Pirates played with conviction

THE ARTS OF PENZANCE
MIT Gilbert & Sullivan Players, Conducted by Steven McDonald, Stage Direction by Marion Lewis Carroll. Reviewed November 20.

By Omar A. Richardson-Sutherland

What happens when a music critic and lyricist collaborate to create a musical which takes us on an adventure on the high seas and tempers it with a Shakespearean romance, a young apprentice's devotion to duty, and a spirit of recklessness abandoned? Why, none other than the incomparable Pirates of Penzance, of course!

All the parts in this production by the MIT Gilbert and Sullivan Players were played with the utmost conviction, and a teddy bear lent a refreshing childishness to the annoyingly impeccable maturity of Frederick and his nurse, Ruth (Carrie Nafeway). What can one say of the Major-General (Shawn J. Rapaport)? From his world-shaking cries of "I am (almost) on the brink of an idea!" to his shattering rendition of "I carry you in my heart," he played his role with all of the respect one owes to royalty, but with the sensitivity to complement his loyalty.

In the beginning of Act II, we saw premonitions of Shirley Temple outtakes with the coordinated marital jitters in their finest form. Frederick's escorts acted with the coordinated choreography of the Keystone Kops, and form a titillating mixture of conviction and chaos.

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