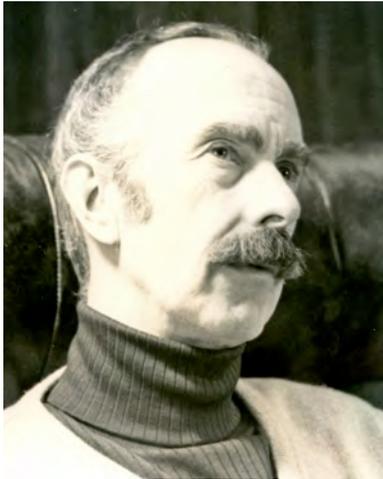


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Contact: Joanne Kay, Sarah Vardigans
Email: press@lamplighters.org
Phone: 415-227-4797
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Lamplighters Music Theatre Mourns the Death of Beloved Co-founder Orva Hoskinson



SAN FRANCISCO, California (27 January, 2017) – Orva Hoskinson, co-founder of San Francisco’s Lamplighters Music Theatre, passed away on Thursday, January 26, 2017. He was 92. —Orva co-founded the Lamplighters with Ann Pool Mac Nab in the summer of 1952. From the beginning, their intention was to bring the Gilbert & Sullivan canon to audiences in productions of the very highest possible artistic professional caliber within the limitations imposed on what was at the time a small group of semi-professional and amateur performers drawn from the San Francisco Bay Area community.

As well as being one of the Lamplighters’ most important leading performers through the years, Orva remained the Company’s most important and influential director, training generations of Lamplighter performers both directly and by example not only in the history and style of Gilbert & Sullivan, but in singing, acting, and all the arts of stage performance. For many Lamplighters, he was their most important theatrical guide, mentor and inspiration.

It is sadly fitting that Orva should pass as the Lamplighters prepare their new production of the show with which he is most intimately associated – both as actor and as stage director – Gilbert & Sullivan’s *Patience*. *Patience* has been a perennial favorite throughout Lamplighters history since the Company’s original production in March and April, 1958, which was, according to Lamplighters history books, “patently designed around Hoskinson as Reginald Bunthorne and [Lamplighters contralto June] Wilkins as Lady Jane,” with “Hoskinson’s most famous characterization spr[inging] into being almost full-grown”. As Robert Commanday put it once in a Chronicle review: “Well, there was Gielgud’s Hamlet, and there is Hoskinson’s Bunthorne.”



Lamplighters Artistic Director Rick Williams and Resident Music Director Baker Peebles stated that “Orva taught each of us just about everything we know on the subjects of acting, character, musicality, good taste, and honest good humor

onstage. Not only that, he accomplished this by both precept and example, with the most beneficent guidance, gentle coaching, patient instruction, love of the art, and sheer affection for the Company and its members. Almost every day there is something that reminds us both how incredibly lucky we were to be guided to find the Lamplighters, and to be mentored by this incomparable man. We all owe him so much. Through founding the Lamplighters, his progeny now extend worldwide.”

In his honor, the Lamplighters are dedicating their upcoming production of *Patience*, directed by Artistic Director Emeritus Barbara Heroux, to the memory of Orva Hoskinson.

Full details of *Patience* are posted at <http://lamplighters.org/season/season.html>. For further information call 415-227-4797 or email info@lamplighters.org.

Lamplighters Music Theatre was founded in 1952 to produce the comic operas of librettist W.S. Gilbert and composer Arthur Sullivan, and is now recognized as one of the world’s pre-eminent Gilbert & Sullivan companies. The Lamplighters’ repertoire includes all the surviving works of these creative geniuses, as well as a select group of comic operas and classic musicals by other composers that exemplify their artistic vision. Critically acclaimed artistic successes for the Lamplighters include honors for Best Production and Best Director at the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival in Buxton, England and local awards in nearly every performance, direction, and design category, including Outstanding Production of a Musical at the 2015 Theatre Bay Area Awards for *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The hallmarks of a Lamplighters production are lavish costumes and sets, live orchestra, excellent comic acting, and gorgeous unamplified singing that showcases the beauty and purity of the human voice. The Lamplighters made Gilbert & Sullivan history earlier this year by transporting *The Mikado*, a work often criticized as being racist “yellowface”, from Japan to Renaissance Italy, resulting in an artistic triumph and a step forward for equity in the arts.

Photo credits:

Orva Hoskinson, Photo by the Lamplighters

Orva Hoskinson as Bunthorne and June Wilkins as Lady Jane, *Patience* 1975, Photo by the Lamplighters