

Cast chosen for spring musical *The Pirates of Penzance*

by Kristi McKim
features editor

Production for Behrend's first musical in over ten years, *The Pirates of Penzance*, is well underway with the completion of auditions late last week. Director Tony Elliot has carefully chosen the twenty-four member cast from the nearly-sixty students/faculty/community members who auditioned.

Last Monday and Tuesday, auditions were held in the Studio Theatre, with final cuts being made Thursday evening. At the first round of auditions, "we looked for the potential in the voice," states Elliot. Then, in deciding the roles for major characters, we "looked for personality. It's one thing to sing, another to 'sell' a song."

To cover effectively all aspects of this musical production, Elliot is assisted by Music Director Roberta Stoughton, a teacher of music and drama at Iroquois High School, and Choreographer Rich Tryzbiak. Stoughton has worked with the show a couple of times previous, coordinating and directing the music; Tryzbiak has also choreographed the musical before, and he has even held the roles of Pirate King and Frederic. "I'm the novice here," Elliot laughs, "that is part of the reason why this is fun for me."

Since most Behrend productions consist of an extremely small cast, the size of this cast is nearly four times larger than that of most shows. While most cast members are fairly new to the Behrend theater scene, the lack of a real Behrend musical theater tradition explains this sort of inexperience. "I've worked with very few of these people, so it is fun and scary," says Elliot. Nonetheless, nearly all the cast has strong backgrounds in vocal performance and/or acting.

"This is a big vocal show; every-

body has to hold their weight vocally," states Elliot. While all roles, whether lead or supporting characters, involve a considerable amount of stage time, the primary roles are those of the Major-General, Pirate King, Frederic, The Sergeant of Police, Ruth, Mabel, Edith, and Kate.

Selected as the overprotective patriarch, Major-General Stanley, Geoffrey Pieper, 06, Political Science, feels "quite privileged to be given a leading role, considering this is [his] first musical. Though the cast is inexperienced, they make up for it with enthusiasm." Though this will mark his debut role in musical theater, Pieper, a member of Behrend's Con-

to the pirates and loyalty to his own desires, Behrend theater veteran Michael Lechner, 06, Communications, states that "since this is my first musical, I'm very, very scared; but I'm extremely excited at the same time." Having starred as Haemon in *Antigone*, Henry Harry in *Brilliant Traces*, and Eddie in *Only You*, this production, in which he will portray the pirate apprentice, marks Lechner's fourth appearance in a Behrend production.

Daryl Dambaugh, 04, Business, who will play the role of the Sergeant of Police, is "looking forward to a great show. A lot of talent has come together to make this all happen, and

the most wonderful experiences of my life; I wanted to be able to do something like that again," states Foust.

In the role of Kate, a sister to Mabel, Lisa Perrette, 04, Political Science, "knows this will be a lot of work" but she is especially "looking forward to the choreography and singing. Everyone seems nice, and [she] is really excited to work with everyone." Though she has never acted in a musical before (except for the role of Dorothy in her sixth-grade production of *The Wizard of Oz!*), Perrette is involved with the Behrend Gospel Choir and Concert Choir. "I'm glad this campus is finally doing a musical," Perrette states.

Additional cast members include Jonelle Wilson as Ruth; Dawn Mitchell as Edith; Joel Gross as Samuel; Bond Davis, Buck Goedicke, John Grollier, John Hanley, and Larry Mitchell as Policeman/Pirates; Tom Burger, John Champagne, Leo Hanley, Aaron Horneman, George Morales, and Chris Reed as Pirates; Jennifer Jacob, Danielle Marshall, Tricia Michel, Alison Ollinger, and Amanda Pieper as Sisters.

Working as stage managers for the production will be Len Hupp, Jason Loucks, and Jennifer Quadri.

This dedicated ensemble, along with the triumvirate of directors, will be spending nearly 15-20 hours per week of rehearsal. Their first goal is to get vaguely familiar with their parts, and then they will break into smaller groups for more intense rehearsal.

"At its heart, this is a goofy story, extremely melodramatic and typical of the mid-nineteenth century Romantic comedy," states Elliot. "This is a very different style than we're used to."

To accommodate for such a new



photo by Erin Costello

At final cuts on Thursday, January 29, Alison Ollinger auditions for a vocal role.

style of theater at Behrend, extensive measures are being taken to ensure the quality of the production. This grand spectacle of musical theatre will take place in the Reed Commons (which, for this musical, will seat 250-300), a space which will better accommodate such a large production. A major difficulty is that the sets will have to be assembled in one place and then transferred to the Commons. Another setback lies in the fact that the room is not wired for lighting or acoustically accommodating for such vocal performances.

In addition to the technical challenges, Elliot laughingly states that, with the extremely large cast, this is a "scheduling nightmare." Though this may be a scheduling hassle for the cast and crew, there should be no hesitation for those theater/musical fans to schedule this production into their calendars; *The Pirates of Penzance* will be produced March 26, 27, 28, and 29.

Reservations can be made two weeks prior to production; ticket prices are \$3 for students, \$5 for general admission.

"Everyone's really talented; I've never worked with a more able cast. They learn so quickly; we'll have no problem being ready by show time."

R.J. Frelin
"Pirate King"

cert Choir, has had extensive work in solo/group vocal performance.

In the role of the Pirate King, R.J. Frelin, 08, Business/Liberal Arts/Sciences, hopes that *The Pirates of Penzance* "will be the start of a new musical tradition at Behrend." Having starred in high school/community productions (as Danny Zuko in *Grease*, Professor Harold Hill in *The Music Man*, and Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*), "it's been awhile since I've been in a musical, and I'm completely excited about this opportunity," states Frelin. "Everyone's really talented; I've never worked with a more able cast. They learn so quickly; we'll have no problem being ready by show time."

Chosen to act as Frederic, the charismatic young man torn between duty

I am excited to be a part of the cast." Having starred as the Scarecrow in his high school production of *The Wizard of Oz*, Dambaugh hopes to "bring experience from high school and put it toward this."

As Mabel, the young fair maiden who is a daughter to the Major-General and the love interest of Frederic, Gretchen Foust, 02, Business, also expresses extreme excitement for the musical. Having just transferred from the University of Richmond this semester, Foust is "glad [she] was able to participate here right off the bat. This is really special and exciting." Her previous musical experience includes starring roles as Sarah Brown in *Guys and Dolls* and the Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. "Those musicals were



photo by Erin Costello

Music Director Roberta Stoughton instructs Alison Ollinger and Gretchen Foust, while Marjorie Podolsky provides accompaniment on the piano.

ACROSS

- 1 Japanese entertainer
- 7 Streetcar
- 11 Steal
- 14 Tie with ropes
- 15 Distinctive air
- 16 Birthday number
- 17 In dreamland
- 18 "Hud" star Pat
- 19 Affirmative vote
- 20 Resolute
- 22 Cried loudly
- 24 Blighted tree
- 25 Attention-getting sound
- 28 Houdini's last name
- 29 Capital of Suriname
- 32 Cartoon portrait
- 35 Definite article
- 38 Tennis event
- 39 Typewriter roller
- 42 Quaker pronoun
- 43 Giraffe, formerly
- 47 Affirm
- 50 Country singer K.T. ___
- 52 Arkin or Bates
- 53 School org.
- 56 Word inventor
- 58 Trappers
- 61 Gore and Jarreau
- 62 Marine shockers
- 65 Garden blooms
- 66 Permit
- 67 Diligent devotion
- 68 Honshu city
- 69 Ninnyhammer
- 70 Form a vortex
- 71 Expressionless

- 11 "Goodfellas" co-star
- 12 Curved moldings
- 13 Necklace units
- 21 The one there
- 23 ___ of intrigue
- 26 Flightless bird
- 27 Disfigure
- 29 Dickens character
- 30 Solitaire starter
- 31 Changing schemes
- 32 Divide the deck
- 33 Cigar dropping
- 34 King's supporters
- 36 One of the girls
- 37 Ultimate act
- 40 Parcel of property
- 41 "The Naked ___"
- 44 Actress Gardner
- 45 Country singer Tillis
- 46 Time periods

DOWN

- 1 Woods clearing
- 2 Artist's stand
- 3 Arabic religion
- 4 Lean-to
- 5 Colors
- 6 Look
- 7 Khaki shade
- 8 Wish undone
- 9 Part of U.A.E.
- 10 Neighbor of Zimbabwe

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