

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY PRESENTS



# THE OR, THE WIDGET COMPANY CEO

Tickets at the Michigan Union Ticket Office (MUTO), 530 S. State St. - (734)-763-8587 - [mutotix.umich.edu](http://mutotix.umich.edu)

**FUMGASS Invited Dress Rehearsal**

**Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 @ 7:30 pm**

**Public Performances**

**Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 @ 2:00 pm & 8:00 pm**

**The Arthur Miller Theatre, 1226 Murfin Ave., Ann Arbor**

**"The C.E.O., or the Widget Company"**

**Adapted from "The Mikado, or the Town of Titipu"**  
**by W.S. Gilbert, with music by Arthur Sullivan**

**Adapted and Directed by David Andrews**

**Music Direction by Nada Radakovich**

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Any work of art, even in a renewable medium like the live theater, necessarily reflects the moment in time in which it was created. This adaptation, although it was written only three years ago, already feels nostalgic, due to the global pandemic that upended the working environment of millions. If it succeeds in connecting with an audience, it will be because it explores ideas that transcend the specific physical location in which those concepts are set.

The same can be said of its source material. W.S. Gilbert's libretto for *The Mikado* is pure fantasy, reflecting a social and legal framework that might have more properly been assigned to Iolanthe's fairyland rather than to either England or Japan. That it has remained popular for well over a century is more a tribute to Gilbert's wit and keen satiric sense (and to Sullivan's musical gifts), than it is to the location in which the narrative occurs.

However, in the interconnected world of the 21st century, Gilbert's decision to place his imaginary society in an existing country outside his personal experience has become understandably problematic, not least for its tradition of requiring performers to portray characters of another race. *The C.E.O., or The Widget Company* is an attempt to capture the best elements of *The Mikado*, in a setting where characters are defined only by what voice-part they sing.

Additionally, the environment you will see portrayed over the next two hours is one with which I have become especially familiar over the past 35 years. I hope that it is one you will find recognizably humorous as well. Welcome to Ann Arbor, the home of Worldwide Widgets!

--David Andrews

## The CEO

Act I. – A tavern off The Diag. Friday night.

Act II. – A quiet corner of The Arb. Saturday morning.

### ***Dramatis Personae:***

The CEO – Don Regan

Hugo – David Andrews

Fisher – Richard Harper

Jessica – Yulin Yu

Katya – Kristin Anne Danko

Zachary – Dean Joyce

Reuben – Matthew D Grace

Brielle – Lexi Pratt

Heidi (Evenings) – Beth Shippey Ballbach

Heidi (Matinee) – Audrey D’itri

Townies & Gownies – Beth Ballbach, Cynthia Butcher, Audrey D’itri, Fred Estabrook, Greg Jensen, Bob Neustifter, Heather Nordenbrock, Brynn Raupagh, Jeff Spindler, Amy Stilgenbauer, Andrew Wilson

### ***Production Staff:***

Director – David Andrews

Music Director – Nada Radakovich

Stage Mgr/Props – Lori Gould

Program Editor – Greg Jensen

Rehearsal Accompanists – Daniel Bachelis, Jordan McKay, Richard Alder

Co-Tech Directors – Jeff Spindler, John Ward

Lighting Design – Tiff Crutchfield

Asst. Set Designers – Cynthia Lempert, Elizabeth Druga

Lightboard Operators – Tate Zeleznik, Marina Lancaster

Asst. Director – Heather Nordenbrock

Accompanist – Ezra Donner

Set Designer – Laura Strowe

Supertitle operator – Colby Nordenbrock

Videographer – Cathryn Duran

Asst. Tech. Dir. – David Steiner

### ***Staff Bios:***

***David Andrews (Director, Hugo)*** This is David's ninth time directing for UMGASS, but his first time directing himself.

***Daniel Bachelis (Accompanist)*** is a graduate of Michigan State and is delighted to be accepted as a pianist in enemy territory.

***Beth Shippey Ballbach (Heidi, Chorus)*** is a frequent UMGASS performer and choreographer and is in her 38th semester with the group.

***Cynthia Butcher (Chorus)*** is having fun singing in this zany, one-of-a-kind light opera arrangement. She feels that together we are a well-oiled music machine!

***Tiff Crutchfield (Lighting Design)*** has lit nearly 200 productions over 20 years. He is lighting mentor and lights crew supervisor for Pioneer Theatre Guild and Community Ensemble Theatre in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, and other recent work includes shows for Randazzo Dance Company, Theatre NOVA, and the Croswell Opera House in Adrian.

***Audrey D’itri (Heidi, Chorus)*** This is Audrey's 3rd show with UMGASS and she is excited to be playing the role of Heidi!

***Kristin Anne Danko (Katya)*** is making her UMGASS debut. She is also the co-founder and Artistic Director of Neighborhood Theatre Group.

***Ezra Donner (Accompanist)*** got his start with UMGASS in a walk-on role in *The Grand Duke* in 2007 and has been a jolly tolloller ever since. He has served as Music Director and Rehearsal Pianist for nine previous productions with The Society and is glad to be returning once more for *The CEO*. He holds a Doctor of Music Degree from Indiana University and a Bachelor of Music with High Honors from the University of Michigan.

*Fred Estabrook (Chorus)* is thrilled to be back for his 14th show with new and familiar words and faces.

*Lori Gould (Stage Mgr., Props)* UMGASS Member since 1993, Lori has had a hand in more than 50 shows in the last 29 years. Chorus, Funny old ladies, director, backstage Props, on stage, she's done it!

*Matthew D Grace (Reuben)* is an UMGASS alum since 1987, he would like to thank the Right Honorable Beverly John Pooley for the actor he has become.

*Richard Harper (Fisher)* has done many productions of many types of theatrical works. This is one of them.

*Greg Jensen (Chorus, Programs)* started singing after age 50 and plans to eventually work his way from chorus up to Second Trombone. This is his 4<sup>th</sup> UMGASS show!

*Dean Joyce (Zachary)* is excited to make his UMGASS Debut wearing shreds and patches. A Registered Nurse by day, he is most passionate about singing and performing on stage.

*Robert Neustifter (Chorus)* is very happy to be in his first Gilbert & Sullivan production. And he is overjoyed to be doing it with UMGASS.

*Heather Nordenbrock (Asst. Director, Chorus)* is finishing up her 10th semester with UMGASS. She is grateful to be the mother of Lily, Colby, and Jackson.

*Lexi Pratt (Brielle)* is excited for her 3rd show with UMGASS and to get her chance at being a UM student.

*Nada Radakovich (Music Director)*, similarly to Greg, started conducting for real after age (not going to say). She may eventually work her way up to second trombone as well!

*Brynn Raupagh (Chorus)* joined UMGASS at age 50. As long as she stays safely in the chorus, she does not suffer from stage fright.

*Don Regan (The CEO)* and his character both have the unaccountable belief that in a previous life they ruled supreme in some East Asian country.

*Jeff Spindler (Co-Tech Director, Chorus)* has been involved with G&S since 1998, either onstage or offstage (sometimes when madness strikes, both).

*Amy Stilgenbauer (Chorus)* has worked tirelessly on the UMGASS board and is now tired.

*Laura Strowe (Set Designer)* has been working on UMGASS sets in some capacity since 1999 after being a G & S lover since childhood.

*Andrew Wilson (Chorus)* cut his teeth singing with the UM Men's Glee Club. Now an alum, this is his first UMGASS show!

*John Ward (Co-Tech Director)* is thrilled that this will be the fourth theater in which he will have worked on an UMGASS set.

*Yulin Yu (Jessica)* is a doctoral student studying Information Science at U of M. A lyric mezzo-soprano, she enjoys singing opera arias, classical & Chinese art songs in her spare time. This is her first opera production in life!

# FUMGASS

(rhymes with UMGASS)

We who have the disposition to admire G&S also have the good fortune to have the University of Michigan Gilbert and Sullivan Society available to us. In exchange for this inestimable privilege, we have joined FUMGASS. Membership in FUMGASS yields numerous benefits, including high ticket priority (second only to cast & crew), an invitation to an afterglow party, and the warm feeling that you have done The Right Thing. You also receive a subscription to GASBAG (Gilbert and Sullivan Boys and Girls), our magazine of scholarly articles, reviews, fun! and the latest news of G&S happenings locally and internationally. FUMGASS is a non-profit organization. We support UMGASS, and we support the University of Michigan Libraries. You can join FUMGASS by filling out the membership form below. Visit us in the lobby before and after the performance, or during intermission.



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at the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation provides annual financial support to UMGASS through its friends' organization FUMGASS. To make contributions to this fund, contact:

The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation  
at 734-663-3514 or [www.aaacf.org](http://www.aaacf.org)

See the C, see the E, see the O!  
See the new UMGASS musical show!  
Next time try something new —  
Join the cast, join the crew,  
Or join FUMGASS! That's so à propos.

*My check is enclosed for:*

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# Mikados



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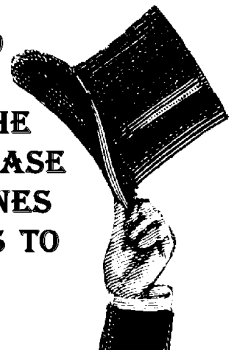
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YOU ARE KEEPING THE  
TRADITION ALIVE. PLEASE  
INVITE YOUR LOVED ONES  
AND THEIR LOVED ONES TO  
ENJOY OUR NEXT  
PRODUCTION!**



# JOIN US!

Do you “want to be in the room where it happens?”

*Improve your on-stage presence!*

Gain self-confidence - many of our performers are introverts, yet they get up on stage and sing to a crowd, and have fun doing it!

*Gain team management skills by joining the board or production staff!*

Gain valuable Tik-Tok performance skills!

*Students are especially welcome! Have fun without getting a grade!*

If you, your friend, someone you know, someone you met just today, or even your worst enemy are interested, join us! We'll soon find their talents and exploit them! Uhhh, help them shine!

Join us in Fall 2022 for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration and performance:

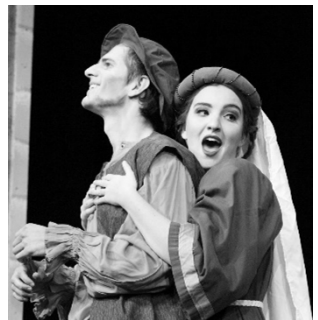
*The Pirates of Penzance, or The Slave of Duty.* December 8-11

Show your pirate head and your pirate heart! Climb over rocky mountains! Save poor wandering ones! Sing about the weather! Be a modern major general! Get engaged! And disengaged! Resolve a paradox! Pursue constabulary duties! Walk with cat-like tread!

Contact any cast or staff member for details or go to [UMGASS.org](http://UMGASS.org) and see for yourself! Also, find us on Facebook and Twitter!

Mass meeting in early September 2022 followed by auditions. Rehearsals begin shortly thereafter.

Contact the board about joining or anything else at:  
[UMGASSexec@umich.edu](mailto:UMGASSexec@umich.edu)



## UMGASS 75th Anniversary Celebration

This December, UMGASS will celebrate 75 years of theatrical excellence and tomfoolery. Anyone who has been an UMGASS member since 1947 at any time in any capacity is invited to attend.

If you would like to join us, please contact [fumgassexec@umich.edu](mailto:fumgassexec@umich.edu). Please pass the word to any of your UMGASS buddies and have them get in touch.