



WELCOME

Welcome! We are delighted that you have decided to audition for the Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Houston. The information contained here strives to provide an overview of the Society and its production values, as well as answer some of the questions you may have about the audition process.

We are proud that the Society's productions in the Hobby Center uphold the high standards of the Houston Theater District. While hard work is required in the short amount of rehearsal time, you can expect to have a lot of fun in the process!

AUDITIONS

During your audition, in addition to assessing your musical ability, stage presence, attitude and movement, the audition committee may also test your ability to take direction. Please do not be surprised if a committee member offers a suggestion or makes a request during your audition.

Auditions for principal roles are required *each* year. Keep in mind, you may be offered a role other than the one for which you auditioned. In addition, if we are not able to offer you a principal role, you may be invited to understudy a principal role and/or be a member of the chorus.

All returning Society Members interested in performing in the summer show chorus must reaudition each year to be considered.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Houston's chorus consists of 24 voices - 6 for each voice part. This is largely due to the dressing room shortage of space in The Hobby Center. If we are not able to offer you a place in the chorus, you may be invited to be placed on our alternates list and to fill a chorus slot should a place open prior to rehearsals.

Finally, while singing is paramount, Gilbert & Sullivan comic operas are fully staged productions, with all the dancing, posing and acting they entail. The auditions committee must take several factors into account when making their cast selections. Often, a good musical audition is not the only indication of an individual's eventual contribution as a performer or Society member.

REHEARSALS

A tentative rehearsal schedule is available at the time of auditions. Everyone auditioning is requested to list any known conflicts with this schedule at the time of auditions.

The schedule has been devised based on years of experience putting on our first-class productions and is the product of careful planning. The Artistic Director, Music Director and cast are all committed to rehearsals starting and ending on time. Respect for the time of others is vital for having harmonious and productive rehearsals.

UNDERSTUDIES

Each principal role will have an understudy - usually a member of our chorus - assigned to it. Understudies are expected during regular rehearsals and should be prepared to jump in whenever the principal role is being rehearsed in a separate room. Understudies must learn their staging by observation and will want to attend rehearsals on nights when the principal role is being rehearsed, even if the chorus has that rehearsal off.

Understudies are also invited to attend a special dialogue rehearsal hosted each year at the home of the Artistic Director.

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society is very proud of the quality of our understudies and may invite them to participate in promotional events leading up to the show. During the final week of rehearsals at Kinkaid School, it has become tradition to have a full run-through rehearsal with understudies assuming their principal roles! It's a special night in the rehearsal calendar each year for chorus, crew and production staff to come together and lend encouragement and support. As is often said, "Understudies are our insurance policies!"

OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE

The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Houston is a Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose Board of Directors works throughout the year to raise the approximately \$325,000 to underwrite our production and scholarships. That cost works out to approximately \$6500 per performer to put on our shows! In addition to providing your talent you will be expected to purchase your own score, pay for your own parking in downtown Houston, and provide personal items you may need (i.e. shoes and possibly a fall or hairpiece).

Each member of the cast is also required to become a member of the Society (annual fee = \$10). As part of this membership, each cast member receives 2 complimentary tickets to the production.

Closing night – the second Sunday performance – there is traditionally a cast-only Cast party which, while subsidized by the Society, may have a nominal cost for cast members.