



Contact: Joe Martin  
530.754.5428

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For immediate release:

## **Carl Rosa Opera Brings *H.M.S. Pinafore* to the Mondavi Center**

*April 2, 2008; Davis, California*—The internationally acclaimed **Carl Rosa Opera** will return to the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** with a stirring and colorful production of **W.S. Gilbert** and **Arthur Sullivan**'s much-loved comic opera *H.M.S. Pinafore*. A hilarious tale of love, hypocrisy, and mistaken identity, this production features beautiful and imaginative staging, period costumes, and, of course, the brilliant satiric wit and memorable songs that have long made Gilbert and Sullivan one of the most popular duos in musical theater.

There will be two performances on April 27, at 3 pm and 7 pm, in the Mondavi Center's Jackson Hall on the UC Davis campus. Tickets are available from the Mondavi Center Ticket Office at 530.754.2787 or online at [MondaviArts.org](http://MondaviArts.org). The performances are presented as Mondavi Center **Special Events**.

Founded in 1873, the London-based Carl Rosa Opera is a unique national touring company of 65 musicians, singers, and technicians dedicated to bridging the perceived gap between grand opera and popular music through high-quality productions of classic popular operas. The company has specialized in Gilbert and Sullivan and has been a Mondavi Center favorite, selling out Jackson Hall in April 2006 with a performance of *The Mikado* and again in April 2007 with *The Pirates of Penzance*. Current productions include **Franz Lehár**'s *The Merry Widow*, **Johann Strauss II**'s *Die Fledermaus*, and, of course, several works by Gilbert and Sullivan, including *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Iolanthe*, *Yeoman of the Guard*, *The Mikado*, and *The Gondoliers*.

Critical response to Carl Rosa Opera's *H.M.S. Pinafore* has been enthusiastic. *The Malvern Gazette* called the production "as good as one is likely to see," adding that "characterization and singing by each of the actors was exemplary and the fine chorus of sailors and female relations was supportive, and added considerable humor." *The Hereford Times* called it "a stirring, polished performance...G&S at its comic best."

Librettist W.S. Gilbert (1836-1911) and composer Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) are beloved by devotees of musical theater all over the world for their 14 comic operas. With a distinctly British wit, Gilbert's words tend to take an absurd premise—often derived from the social realities of Victorian England—and push it to a hilarious conclusion, while Sullivan's music is filled with memorable melodies and inimitable craft. Widely

credited with bridging the gap between “serious” opera and popular music, the two remain icons in musical theater with legions of devoted fans.

*H.M.S. Pinafore*, a comic opera in two acts first performed in 1878, was the fourth collaboration by Gilbert and Sullivan and the duo’s first hit. The plot tells of the daughter of a navy captain who falls in love with a sailor even though her father intends her to marry an admiral, which offers ample opportunity for the gentle social satire for which Gilbert and Sullivan are well-known. The work pokes fun at the class divisions in British society, the foibles of the Royal Navy, the actions of incompetent boobs in positions of authority, and other favorite themes as it makes its way through hilarious comic episodes, plot twists, and some of Gilbert and Sullivan’s best-known songs (“I’m a Little Buttercup,” “Never Mind the Why and Wherefore,” and many more).

Scheduled to perform on April 27 are: **Barry Clark** (Sir Joseph Porter); **Steven Page** (Captain Corcoran); **Lincoln Stone** (Ralph Rackstraw); **Bruce Graham** (Deadeye Dick); **Michael Kerry** (Bill Bobstay); **Charlotte Page** (Josephine); **Victoria Ward** (Hebe); and **Sylvia Clarke** (Mrs. Cripps/Little Buttercup).

“The operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan are beloved by audiences all over the world, and we look forward to presenting one of the premier touring companies in that repertoire in Carl Rosa Opera,” said **Don Roth**, the Mondavi Center’s executive director.

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**What:** Carl Rosa Opera  
*H.M.S. Pinafore*  
**When:** Sunday, April 27 • 3 pm and 7 pm  
**Where:** Jackson Hall  
Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts  
University of California, Davis  
**Admission:** \$59/\$54/\$49 Adults • \$29.50/\$27/\$24.50 Students & Children  
**Tickets/Info:** 530.754.2787  
866.754.2787 (toll-free)  
<http://www.MondaviArts.org>  
530.754.5402 [TDD]

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