

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Lamplighters Music Theatre presents**  
**Lerner & Loewe's**  
***MY FAIR LADY***

**Stage Director: Barbara Heroux**  
**Conductor: Brett Strader**  
**Choreographer: Erica Smith**  
**Costume Design: Melissa Wortman**

415-227-4797 ★ [www.lamplighters.org](http://www.lamplighters.org)  
Tickets: \$14-50

A delightful blend of intellect, wit, rhythm, and high spirits, *My Fair Lady* was a raving success from the moment it opened on March 15, 1956. Greats such as Noël Coward, Cole Porter, and Rodgers & Hammerstein had all turned down the opportunity to transform George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* to musical form on the grounds that Shaw's play was too perfect to tamper with. When Lerner & Loewe finally accepted the challenge they began in 1952 and worked on it for six months before giving it up as impossible - the play violated several key rules for constructing a musical: the main story was not a love story, there was no subplot or secondary love story, and there was no place for an ensemble. But in 1954 they took another go at it, and this time stuck with it until completion. And oh, what a show it was!

**SYNOPSIS:**

Professor Higgins - a brilliant, crotchety expert in phonetics - bets his house guest, fellow linguist Colonel Pickering, that he can turn Eliza Doolittle, a cockney flower girl with a horrendous accent, into a refined lady in 6 months, simply by teaching her to speak properly (*Why Can't the English?*) Eliza, who wishes to better herself (*Wouldn't It Be Lovely*), moves in and begins her difficult tutoring. Her good-for-nothing father, Alfred (*With a Little Bit of Luck*),

finds out that she is living in Higgins' house and shows up looking for a hand-out. Higgins, fascinated by Alfred's earthy philosophy, gladly obliges. The grueling training in speech continues, and with Higgins viewing Eliza not as a person, but rather as raw material on which to experiment (*I'm an Ordinary Man*); she soon begins to dream of different ways in which he might meet an untimely demise (*Just You Wait*). Progress is slow (*The Servants Chorus*) but - just as they are about to give up - Eliza has a burst of eloquence and they realize she has broken through (*The Rain in Spain, I Could Have Danced All Night*).

Next, Higgins decides to test Eliza's progress by taking her to Ascot (*Ascot Gavotte*) - a leading racecourse associated with the British Royal Family due to its close proximity to Windsor Castle. Instructed to stick to the topics of the weather and everyone's health, Eliza impresses the upper-crust crowd with her polite manners and eloquence but shocks with her cockney attitude and slang. She does, however, win the heart of Freddy Eynsford-Hill, a fatuous young aristocrat who falls head-over-heels for her (*On The Street Where You Live*).

After more unending hours of coaching, the final test is the night of the Embassy Ball (*Embassy Waltz*). Exquisitely attired, and in every sense the well-groomed lady, Eliza carries herself with the utmost poise, and even Higgins has to admit she is more beautiful than he could have imagined. At the ball the triumph becomes complete as the guests, including rival linguist, Zoltan Karpathy, are convinced she is a Hungarian princess. Back home everyone praises Higgins for his success and he basks, self-satisfied in his achievement (*You Did It*). Eliza, angry that she is not being given credit for her part in the success (*Just You Wait* reprise), runs out of the house and into Freddy's arms (*On The Street Where You Live* reprise). He begins to tell her how much he loves her, but she cuts him off saying she has heard enough words; if he really loves her, he must show it (*Show Me*). They return to the flower market of her upbringing where nobody recognizes her, including her father, who is drunk and dressed to the nines. When he does finally realize who she is Doolittle confesses that, during her training, Higgins had referred all his speaking engagements to him, and now that he is a wealthy and respectable man he is forced to marry Eliza's "stepmother", the woman he has been living with for many years (*Get Me To The Church On Time*).

Higgins is disturbed that Eliza has run off and, concluding that men (especially himself) are far superior to women (*A Hymn to Him*), he ventures to seek advice from his mother - only to find Eliza there seeking warmth and sympathy. Again, they exchange words and Eliza runs out threatening to marry Freddy, declaring that she was foolish to think that she needed Higgins (*Without You*). Mrs. Higgins imparts some advice about love and women and for once Higgins is inclined to listen. He returns home, cursing Eliza's ingratitude, but, admitting that he is lonely (*I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face*), plays some early recordings of her voice to cheer himself up. Suddenly the voice is live; Eliza has returned.

**CAST:**

Eliza Doolittle	- Sharon Rietkerk
Henry Higgins	- Tom Reardon*
Colonel Pickering	- Bruce Hoard
Alfred P. Doolittle	- Geoff Hoyle*†
Freddy Eynsford-Hill	- Nick Volkert
Jamie	- John Brown
Harry	- Chris Uzelac
Mrs. Pearce	- Kelly Powers
Mrs. Higgins	- Shelley Lynn Johnson
Mrs. Eynsford-Hill	- Leontyne Mbele-Mbong
Zoltan Karpathy	- Ray Thackeray (Alfred Doolittle understudy)

**Ensemble:**

Kayra Nicole Arias, Joshua Beld\*, Marisa Binder, Dennis Chase, Ron Dritz, Rose Frazier, Mark Hodgson\*, Kristen Jones, Fionna Lane\*, Eliza Leoni, Benjamin Liupaogo\*, William Loney, Erin Lucas, Hestia Lucchese, Gregory Marks, Julia Norton\*, Michele Schroeder\*, Daniel T. Schultz\*, Chris Shuford, Arie Singer, William Weidner.

\* Lamplighters debut

† The Actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

**QUOTES:**

“... a rich treat for the eyes, ears and mind... the show is breathtaking... as good as you can get.”

Pat Craig, The Contra Costa Times

*"one of the best musicals of the century ... close to the genius of creation"*

NY Times theatre critic, Brooks Atkinson, commenting on the original production

*"... a rare combination of first rate professionalism and outpouring of pure joy."*

Lucy Simon, Composer of *The Secret Garden*

*"The Lamplighters is a San Francisco tradition ranking somewhere between sourdough bread and cable cars"*

Robert Commanday, Editor, San Francisco Classical Voice

**VENUES:**

**Leshner Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek**

**925-943-7469 • [lesherartscenter.org](http://lesherartscenter.org)**

**Tickets: \$17-50**

Thursday 30th July 8pm

Friday 31st July 8pm

Saturday 1st August 2pm & 8pm

**Napa Valley Opera House, Napa (Concert version)**

**707-226-7372 • [nvoh.org](http://nvoh.org)**

**Tickets: \$38-43**

Friday 7th August 8pm

Saturday 8th August 8pm

Sunday 9th August 2pm

**Novellus Theater at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco**

**415-978-2787 • [ybca.org](http://ybca.org)**

**Tickets: \$14-47**

Friday 14th August 8pm

Saturday 15th August 2pm & 8pm

Sunday 16th August 2pm

Friday 21st August 8pm

Saturday 22nd August 2pm & 8pm

Sunday 23rd August 2pm

**Bankhead Theater, Livermore**

**925-373-6800 • [livermoreperformingarts.org](http://livermoreperformingarts.org)**

**Tickets: \$16.50-43**

Saturday 29th August 2pm & 8pm

Sunday 30th August 2pm

## **COMPANY PROFILE:**

**Lamplighters Music Theatre** is recognized as one of the top Gilbert & Sullivan companies in the world, and is one of the oldest continuously performing theatres in the Bay Area. Since the company's founding in 1952, Lamplighters Music Theatre has been dedicated to upholding the tradition of light opera and musical theatre, particularly through the production of the operettas of W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. The company has produced the entire Gilbert and Sullivan canon as well as other light opera and musical theatre classics such as *The Merry Widow*, *Die Fledermaus*, *The Secret Garden*, and *My Fair Lady*. The hallmarks of a Lamplighters production are lavish costumes, live orchestra, excellent, often comedic acting and unamplified singing that showcases the beauty of the human voice.