

## Autumn 2017 - 'Hot Mikado'

After months of hard work and many frantic rehearsals, the Opening Night of 'Hot Mikado' arrived with a bang! The enthusiastic audience greeted the opening number with generous applause, which built and built until we and they just went wild in the Finale! Chorus and principals really rose to the occasion, which set us up for a really fantastic week which just got better and better, ending with a standing ovation at the conclusion of Last Night. What an amazing five days that was.

But how did we get to where we are now? Well... our investigations for shows in 2017 threw up a number of interesting possibilities, but then it was a question of finding production teams and working round their other commitments. We usually like to go for something a little more traditional in the autumn but have recently presented some excellent modern shows, so this time we decided to combine the two - a modern take on a traditional theme. In fact, we will be looking far to the East and dusting off our tap shoes in order to present that dynamic fusion of classic G&S satire and cool hipster style known as 'Hot Mikado'!

The score uses much of Sullivan's original music but is re-orchestrated using popular musical harmonies and arrangements from the 1940s and a wide range of styles including jazz, hot gospel, blues, rock, Cab Calloway swing and torch songs. The dances called for include the Lindy Hop, tap and the jitter-bug, with the cast costumed in zoot-suits, snoods, wedgies and felt hats all executed in the colourful silk kimono textures of Japan: something for everyone there then!

The Preview Evening, held in Quaker Hall, Beccles, on Monday 8th May, gave our Directors and Choreographer the opportunity to tell you all about the dynamic things they have lined up for us during the summer. The Read-Through then followed close behind on the 10th, when potential cast members could see exactly what every character gets up to. Following the Scat Singing Workshop on 13th May, next in line was a Dance/Movement Workshop on the 15th, when at least everyone got a good work-out even if we didn't exactly excel! And all too soon it was time for those going for a named role to show us how good they are, as the Principals' Auditions were held in Beccles Public Hall on 22nd & 24th May. As ever, there were many excellent performances on show, giving the audition panel their usual difficult task in deciding who to cast. We didn't get a full cast the first time round but after lots of diligent searching (and a certain amount of gentle arm-twisting!) we eventually managed to secure a full cast. Those taking us to Titipu via the Cotton Club were thus:-

Nanki-Poo -	Terry Boast	Yum-Yum -	Jo Forster	Ko-Ko -	Chris Steed
Katisha -	Harriet Chambers	Pooh-Bah -	Gary Watson	The Mikado	
-	Bob Sharman				
Pitti-Sing -	Emily Holt	Peep-Bo -	Ruth Alder	Pish-Tush -	
	Helen Watson				

Stage Direction was a joint effort between Jane Zarins & Christine Mullord, ably supported by Cerys Roscoe who dealt with choreography with Alice Cushing & Zak Poll also on the dance team. Stella

Browsea made a very welcome return as our Musical Director, so we had a really great team with loads of experience to carry us through!