

Mikado Character Notes

As potentially the best known operetta in the G&S canon there isn't much I can tell you about the characters in The Mikado that hasn't been said a million times before. As is my way I'm looking to make the production vibrant, relevant and perhaps a little off kilter. I'm open to all interpretations and look forward to seeing what you can bring to the party. The descriptions below give the basics - we can build on that together.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at raeannlamond@gmail.com.

Ko-Ko, The Lord High Executioner of Titipu (comic Baritone):

Ko-Ko is the core of this operetta. The audience needs to root for him, disapprove of him, feel sorry for him, laugh at him, laugh with him and enjoy his trials and tribulations. Ko-Ko drives the actions and bounces off every other character at some point in the operetta. Stamina, diction and likeability are key.

Nanki-Poo, The Son of the Mikado, disguised as a Wandering Minstrel (Tenor):

Nanki-Poo is a trombone player who travels from town to town, but he has a family secret that will cause trouble for Ko-Ko. Nanki-Poo is also in love with Yum Yum. Classic handsome hero tenor lead on paper, but what we take to the stage could be something a lot more interesting...

The Mikado Of Japan (bass or bass/baritone):

A cameo role that appears only in act 2 - but what an entrance. The Mikado has presence and stature and can hold a room with only a look. There is scope for some lurking in the Male chorus in act one.

Pooh-Bah, Lord High Everything Else (baritone):

Pompous, entitled, greedy, selfish, self serving and pleased with himself. Pooh-Bah is a monster, but a monster with some of the biggest laughs in the show. The balance of loathesome but likeable is tricky to strike.

Pish-Tush, A Noble Lord (baritone):

It's always nice to see a Pish-Tush who brings more than exposition to the party. A foil for Pooh-Bah no doubt, but he also needs to have his own character. The script doesn't give much away so the page is wide open as to what this noble lord is like.

Yum-Yum, A Ward of Ko-Ko and engaged to Nanki-Poo (soprano):

Yum-Yum is the top dog of the maids from school. She's beautiful, she's vain, she's intelligent and she takes herself very seriously - but she also has to be likeable. It's a much meatier role than some of the G&S sopranos and it will be great to create a fully rounded character for her.

Pitti-Sing, A Ward of Ko-Ko (mezzo soprano):

The classic buddy role. This is a nice and busy mezzo part for someone with a flair for physical comedy. The character gets stuck in and is possibly smarter than everyone else put together.

Peep-Bo, A Ward of Ko-Ko (soprano or mezzo soprano):

A small but killer role. Has potential to bring down the house with one line and a look in act 2. Will fit with Yum-Yum and Pitti-Sing but also needs to lead the ladies of the chorus, so possibly the most important of the maids.

Katisha, An Elderly Lady in love with Nanki-Poo (Alto):

Larger than life in all respects, Katisha needs to be terrifying. Even when she's being sweet, she's terrifying. This role demands a scene stealing performance - but there's also a person in there and it would good to bring out the heart of the spurned and disappointed woman too.