised with AC&O. Earlier this year, he performed as Alfred in the Eldbrooke Artist Series production of *Die Fledermaus*. His Musical Theater credits include Sir Harry in *Once Upon a Mattress* with TAP; Alexius in *The Chocolate Soldier* and *Shakespeare: A Vaudeville* with MVP; and Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* at the AT in McLean. Paul has an extensive background in Opera and Oratorio.

June J. Morris (Special Girl) is enjoying her first performance with VLOC and is wondering why it took her so long to get here. She's performed with WS for many years and served as a Board Member and a producer of the Traveling Troupe. Now she is looking forward to many more enjoyable times with VLOC.

Kathy Nieman (Chorus) is appearing for the first time with VLOC due to Joe's invitation! She has appeared in numerous shows with the Goddard Music and Drama Club and with RMG.

Ron Nieman (Chorus) is appearing for the first time with VLOC. (Thanks Joel!) He has appeared in musical reviews and dinner theaters with the Goddard Music and Drama Club and RMG.

Deborah Niezgoda (Director) has directed *The Magic Flute*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Merry Widow*, and *Pirates* (VLOC); *The Marriage of Figaro* (FOC); *Iolanthe* for WS; *A Little Night Music*, *Hansel und Gretel*, *The Impresario*, *The Stoned Guest*, and *La Serva Padrona* (TOOC); *The Barber of Seville*, *L'oca del Cairo*, *Chanticleer*, and *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* (OTNV); *Ruddigore* (GG&SS); and *Brundibar* (WNO Camp for Kids). Upcoming engagements include *Yeomen* for VLOC and *Don Giovanni* for FOC.

Gina Nowacki (Chorus) is VLOC regular who last appeared on the Fitzgerald stage as Monostatos' Second Slave in the 2004 production of *The Magic Flute*. She is relieved that there are no quick costume changes in *Desert Song!*

Deborah Peetz (Neri/Special Girl) was last seen as the "ubiquitous" Cousin Hebe in VLOC's production of *Pinafore* and is very pleased to be "Special" in *Desert Song*. This is her 14th show in 9 years with VLOC. Other groups she has worked with include ESP, WS, OI, ACCT, OTNV, and LTA.

Thomas Pondolfino (Hassi) is pleased to be riding with the Riffs in his second stage appearance with VLOC, after leaving the crew of the *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Tom wants to thank his wife Amy for all the help and support.

Susan Porter (Chorus) is thrilled to be in her first VLOC production. Some favorite roles include: Shirley Kaplan (*Street Scene*, FPCT), Maddy (*Mamaleh*, Spotlighters); Yente the Matchmaker (*Fiddler*, CP); Thank you again, Steven, Matthew and Chana for supporting the other love of my life.

David Roethel (Chorus) is in his 4th production with VLOC. Previously, he appeared in the chorus for *Pinafore*, *Mikado*, and *Pirates* (in which he doubled as Queen Victoria). Singing in *Desert Song* is a natural, he says.

Rosalie Santilhano (Artistic Director) is an accomplished G&S performer who has sung all of the contralto and most of the soprano roles in the canon. She received her vocal and acting training in her native Holland. She has performed in VLOC's past productions of *Pirates* (Ruth), *Mikado* (Katisha), *Iolanthe* (Fairy Queen), *Pinafore* (Buttercup), *Yeomen* (Dame Carruthers), and *Gondoliers* (the Duchess). Rosalie has served as VLOC's Artistic Director since 1991.

Charles Sheridan (Chorus) seeks harmony in all things after retiring from many years of resolving contract disputes. The intricate harmonies of *The Desert Song* serve nicely (not to mention the glorious melodies).

Joseph Sorge (Music Director & Conductor) was last seen on the VLOC stage as the First Priest in *The Magic Flute* and last appeared in its pit to music direct and conduct *Iolanthe*. Prior to that, he appeared as Dr. Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, Cyril in *Princess Ida*, and Leonard Merryll in *Yeomen*. He was the music director for VLOC's *Mikado* in

1996 and 2001, *Sorcerer* in 1997, and most recently, *La Vie Parisienne* and *Pinafore*.

Julie Stevens (Chorus) thinks that any chance to sing is a delight for this late bloomer. Thanks to Leta and VLOC for these past years of delight as she look forward to many more.

Rusty Suter (Chorus) is happy to be performing with all the very talented people that comprise VLOC. This begins her 16th year with the company and she hopes for many more!

Shaina Vatz (Chorus) recently graduated with a B.A. in music with a concentration in vocal performance from UNC-Chapel Hill. *Desert Song* is her first performance since relocating to the Baltimore area, where she studies voice with Ms. Ruth Drucker.

Mary Anna Vineyard (Chorus) is in her third VLOC show and has also sung with WS. For many years she was a church cantor and is currently a member of the St. Rose of Lima Parish Choir.

Howard Weinstein (Chorus) was last seen as a tenor with NYU's University's University Heights Chapel Glee Club. Ripened with age, he is now a baritone

William Weiss (Hadji/Guard) was most recently heard in WNO's production of *Andrea Chenier*. He's also sung with VLOC in *Pinafore*, *Magic Flute*, *Pirates*, and *La Vie Parisienne*, and is happy to help out.

Kent Woods (Chorus) is frequently heard in VLOC productions, most recently as King Hildebrand at the 2003 Sing Out. He is attempting to raise his lyric baritone voice to the level of second tenor in *The Desert Song*.

Denise Young (Margot Bonvalet) appeared most recently as Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* with FOC. VLOC appearances include Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, Mabel in *Pirates*, Giannetta in *Gondoliers*, Angelina in *Trial*, Laetitia in *The Zoo*, The Baroness in *La Vie Parisienne*, Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, Yum-Yum in *Mikado*, and Lady Psyche in *Princess Ida*.

Theater Acronyms

ACCT = Aldersgate Church Community Theater,
AC&O = Annapolis Chorale and Orchestra, AMS = American
Music Stage, AT = Alden Theater, CCP = Columbia Community
Players, CMH = Chesapeake Music Hall, CP = Centennial Players,
ESP = Elden Street Players, FOC = Forgotten Opera Company,
FP = Fairlington Players, FPCT = Fells Point Corner Theater,
GG&SS = Georgetown Gilbert & Sullivan Society, LTA = Little
Theater of Alexandria, MP = Montgomery Playhouse,
MTA = McLean Theater Alliance, MVP = Mount Vernon Players,
OBC = Opera Bel Canto, OI = Opera International, OTNV = Opera
Theater of Northern Virginia, PGLT = Prince George's Little
Theater, RLT = Rockville Little Theater, RMG = Rosebud Music
Group, SMP = St. Mark's Players, SSS = Silver Spring Stage,
TAP = The Arlington Players, TMC = The Metropolitan Chorus,
TOOC = The *Other* Opera Company, WCM = Washington
Conservatory of Music, WNO = Washington National Opera,
WS = The Washington Savoyards, WSC = Washington
Shakespeare Company

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VLOC would like to extend its sincere thanks to:
Scott Bloom, Christ Congregational Church, Grace
Episcopal Church, Holy Redeemer Catholic Church,
Amy Pondolfino, Rockville Band, and Sandy Rovner, for
their efforts on its behalf.

Coming Next!

The Victorian Lyric Opera Company
Presents

Gilbert & Sullivan's

The Mikado

"I'm really very sorry for you all, but it's an unjust world, and virtue is triumphant only in theatrical performances." ---- The Mikado

Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner for the town of Titipu, has worked things out quite nicely - sprung from the county jail (who would guess that flirting is a crime?), given a cushy government job, and he's engaged to marry Yum-Yum. What could go wrong? Well, Yum-Yum is in love with Nanki-PooKo-Ko hasn't actually managed to execute anyoneand The Mikado of Japan and Katisha are coming to town to find out *what's going on*.

Gilbert and Sullivan's charming and tuneful operetta includes such favorites as "Three Little Maids from School," "A Wandering Minstrel, I," "The Sun Whose Rays," and "The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring."

Directed by Alicia Oliver

Music Directed and Conducted by Joseph Sorge

February 2005

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