



Ojai Youth Entertainment Studio

PIRATES OF PENZANCE JR.

The Pirates of Penzance is a comic operetta¹ by composers William S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, which opened during the Victorian Era² in London, 1879. Satirical and irreverent, The Pirates of Penzance is a witty farce³ of tenderhearted pirates, a bungling police force, callow young lovers, dew-eyed daughters and an eccentric Major-General, all ridiculously bound to the order of honor and duty!

A robust cast of featured ensemble roles; pirates, daughters, and constables, is the mainstay of this timeless production. **Pirates of Penzance JR** is adapted for the youth stage and provides a unique experience for each performer to explore the wit of satirical exaggeration, comic confusion, classical styles of operetta, engage in stage combat, and create memorable characters in an ensemble, developing invaluable skills to grow as an actor. Much of the storytelling and dialogue in the operetta are sung as lyrics. *The story is told through song!*

SYNOPSIS

The young pirate apprentice Frederic, who was mistakenly apprenticed to the Pirate King and his band of pirates (with a soft-spot for orphans) by his partially deaf nursemaid Ruth, is about to be freed from his indentured period - and has decided to leave the pirate life for good. Now a free man, Frederic, (who has never seen another woman besides Ruth), leaves for the shore and instantly falls in love with Mabel, one of the many daughters of Major General Stanley. Soon enough, the band of pirates arrive on shore, discover the daughters, and attempt to marry them all! Major General Stanley makes use of a clever ruse, and engages the help of a bungling brigade of constables to stop the pirates. Meanwhile, Frederic, although he desires to help Major General Stanley and the police protect the ladies, is informed of a paradoxical loophole in his terms of apprenticeship, and bound by his overwhelming sense of duty, he determines to remain loyal to the pirates. But, all is well in the end when it is discovered that the pirates have noble blood and would in fact be suitable husbands for Major General Stanley's daughters after all!

Oh Far Better To Live and Die - Pirate Song - <https://youtu.be/SwcdKCkI66A>

Poor Wandering One - Daughters Song - <https://youtu.be/eP1csY1SsVQ>

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¹ Literally, "little opera." A key difference between opera and operetta is the delivery of dialogue. Operettas include spoken dialogue (rather than recitative, where dialogue is sung), between musical numbers. Gilbert and Sullivan are some of the most famous composers of operetta, which became the precursor to modern musical theater.

² From the period of the reign of Britain's Queen Victoria from 1837 to 1901, implying an emphasis on rigid social attitudes. Queen Victoria herself was "often perceived as being overly serious and possessing little or no sense of humor".

³ A light dramatic composition marked by broadly satirical comedy and improbable plot

CAST OF CHARACTERS

The roles of Pirate King and Frederic will be double cast.

Performances will be shared: A) Fri 6pm, Sat 2pm; B) Sat 6pm, Sun 2pm

SAMUEL. Lieutenant. The Pirate King's right-hand man (infused with good-will). Think of him as the bookish accountant to the Pirates. Comfortable with leading the chorus with a solo. Vocal Range - Bb to Eb.

PIRATE KING. Leader of the buccaneer band pirate band. A bloodthirsty pirate and an orphan - tough until he meets another orphan. A self-assured, comedic character. Comedic timing, physical comedy, strong singing, speaks clearly with a British dialect. Ability to memorize dialogue. As with a number of Gilbert's "villains," he's topsy-turvily likeable - of noble birth, but we don't know until the end! Vocal Range - B to Eb

FREDERIC. The young pirate apprentice. The male ingénue of the show. Reared by the middle-aged Ruth among the pirates, he feels an affectionate loyalty toward her. Bound by a ridiculous sense of duty and loyalty to the pirates all the while despising them. Speaks clearly with a British dialect. Vocal Range - B to F

RUTH. Pirate maid-of-all work (Nurse-maid and a member of the band of pirates). Matronly, but still vibrant and full of energy. She loves her "pirate apprentice," but realizes as soon Frederic catches sight of the Major-General's daughters, that all is "Lost! lost! Lost!". Duet with Frederic has real tragic proportions, and her appeal to him is unacknowledged. By Act II, she has reestablished her status with the pirates, and even helps in their attempt to bring Frederic back to the band. Speaks and sings clearly with a British Cockney" dialect. Comedic timing with ability to hold a vocal harmony. Vocal Range - G to Eb

EDITH. General Stanley's daughter. Daring. Suggests that she and her sisters "Make the most of fleeting leisure" and then offers the shocking suggestion that they all take off [their] shoes and stockings and paddle! Sings a complex vocal harmony by herself. Soprano. Vocal Range - G to F

KATE. General Stanley's daughter. Kate is more the romantic. She admires the countryside and idealizes it. Sing a complex vocal harmony by herself. Mezzo-Soprano. Vocal Range - G to F

ISABEL. General Stanley's daughter. Empathetic and imaginative. Ability to sing harmony.

MABEL. The female ingénue. Establishes her character though singing. Speaks clearly with a British dialect. Ability to sing operatic, or sing wide range and ability to sustain higher notes. Vocal Range - G to G3/9

MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY. The father of the daughters and a military man. A vivid character with warmth and good humour. Well spoken, "terribly terribly" upper class English accent. The Major-General delivers a rapid fire patter song. A comedic character with ability for rhythm, timing, excellent diction and articulation. Vocal Range - A to Eb

The SERGEANT of Police is a natural leader. The Sergeant leads the comedic bumbling police force. He puts on a brave front: *"Though in body and in mind, we are timidly inclined. . . . Yet when the danger's near, we manage to appear as insensible to fear as anybody here."* Vocal Range - C to E

The POLICE. Lively ensemble of dancers and singers with featured roles. Physical comedy.

The DAUGHTERS - Featured daughter roles. Daughters of Major General Stanley range in type and talent from great singers, dancers and actresses! Though mostly on stage as a group, each of these ladies is unique, possessing individual characteristics (silly, bored, awkward, jealous, brainy, etc). Vocal Range F to G

PIRATES - Featured pirate roles. Rowdy! Loud! and Loveable! is the only way to describe this motley crew of sea-loving Pirates. This kooky band of outlaws is a hodgepodge of individual personalities as wide as the actor's imagination will allow. The more creative the actors, the more this group of hammy hooligans shine. Vocal Range - Bb to F#

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