



THE MEDIUM

BY
GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

*"Who's there?
- answer me!"*

Explore the darker and lighter sides of Opera
with this contrasting double-bill from
the highly acclaimed Midland Music Makers



&

Gilbert & Sullivan's Trial by Jury



WARNING:
During 'The Medium'
gunshots will be fired

Midland Music Makers
Opera

Tuesday 2nd - Saturday 4th October 2003 7.30pm
Matinée, Saturday 4th 2.30pm

The Crescent Theatre 20 Sheepcote Street
Brindleyplace Birmingham B16 8AE 

Midland Music Makers
Opera

OFFICERS OF MIDLAND MUSIC MAKERS

President Arthur Street
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Musical Director Phil Ypres-Smith
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Sound Andrew Holtom
Costume Co-ordinator Dee White
Props Susan Cash
Stage Crew Kevin McGrath, Rob Taylor,
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FRONT OF HOUSE

Ticket Managers Norma & David Johnson

Welcome

It's been another eventful year for Midland Music Makers. We just love the drama! We said a sad farewell and thanks to Charlotte Exon, our MD for the last two productions, and thank you to Pat Morris, last year's producer. Our ten-year-rehearsal accompanist, Darren Hogg, left for new pastures too, and the fantastic critical and artistic success of 'La Traviata' was unfortunately not mirrored in ticket sales.

But we're back again, with thanks to Amanda Laidler, a previous MMM producer, and MD, Phil Ypres-Smith. We present an amazing and contrasting programme. 'The Medium's' dark and sinister tragedy being offset against the daft and tuneful 'Trial by Jury'.

You just can't keep a good society down!

Many thanks to all of you for joining us, as we keep the spirit of Music Makers alive. We hope you enjoy it as much as we most certainly will, and we look forward to seeing you during our forthcoming Season of Concerts too.

Forthcoming performances

January 8th 2004

Friends' Evening

Clarendon Suites.

March 27th 2004

Spring concert

The Friends Meeting House, Bournville

w/c 31st October 2004

Main Opera Production

The Crescent Theatre, Brindleyplace

Number of performances tbc.

Further concert dates to be confirmed. So look out for publicity leaflets in libraries, arts centres and music shops or visit our web site.

Recent productions

2002 *La Traviata*

1999 *The Bartered Bride*

2001 *L'Elisir D'Amore*

1998 *Aunt Caroline's Will / I Pagliacci*

2000 *Carmen*

1997 *Faust*

A full list of previous productions, from 1946, will soon be posted on our website (below)

www.midlandmusicmakers.org

MAIN INTERVAL: Refreshments will be served in the foyer during the first interval. The Promenade Bar will be open before and after the performance and during the interval. Patrons requiring drinks during the interval and particularly at the end of the performance are urged to order them in advance. Smoking is not permitted in the auditorium. Neither is the use of cameras and tape recorders. First aid facilities are provided by St John's Ambulance which gives its services voluntarily. In accordance with the requirement of the licensing justices: a) The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exits and entrances other than those used as queue waiting rooms and the doors of all such exits and entrances shall at all times be open. b) All gangways, passages, and staircases shall be kept entirely free from chairs or other obstruction. c) Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the intersecting gangways. If standing be permitted at the rear of the seating, sufficient space shall be left for persons to pass easily to and fro.

THE CRESCENT THEATRE Licensee and Manager Ian Craddock

THE MEDIUM

Music and libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti

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WARNING: During all performances of 'The Medium' gunshots will be fired

CHARACTERS

Baba (Madame Flora)	<i>The Medium</i>	Patricia Nixon
Monica	<i>Baba's daughter</i>	Lorraine Payne
Toby	<i>A mute boy adopted by Baba</i>	Edd Turner
Mr. Gobineau	<i>a customer of Madam Flora</i>	David Mellor
Mrs Gobineau	<i>Wife of Mr. Gobineau</i>	Kym Sheargold
Mrs Nolan	<i>a Customer of Madam Flora</i>	Patricia Bullock

Gian Carlo Menotti

Gian Carlo Menotti was born in 1911, in Cadegliano, Italy. Menotti's mother, Ines - the force behind his musical education - fostered his obvious talent from the beginning. At 7, Gian Carlo began composing songs and by 12, had written and composed two operas. In 1923 he began formal musical training at the Verdi Conservatory in Milan. Following that, Arturo Toscanini, a family friend, persuaded Rosario Scalerò to enroll him at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music. Thanks to Scalerò's discipline, Menotti was thoroughly and rigorously trained in all the techniques of composition, particularly counterpoint. Fellow Curtis Institute student, Samuel Barber, became his close companion and lifelong friend.



His first mature work, 'Amelia Goes to the Ball', premiered in 1937, this success led to commissions from the NBC to write especially for radio; 'The Old Maid and the Thief'. His first ballet (both score and scenario) 'Sebastian', followed in 1944. In 1945, Menotti returned to opera with 'The Medium', shortly joined by 'The Telephone'. Both enjoyed international success and were two of the first operas ever to make it on Broadway.

The Broadway production of 'The Medium' and 'The Telephone' made Menotti a household name. And again, Toscanini played a vital role, twice attending this double bill, causing a public sensation.

The voice is the linchpin of Menotti's style. His operatic characters express themselves through vocal lines that are intrinsic to the dramatic situation and not merely decorative. Menotti is fundamentally a story teller and any subtext is buried in the physical actions of his protagonists. In 'The Medium' the beatings of Toby are given intense drama within the music. By such strategies Menotti manipulates our emotions.

Menotti writes the text to all his operas, the original language being English in every case, with the exception of 'Amelia Goes to the Ball', 'The Island God', and 'The Last Savage'. He continues to work internationally.

SYNOPSIS

Act 1

The opera is set in the apartment of the Medium Madame Flora (Baba).

As Act 1 begins, Baba's daughter, Monica, is combing her hair. Toby, her mute foster brother, is taking lengths of silk from a costume basket and improvising a costume. As they play out a scene together, Baba returns and scolds a frightened Toby for playing with her belongings. Monica distracts her mother and they prepare for a séance.

Three clients arrive. One has not been before. The others, a couple, have been coming for two years. All of them hope to contact the spirits of their dead children. But Baba is a charlatan, and the 'spirits' are faked by Monica, in a well-practised performance. Suddenly Baba shouts hysterically and turns on the light – she is convinced that something has touched her. In a panic, she sends the puzzled clients away, and seizes Toby, trying to blame it all on him. Monica soothes her.

- Brief Pause -

Act 2

Act Two takes place a few days later. Monica enjoys a puppet performance which Toby is giving. Taken with the moment, Monica applauds and acts out a scene - providing Toby's voice - in which Toby is in love with her. She disappears when Baba arrives.

Baba questions Toby again about the incident at the séance – was it he who touched her? She loses her temper and beats the boy.

The clients return: Baba admits it was all a fraud, but they refuse to believe it. Nothing will convince them, so she forces Monica to reveal her performances. Baba eventually loses her temper and sends them away. She then turns on Toby and throws him out too, locking Monica in her room.

Left alone, voices torment her, and in desperation she goes to the cupboard and pours herself several drinks. Exhausted she falls asleep: Toby creeps back in. He tries to go into Monica's room, and then looks in the trunk. The noise he makes wakes Baba, so he hides. Convinced she has trapped her ghost, Baba fires a gun and kills him.

CURTAIN

followed by a 20 minute interval

Trial by Jury

Text by W. S. Gilbert; music by Sir Arthur Sullivan. Produced with kind permission of Chappell & Co. Ltd.

CHARACTERS

The Judge	.....	Clive Thursfield
Counsel for the Plaintiff	.....	Paul Forbes
	.....	Barry Matthews, (Sat. Matinée)
Edwin	<i>The Defendant</i>	Alex Laing
Angelina	<i>The Plaintiff</i>	Kym Sheargold
Foreman of the Jury	.....	Foreman of the jury
Usher	.....	Sheila Giles

CHORUS LADIES:

Sally Allsop, Angie Barnbrook, June Borthwick, Gwyneth Bowdler, Patricia Bullock, Susan Cash, Pam Davies, Adele Greensall, Margaret Hale, Norma Johnson, Valerie Matthews, Patricia Nixon, Lorraine Payne, Janet Stanley, Dee White, Marrian Yates.

CHORUS GENTLEMEN:

Dick Kemp, Barry Matthews, David Mellor,
Tim Morris, Keith Nield, Malcolm Oakes, John Reading, Bob Shepherd.



&



Things you may already know about 'Trial by Jury'

On 25 March, 1875 "Trial by Jury" which is a dramatic cantata in one act, was produced at the Royalty Theatre and was played after Offenbach's three-act comic opera, 'La Perichole'. The Royalty Theatre was under the management of Madame Selina Dolaro, whose manager was Mr. Richard D'Oyly Carte, and it is to the latter's initiative in following his conviction that Gilbert and Sullivan would make a success in collaboration, that we owe the now World-famous long string of comic operas.

"Trial by Jury" is of interest in many ways. It is the only Gilbert and Sullivan opera which is sung throughout and, when first produced, Frederick Sullivan - the composer's brother - took the part of *the Judge*. Frederick died on 18 January, 1877, and Sullivan wrote 'The Lost Chord' in memory of his brother, to whom he was greatly attached.

The scene is laid in the 'Court of the Exchequer' and the plot consists of a 'breach of promise' case. Why a 'Court of Exchequer' for a 'breach of promise' case?. Needless to say Gilbert, as usual, is quite accurate. At the time he wrote the opera this Court, absurd though it may sound, did try breach of promise cases.

synopsis

Scene: A Courtroom

The Curtain rises on Chorus of Court Officials, Jury and members of the public.

Edwin is to be sued by Angelina for a 'breach of promise'.

The Usher tells the Jury what is expected of them. The defendant appears and pleads with the Jury to understand his case. Enter the Judge, who tells the courtroom of his rise to his present exulted position by dint of marrying the boss's 'elderly, ugly daughter'.

Then, at the Judge's order, the Usher swears in the Jury and summons the Plaintiff, Angelina. The Judge is taken first with the charms of one of her friends, and then by Angelina herself. He even admits that he never saw "so exquisitely fair a face"; and the Jury too, profess great admiration for the ladies.

The Counsel for the Plaintiff makes his appeal to the Jury telling how the Defendant deceived her. As the Counsel and Jury try to cheer up the plaintiff, she reels as if to faint and falls sobbing on the Foreman's breast, but when the Judge approaches she leans on him instead. Edwin attempts to defend himself from their charge of "Bastard!", by offering to marry the plaintiff today and his new sweetheart tomorrow.

The Judge is happy with this, but on checking his books he sees that marrying two ladies is a serious offence. Angelina is anxious that the Jury should take into account her distress when assessing the damages owing to her. Edwin suggests that he is a bad lot, and when he has been drinking is likely to beat her: the Judge thinks that possibly they should give him some drink to assess this. When this is rejected by the courtroom, the Judge, anxious to get away, hits on a novel solution: he will marry Angelina himself.

Everyone is happy.

CURTAIN

biographies

PAT BULLOCK (Mrs Nolan)

Pat Bullock has been involved with music for many years, and as a child played violin in Staffordshire Youth Orchestra. In tandem with her first career in clinical chemistry, Pat also studied ballet & tap dancing. She returned to vocal training around ten years ago. Pat has had wide experience in choral and solo work, singing regularly for a number of local Church choirs. She joined MMM three years ago and has since sung solos in concerts and performed in the chorus of the main operas. This is Pat's first principal rôle for MMM. She currently works as teacher, and recently finished a higher diploma in music at Birmingham University.

PAUL FORBES (Council for the Plaintiff)

Originally from Long Eaton, Derbyshire, Paul moved to Birmingham 25 years ago. He soon established himself as a Gilbert and Sullivan tenor and has performed all 13 of the Savoy Operas (some several times). He trained with Mary Parsons for 13 years and has appeared in many musicals and operettas, in roles including *Tommy* in 'Brigadoon', *Camille* in 'The Merry Widow' and *Alfred* in 'Die Fledermaus'. Paul made his opera debut with Midland Music Makers as the Ballad Seller in 'Hugh the Drover'. His other opera credits include *Pang* in 'Turandot', *Malcolm* in 'Macbeth', *Don Basilio* in 'The Marriage of Figaro', *Borsa* in 'Rigoletto', *Dancaire* in 'Carmen' and *M. Triquet* in 'Eugene Onegin'. His last rôle for MMM was *Gaston* in last year's 'La Traviata'

SHEILA GILES (The Usher)

Sheila began singing at an early age and was talented enough to win the 'Llangollen International Singing Festival' early in her singing career. She has performed with Midland Music Makers for many years, having sung some significant Contralto rôles during that time, including 'Gianni Scicchi' and *Miriam* in 'Moses'. Sheila is active on the oratorio circuit and also sings with The Midlands Chorale and The Manor Operatic Society.

AMANDA LAIDLER (Producer)

Amanda has directed musicals and children's theatre as well as opera, and has written and directed several pantomimes and adaptations of musicals for children. She has directed the "Sibford Millennium Pageant" - written by RSC actor David Ryall - for a cast of over 100, including horses and a flock of sheep, and also "Oliver!" for Stratford Amateur Operatic at the Swan Theatre. She is at present writing and producing "Shakespeare on Love", an evening based on some of Shakespeare's romantic couples, together with music inspired by his words. Amanda has worked as an arts administrator and a stage/company manager for both theatre and opera. From 1986 to 1991 she was Company Manager and Assistant to the Director of Wexford Festival Opera. She has worked as professional stage manager or Assistant to the Producer on many musicals and operas for societies in Yorkshire and Warwickshire. Her 2001 "L'Elisir D'Amore" for Midland Music Makers was an artistic success, receiving high praise from reviewers.

ALEX LAING (The Defendant)

Alex was born in Edinburgh in 1978. He is a professional violinist and singer. he is tenor lay clerk at St Philip's Cathedral in Birmingham. His theatre credits include *Henry Higgins* in 'My Fair lady', *Lychus* in Sophocles' 'The Trachiniae', *Grosvenor* in Gilbert and Sullivan's 'Patience'. Alex appears regularly as tenor soloist in and around Birmingham including a recent performance of Stainer's Crucifixion

DAVID MELLOR (Mr. Gobineau)

David has sung in every MMM production since 1985. Solo roles include *Betto* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Micha* and *Krusina* in 'The Bartered Bride', *Balthazar* in 'Amahl', *Zuane* in 'La Gioconda' and *Jobard* in 'Aunt Caroline's Will'. He sang his current rôle in the English Touring Opera Summer School's production of 'La Traviata' this summer, his third year at the school. He has also been a member of Royal Sutton Opera since 1981, where roles include *Zuniga* in 'Carmen', the *High Priest of Baal* in 'Nabucco', *Simone* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Monterone* in 'Rigoletto', the *Marquis of Calatrava* in 'The Force of Destiny', *Zaretsky* in 'Eugene Onegin' and the *Mandarin* in 'Turandot'.

PATRICIA NIXON (Baba - 'Madame FLora')

Pat has been a member of MMM for many years. Her first leading rôle with the society was *Messenger of Peace* in Wagner's 'Rienzi'. Following that, Pat performed numerous leading soprano rôles, including the *Fairy Queen* in 'Die Feen', Wagner's second opera. She has found every rôle extremely rewarding, but most memorable were the title rôle in 'Aida', *Lady M* in the Scottish Play and, of course, the title rôle in 'Turandot'. Pat has also produced operas for MMM and other local societies and is currently a Teacher of Speech, Drama and Singing.

LORRAINE PAYNE (Monica)

Lorraine started vocal training in 1991 and was introduced to Opera at MMM in 1992. Since then she has appeared as *Marguerite* in 'Faust', *Nedda* in 'I Pagliacci', *Marenka* in 'The Bartered Bride' and *Adina* in 'L'elisir D'Amore' along with many and varied concert appearances. With Consensus, Lorraine played *Cherubino* in 'The Marriage of Figaro'. Since 1999 Lorraine has been privately coached by international singer and Birmingham Conservatoire tutor, Margaret Field. Lorraine has a great love of oratorio and church music, folk music, and also sings and plays occasionally with her husband in a rock band.

JOHN READING (Foreman of the Jury)

John has sung many rôles in MMM productions and for other Operatic groups. His last rôle for MMM was *Micha* in 'The Bartered Bride'. He has also taken various rôles in Cincinnati Theatre Company productions, including the *Lion* in 'The Wizard of Oz', *Canon Chasuble* in 'The Importance of Being Earnest' and, last April, *Colonel Von Strohm* in 'Allo Allo'.

KYM SHEARGOLD (Mrs Gobineau / The Plaintiff)

Kym Sheargold was born in Birmingham and studied at Birmingham Conservatoire, gaining a Masters Degree in Music Performance. She has appeared in many operas as a professional and semi-professional singer, including 'Don Giovanni', 'Macbeth', 'Tales of Hoffman' and 'Carmen'. Kym is also a recital singer, specialising in twentieth-century music, and has premiered a number of contemporary works. She has sung on radio and TV, and these rôles are her first operatic appearances with Midland Music Makers. Kym currently studies with international performer Nicholas Clapton.

CLIVE THURSFIELD (The Judge)

Clive began singing with the Forward Operatic Company playing a number of rôles including *Prince Orlofsky* in 'Die Fledermaus' and *Allesando Dell Acqua* in Strauss's 'Night in Venice'. He has sung *Escamillo* in 'Carmen' with Kennet Opera and for Royal Sutton Opera has performed many major operatic rôles, including *Wagner* in 'Faust' and *Don Carlo* in 'Force of Destiny'. For Consensus Opera he has sung rôles including the *Count* in 'The Marriage of Figaro' and *M. Aristide de Chateau-Yquem* in 'Not in Front of the Waiter'. With MMM he has played *Marco* in 'Gianni Schicchi', *Iago* in 'Otello', *Prince Galitsky* in 'Prince Igor', *Valentin* in 'Faust' and *Dr. Dulcamara* in 'L'elisir D'Amore'.

EDD TURNER (Toby)

Edd has been acting, singing and dancing since he was two years old. He has appeared in many performances, both in amateur dramatics and professional shows. He has appeared in two films for channel four, and recorded a CD for schools. His main love is the theatre and this year he performed with the RSC in 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' for three months, a short spell with 'Toad of Toad Hall' at the Swan theatre and played *Romeo* in scenes from 'Romeo and Juliet' as part of 'Shakespeare on Love' at Hall's Croft Gardens in Stratford. Later this year he will also take the title role in Tom Stoppard's 'Fifteen Minute Hamlet,' for Second Thoughts.

PHIL YPRES-SMITH (Musical Director)

Phil Ypres-Smith began his musical career studying organ and singing at Birmingham School of Music, where he worked closely with the vocal department as an accompanist. He was also a student at the Opera School and, in following years, was invited to return as a visiting lecturer, coach, répétiteur and Musical Director. His Musical Direction for the Opera School has included "Don Giovanni", "Alcina", "Albert Herring" and many Workshop productions. Philip is an active singer (with a fine Counter Tenor voice). He is also a Singing Teacher and Vocal Coach. He accompanies in solo, instrumental and continuo works and has sung and accompanied for radio. Over the years, Philip has led many musical and choral groups and, as well as MD for MMM, he is currently Director of Music at St. George's, Edgbaston.

*Our policy is one of continuous recruitment in all sections,
and singers who are interested in joining us for any of the above events
are invited to use the form on the back cover of the programme or call
the New Members' Rep. Lorraine Payne on 01384 374 531*

Visit us on-line to keep up with news,
events and information.

www.midlandmusicmakers.org

MMM's web site is constantly changing
and adding new information. Visit our site
regularly to find out what's going on.



Royal Sutton Opera will perform

La Traviata

VERDI

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The Midland Music Makers are grateful to all the Friends listed above for their continued support, which helps us to continue our annual opera performances in spite of the ever-increasing costs. We shall be delighted to welcome new Friends and if you have enjoyed this evening and would like to become more closely associated with our efforts, please write to our President, Dr Arthur Street, 17 Maplebeck Court, Lode Lane, Solihull, B91 2UB. Alternatively, fill out the appropriate section overleaf and hand it to one of our stewards. To become a Friend you promise to donate not less than £5 per person per annum. (Arthur will send you annual reminders). Friends receive prior notice of our opera performances and concerts. Also we arrange a special social evening and concert to which all Friends are invited. The next Friends' Evening will be held on 8th January 2004.

MMM Needs You

Simply tick the section/s most appropriate to you, fill in your details and hand it to a member of the Society. Alternatively, post to Midland Music Makers at West View, South Avenue, Stourbridge, West Midlands, DY8 3XY

MEMBERSHIP

I would like to be considered for membership.

My voice range is: Soprano / Contralto / Tenor / Bass / Not quite sure.

(Children under 16 must have the permission of a parent / guardian)

I would like to take part in a non-singing rôle.

(In virtually every opera we require villagers, peasants, soldiers, children and general onlookers of all ages

- go on, try it, you may uncover secret thespian leanings)

I'm sure I could do something backstage: painting, scenery changes, design etc.

(You don't have to be Leonardo to help produce our imaginative sets)

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(see overleaf for details of what is involved in becoming a 'Friend')

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