

## THE SPIS

OR THE OPERA

*Thespis* takes place on the summit of Mount Olympus, where the gods of classic mythology still reside. A travelling theatrical company, headed by a comedian who modestly calls himself Thespis, appears at the top of the mountain. They have come to have a picnic, but here they meet Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, Diana and Mercury, all of whom, with the exception of Mercury, have grown deplorably old in body and mind, very much behind the times, and out-of-date. Thespis suggests that the gods take a trip incognito down to earth, and judge for themselves as to the best means of reviving their influence. The gods agree and descend to earth, leaving Mercury behind in case of any difficulty, while the actors and actresses take over the divinities' powers and identities. Predictably, the results are disastrous.

— from H. M. Walbrook's 1922 book, *Gilbert & Sullivan Opera*

*Thespis* was the first product of the long and fabulous collaboration between librettist William S. Gilbert and composer Arthur S. Sullivan. The opera opened on December 26, 1871 at the Gaiety Theatre, and ran for 64 performances. The score was never published and, except for a few fragments, was almost completely lost.

The Durham Savoyards, Ltd. is proud to present *Thespis, or The Gods Grown Old* with new music composed by our own Alan Riley Jones.



**The Durham Savoyards, Ltd.**



presents

## THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or *The Slave of Duty*

**Gilbert & Sullivan's**  
most famous musical comedy

April 15-17 & 22-24, 2005, 8pm

**The Carolina Theatre**

309 West Morgan Street  
Durham, North Carolina



*This program is made possible in part through gifts to the Durham Arts Council United Arts Fund and support from the City of Durham, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.*

The  
**Durham  
Savoyards,  
Limited**

presents

# THE SPIS



or

**The Gods Grown Old**

Libretto and Lyrics by  
William S. Gilbert

Music by  
Alan Riley Jones

A Concert Reading  
Saturday, November 6, 2004

7:30pm

D&I Theatre

Durham Arts Council

# THE SPIS

OR  
The Gods Grown Old

Directed by  
ALAN RILEY JONES

Accompanied by  
J. SAMUEL HAMMOND

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

### GODS AND OLYMPIANS:

#### AGED DEITIES:

*Jupiter*..... Michael Hale Gray  
*Apollo*..... Bill Chamberlain  
*Mars*..... Steve Dobbins  
*Diana*..... Olive McKrell  
*Mercury*..... John Adams  
*Solo Star*..... Karen E. Gray

### THESPIANS:

*Thespis*..... Richard Dideriksen  
*Sillimon*..... Steve Dobbins  
*Timidon*..... Michael Rowe  
*Sparkeion*..... Chris Newlon  
*Nicemis*..... Ann Marie Thomas  
*Pretteia*..... Laurie Siegel  
*Daphne*..... Evelyn McCauley  
*Tipseion*..... Pam Guidry-Vollers  
*Prepostoros*..... Bobby Cameron  
*Stupidas*..... Emily Harville  
*Cymon*..... David Smith

CHORUS OF OLYMPIANS AND THESPIANS..... Chris Andrews, Kay Bailey,  
Cathy Lambe, Teme Levbarg, Ann McCloskey, Daryn O'Shea,  
Dierdre Shipman, Lisa Tranquillo, Joyce Walworth

This premiere concert reading of Gilbert & Jones's *Thespis* has been made possible through the generosity of the Friends of the Durham Savoyards, Ltd., with the support and encouragement of the Board of Governors, and by the tireless work of many behind-the-scenes volunteers. Thank you, one and all.

# THE SPIS

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### OVERTURE

#### ACT I: RUINED TEMPLE ON THE SUMMIT OF OLYMPUS

"Throughout the Night the Constellations" .. *Solo Star, Chorus of Stars*  
"Oh, I'm the Celestial Drudge"..... *Mercury*  
"Oh, Incident Unprecedented" .. *Mercury, Mars, Apollo, Diana, Jupiter*  
"Here Far Away From All the World" ..... *Sparkeion, Nicemis*  
"Climbing Over Rocky Mountain"..... *Timidon, Pretteia, Daphne, Sillimon, Chorus of Thespians*  
"Once Knew a Chap" ..... *Thespis, Chorus of Thespians*  
RECITATIVE: "Presumptuous Mortal" ..... *Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, Thespis*  
FINALE: "So That's Arranged" ..... *Jupiter, Apollo, Diana, Mercury, Thespis, Sparkeion, Nicemis, Timidon, Daphne, Chorus of Thespians and Olympians*

#### ACT II: THE SAME SCENE, WITH THE RUINS RESTORED

"Of All Symposia" ..... *Sillimon, Chorus of Thespians*  
"Little Maid of Arcadee" ..... *Sparkeion*  
"Olympus Is Now in a Terrible Muddle"..... *Mercury*  
"You're Diana, I'm Apollo" ..... *Sparkeion, Daphne, Nicemis, Thespis*  
"Oh Rage and Fury!"..... *Apollo, Mars, Jupiter*  
RECITATIVE AND SCENE: "Oh Monster!" ..... *Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, Thespis, Mercury, Cymon, Timidon, Tipseion, Thespians*  
FINALE: "We Can't Stand This" ..... *Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, Nicemis, Daphne, Sparkeion, Thespis, Thespians and Olympians*

## ABOUT THE COMPOSER

ALAN RILEY JONES has performed on the Durham Savoyards' stage for many years, and first came to the director's podium in 2003 for the acclaimed *The Mikado*, followed by the ghoulishly clever *Ruddigore* earlier this year. He returns now with his own original version of *Thespis*. With Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from East Carolina University, Alan is a twenty-year veteran of Triangle area theaters. Besides performing, Alan enjoys composing and arranging choral music, especially for the Raleigh-based Oakwood Waits, for whom he has served as rehearsal conductor. In 1995, he was a contributing songwriter for the Raleigh Ensemble Players' staging of Lee Smith's novel, *The Devil's Dream*. In 1996, Alan's original musical drama, *Ladri Waits*, was performed by Perihelion Theater at the Carrboro ArtsCenter. His inspiration for *Thespis* came some years ago while reading the libretto. Gilbert's words began calling up tunes, "remembered" melodies never heard before, insisting to be written down. The work is truly a labor of love.