

Pirates of Penzance - Audition Pieces

Sunday, 27th January, 2.30pm, Thalian Hall

Gilbert and Sullivan's most popular show, *The Pirates of Penzance*, is a rollicking, delightfully funny tale of a band of soft-tempered pirates. Mistakenly apprenticed to a pirate (instead of a pilot) by his nursemaid Ruth at the age of eight, the handsome Frederic is now twenty-one and, though quite fond of the group of joyous and fun-loving pirates, chooses to abandon his profession and "lead a blameless life henceforth," dedicating himself instead to their eradication. Shortly after leaving them, he encounters a gaggle of beautiful maidens (one of whom, Mabel, steals his heart) and their father, the eccentric Major-General. The whole group has a run-in with the pirates themselves before escaping on the false premise that the Major-General is an orphan -- a fact these tender hearted pirates simply cannot help but take into account, given the fact that the majority of them are orphans themselves and "know what it's like." Just as Frederic is ready to lead a band of lily-livered policemen to take out the Pirate King and his men, a secret is uncovered that will change his fate forever, but, naturally, all comes out right in the end

Character	Libretto	Songs
<p>Pirate King (any age) – Baritone - Lead Role Swash buckling, buccaneering Pirate, a look somewhere between Errol Flynn and Jack Sparrow A pantomime villain as he tries to appear all tough with his enemies but actually has a soft heart and can't attack anyone who is an Orphan – which the whole of the British Navy appear to be! Strong singing required and a commanding presence. We need to realise why he is the Pirate King – no wall flowers need apply!</p>	<p>Act 1 Page 2 – 4 From "Oh, pardon Frederick pardon" To "I shall live & die a Pirate King"</p> <p>Act 2 Page 29-31 From "Upon my word this is most curious – most absurdly whimsical"</p>	<p>Pages 18-20 Oh better far to Live and Die First verse and chorus</p> <p>Pages 123-127 Away, Away my hearts on fire.</p>
<p>Samuel (any age) – Baritone – Support role Pirate King's right hand man and lieutenant whose success onstage is dependent on creating a memorable personality, one infused with goodwill. He occasionally leads the chorus with solos, has some early dialogue, gets to distribute burglarious tools while singing about it in Act II, and often has his own vocal line in ensembles.</p>	<p>Act 1 Page 2 – 4 From "Oh, pardon Frederick pardon" To "I shall live & die a Pirate King"</p>	<p>Pages 13 14 Pour oh Pour the Pirate Sherry 2 verses and chorus</p>
<p>Ruth (47 looking) – Alto – Lead role Ruth is 47 years of age. She is in love with her "pirate apprentice" but when all is lost with Frederick she re-invents herself as a major pirate. Need to see the personality change from 'nice'</p>	<p>Act 1 Page 2 – 4 From "Oh, pardon Frederick pardon" To "I shall live & die a Pirate King"</p>	<p>Pages 16-17 When Frederick was a little lad – First verse</p>

<p>nursery maid to Frederick to manipulating swashbuckling pirate in Act 2. Strong acting and harmonising singing required.</p>	<p>Act 2 Page 29-31 From "Upon my word this is most curious – most absurdly whimsical"</p>	<p>Pages 123-127 Away, Away my hearts on fire</p>
<p>Frederick (youngish looking) – Tenor – Lead Frederick is a kind hearted (accidental) pirate who although hates the pirates calling, loves them all as friends. He is a bit of an innocent goody-goody and always needs to do what is right and true even when that means he has to re-join the pirates when he realises due to being born on leap year he is 5 and not 21 (age range can change). He has a lot of stage time and needs to be a confident harmonising singer and actor. We would also like to see a bit of (elvis?) sex appeal with his song maiden breast when he sings to the daughters in Act 1.</p>	<p>Act 1 Page 2 – 4 From "Oh, pardon Frederick pardon" To "I shall live & die a Pirate King"</p> <p>Act 2 page 23-24 From "Oh Frederick Cannot you..." To " Dear Sir they come"</p> <p>Act 2 Page 29-31 From "Upon my word this is most curious – most absurdly whimsical"</p>	<p>Pages 36-39 Is there not one maiden breast From beginning to top of 39</p> <p>Pages 123-127 Away, Away my hearts on fire.</p> <p>Pages 130 – 133 Stay Frederick Stay – duet Up to fal-la at the bottom of 133</p>
<p>Edith & Kate (any age) – mezzo – support role. These are 2 daughters of the Major General they are more hedonistic and strong willed than some of the other daughters. We are looking for these to be the naughty ones, leading others astray, coming home late, drinking, flirting etc...but they have a couple of little solos so need to sing as well...</p>	<p>Act 1 page 9 From "What a picturesque spot" To "Yes, yes the very thing"</p>	<p>Act 1 Page 28-32 Climbing over Rocky Mountains – both verses.</p>
<p>Mabel: (youngish looking) – Soprano - Lead Mabel is the saccharine sweet daughter of Major General and has little chance to establish her character in the spoken dialogue, and consequently must do most of it in the singing. Her signature aria is, of course, "Poor wandering one" but there are also opportunities for romantic duets with Frederic (to whom she is attracted at least as much as he is to her). As we are modernising this show, I am happy for this aria to be messed about with – in conjunction with Peter Farrell,</p>	<p>Act 2 page 23-24 From "Oh Frederick Cannot you..." To " Dear Sir they come"</p> <p>Act 2 page 35-36 From "Sergeant approach" To "It is too late now"</p>	<p>Page 39-45 Poor Wandering One From Yes Tis Mabel to end of song.</p> <p>Pages 130 – 133 Stay Frederick Stay – duet Up to fal-la at the bottom of 133</p>
<p>Major General: (mature) –light baritone - lead A bombastic military man, with a military like-precision in a number of challenging "patter"</p>	<p>Act 2 page 23-24 From "Oh Frederick Cannot you..."</p>	<p>Page 61-64 I am the very model of a modern Major General</p>

<p>lyrics, including one of G’&’S’s signature songs which need to be enunciated clearly. He has a chance for more lyricism in “Sighing softly to the river” at the end of Act II. His is a more melodramatic character with his asides to the audience when he lies to the pirates about being an orphan and his dancing around in the dark in his “Sighing softly to the river” song.</p>	<p>To “ Dear Sir they come”</p>	<p>First verse & chorus Page 153-156 Sighing softly to the river From “Yes, Yes the Major General comes “ To “wave their arms above”</p>
<p>Police Sergeant (any age) Bass/Alto – Support role Although onstage for only seventeen minutes, the Sergeant is truly unforgettable. The character is at the centre of two highlights in the second act which includes the solo lamenting that “a policeman’s lot is not a happy one.” In keeping with the modern times we are opening this up for women officers to apply.</p>	<p>Act 2 page 35-36 From “Sergeant approach” To “It is too late now”</p>	<p>Page 138 – 140 From “Though in body and in mind” To “Anybody here” Page 142-144 A Policeman’s lot is not an ‘appy one. First Verse and Chorus</p>