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The Mikado (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

A lighthearted burlesque of Victorian English culture and the vagaries of love, *The Mikado* offers an ideal matching of William Schwenck Gilbert's elegant comedic gifts with Arthur Sullivan's agile and refined musicianship. The tale unfolds amid a fanciful version of Japanese society, in which a wandering minstrel has the misfortune to fall in love with the beautiful ward of the Lord High Executioner of Titipu. The sparkling lyrics and witty dialogue of this comic masterpiece are as much a delight to read as they are to hear with musical accompaniment. The complete libretto is reprinted in this edition from the standard performance text of *The Mikado*, complete with nine charming illustrations drawn by W. S. Gilbert himself.

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Customer Reviews

This was a wonderful production from the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario, Canada. The cast is very strong, and benefits from being actors, as opposed to singers. The weakest link in the cast (and I think any one will agree with me) is Henry Ingram as Nanki-Poo, who is not an actor, just a singer. He's not the young, handsome type that one would like to see in the role, nor is he even all that funny. Marie Baron as Yum-Yum is high spirited, bubbly, and funny. Also exceedingly comical is Richard McMillan's Pooh-Bah, who steals the show. Eric Donkin is a perfect Ko-Ko, of the D'Oyly Care breed. Pish-Tush (Allen Stewart-Coates) is generally a non-descript, but is of strong voice and personality here, and is left to be fairly memorable. Karen Wood is PERFECT for the adorable

Pitti-Sing, and is cute and charming to boot! My least favorite presence in the cast, though, is Gidon Saks as The Mikado of Japan himself. Now, I love over the top performances, as you can tell from my praise of McMillan, but this one crosses the lines of what's bearable. I feel that a strong Mikado, next to being highly comical, should at least be somewhat intimidating. Saks just plays the Mikado as a big goofy man, that strikes fear into no one (except for the cast, for some strange reason). The production was brilliantly and swiftly staged by Brian MacDonald, who keeps everything comical and at a swift pace. (Incidentally, I did THE MIKADO myself this summer with the local G&S Society, a first-rate Summer Stock company. A Canadian tenor played Nanki-Poo, and he told me HORROR STORIES of what it was like for friends of his who have worked with Mr. MacDonald.

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