



Craven's Utopia 1893



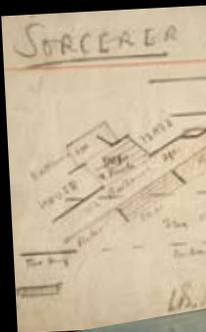
Ricketts' Gondoliers 1926

BACKDROP TO A LEGEND

D'Oyly Carte Scenic Design over 100 years

Raymond Walker & David Skelly

Described as the Rollins & Witts of scenic design, the book traces the history of scenery from 'Thespiis' to the final 1982 performances.



Goffin's Patience 1957



Raphael's Mikado 1908

SALE OF SCENERY FROM
There is a unique sale on to-day, one all true Savoyards. Under some gloomy worth, there is being offered for sale cloths, and borders that have been



Adams' Iolanthe 1919



Craven's Yeomen 1897



“Backdrop to a Legend”

The century-long presentation of the Gilbert and Sullivan Operas by the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company is shown in the context of its scenic history over one hundred and ten years. This hardback volume of 250 pages printed on heavy-weight paper is a Limited Edition and available for advance subscription only.

Introduction Setting the scene

Chapter 1 The D'Oyly Carte's Company: W.S. Gilbert and key members of the company including Gordon, Lloyd, Riley, Heyland.

Chapter 2 Early theatre design: A history of staging. Theatre lighting from gas to electricity. The Savoy system. The lives and working practices of scenic artists and painters within their profession. The scenic artists' craft and their working traditions. The Painting Rooms of London. Where the D'Oyly Carte scenery was made. The D'Oyly Carte stores (“the best run theatrical stores in the capital”). Transportation for early touring by rail. Goffin's Unit Set. The practicalities of touring for 48 weeks a year. What happened to the old scenery.

Chapter 3 Scenic design: Chronological listing of scenery changes that took place from 1871 to 1982, including the premières. Biographies of the 41 scenic artists and designers who worked for the company.

Chapter 4 The D'Oyly Carte Opera settings over 100 years: Rare photographs and artwork for each opera over the decades, including discussion of their scenic qualities.

Chapter 5 North America and the Antipodes: The scenic presentation of the operas in the USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand and Europe. Scenery organisation for *The Pirates of Penzance* and following American premières. Transportation of scenery. Rare photographic evidence of the early Australian productions.

Chapter 6 Epilogue

Appendices of equipment, Bibliography, Index

Outstanding Features

There is much fresh biographical information about the D'Oyly Carte family, key Company personnel, scenic artists, designers and painters, all collated in one volume.

The book is copiously illustrated with rare photographs of sketches and drawings of scenery, theatrical conditions, scenic workshops, lighting and those responsible for the visual presentation of the Savoy Operas. Never before has such a high level of research from so many sources resulted in the presentation of such a complete a picture of the internal workings of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company.

The cost is expected to be £70 by advance subscription. The Limited Edition copies will be numbered with the subscribers listed within. A discount of 10% will be given to those who place advance orders before the end of November 2017.

Publication date is to be fixed. Postage will be charged at cost within the UK, America and Australasia.

Please send an email to David Skelly at Turbotston, Coole, Mullingar, Co. Westmeath N91 NR71, Ireland – [skelly.oliver@yahoo.ie] or Raymond Walker at 6 Lindow Fold, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 6DT – [raymondwalker@talktalk.net] to declare an intent to purchase.

No money need be sent at this stage.