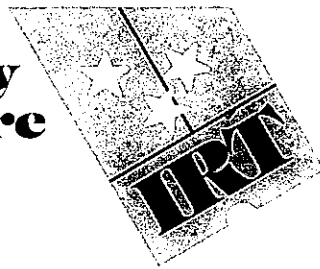


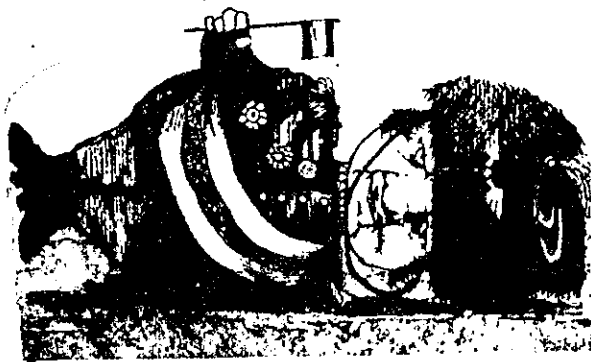


# Celebrate

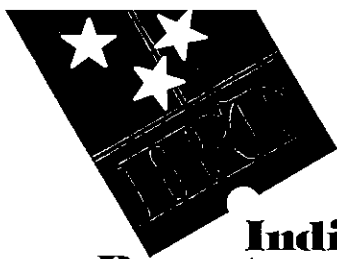
**Indiana  
Repertory  
Theatre**



**OPERETTA,  
MY DEAR WATSON**



**1981-82 Student Matinees**



**Indiana  
Repertory  
Theatre**

**Tom Haas**, Artistic Director  
**Benjamin Mordecai**, Producing Director

Dear Teacher:

We would like to welcome you and your student group to the 1981-82 student matinee series.

The enclosed study guide is meant to provide some informational context for the play, which you can use to stimulate discussions with your students both prior to and upon the conclusion of the performance. To supplement the educational experience, we will hold a question and answer session immediately following each student performance so that your students may interact with a group of the actors directly. During this period, your students are welcome to inquire about all aspects of the professional theatre as well as any specific questions they may have about the text or production.

We hope that the entire experience of the student matinee will provoke interest in your students both for the specific performance text but also for the event of the theatre in general.

Cordially,

Janet Allen  
Literary Manager

## The Holmes Legacy

"It is wonderful," he cried. "Your merits should be publicly recognized. You should publish an account of the case. If you won't. I will for you."

With these lines, an unknown Victorian author, whose name was to be far overshadowed by his famous creations, ended what he believed to be a single, relatively minor short novel. Little did he realize that he had created two of the most famous fictional characters ever written in any language, whose serialized adventures were to be clamored after by two generations of readers during his lifetime, and many other generations after his death. This author was A. Conan Doyle, who first picked up the pen only to supplement the income of his fledgling medical practice. The speaker of the premonitory lines was Doyle's fictional counterpart, "the most famous and beloved physician in literature," Dr. John Watson. The subject of his wonderment was, of course, "the most convincing, the most brilliant, the most congenial and well-loved of all the detectives of fiction," Sherlock Holmes.

While dramatic renderings of the Holmes/Watson partnership have touched on many incidents from the later years of their alliance, none recount the early days of 221B Baker Street, when each of their eccentricities was a source of amazement and occasional irritation to the other. Imagine, as we have, a Holmes yet unaccustomed to the deerstalker, and a Watson who was not yet fully aware of his position as the resident Boswell; that is, a Watson who was observing for the first time the detective procedures whose documentation was to make him, and his diffident cohort, famous. In OPERETTA, MY DEAR WATSON, Holmes and Watson embark on their partnership in detection with an imaginative and fun-

loving journey through the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

The Holmes and Watson we meet in OPERETTA, MY DEAR WATSON are drawn from some of their earliest chronicled adventures. They have only recently met, as popular history recalls, in the laboratory of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, introduced by a mutual friend who knew that both were seeking a roommate with whom to share lodgings. Watson, the narrator of their many episodes, recalls fondly in A STUDY IN SCARLET that when he first laid eyes on his future partner, Holmes greeted him with the now famous phrase, "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive," to which Watson replied in a manner which was soon to become familiar to him, "How on earth did you know that?" But Holmes, returning to the chemical experiment that was engrossing him, merely replied, "Never mind," and the rest, so to speak, became literary history.

The names Holmes and Watson are known virtually around the world, but even Doyle could hardly have predicted the accuracy of his observations printed in the preface to one of the early collections of Holmes stories, "I trust the younger public may find these romances of interest, and that here and there one of the older generation may recapture an ancient thrill." The modesty of this legacy now strikes us, more than fifty years after the author's death, when we consider the many forms in which Holmes and Watson still live for us today in films, recordings, plays, societies, memorials, foreign language editions, games, puzzles, cartoons, and fictional spinoffs. It is certainly an understatement to assert that Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes have grown deeply into our cultural consciences. Like the Greek gods, they figure so vividly in our heritage that it is difficult to remember that they did not really exist.

# Sherlock Holmes- a short biography

HOLMES, Sherlock, private consulting detective; b. Jan. 1854, of family of English country squires; g.g.s. of Carle Vernet, French painter. Educ.: public school; Cambridge University; St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Discovered new test for bloodstains, superseding old guaiacum test; in private consultative practice from 1886, disappeared and erroneously reported killed, Reichenbach Falls, Switzerland, 4 May 1891; explored Tibet, under the name of Sigerson, 1891-92, also the Far and Near East; returned to professional practice in London, April 1894, and completed destruction of Professor Moriarty's criminal organisation; retired to small farm near Eastbourne, Sussex, 1903, devoting himself to bee-keeping and philosophy; confidential mission to Shantung for the Admiralty, 1914; undertook (under the name of Altamont) a German espionage case, 1912-14, instrumental in the capture of the international spy, Von Bork; accounts of more celebrated cases edited by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the historical novelist, q.v. from notes by Dr. John H. Watson: *A Study in Scarlet*, 1887; *The Sign of the Four*, 1890; *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, 1905; *The Valley of Fear*, 1915; *His Last Bow*, 1917; *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*, 1927. Publications: *The Blanched Soldier*, *The Lion's Mane* (accounts of cases); *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture with Some Observations on the Segregation of the Queen*; numerous technical monographs relating to criminology, music, and scientific subjects; has been working for many years upon a work to focus the whole art of detection into one volume. Recreations: criminology, sensational literature, chemistry, music, the violin, boxing, fencing, baritsu, philosophy, bee-keeping. Address: 221B Baker Street, NW1. Club: Diogenes.

This entry for *Who's Who* appears with the kind collaboration of the publishers, Messrs. Adam & Charles Black, and the Library Committee for the Borough of St. Marylebone.

Sherlock Holmes as played on the stage by William Gillette and drawn in 1901 by "Spry" for "Vanity Fair". Right: A composite picture of Holmes and some of his most famous cases by Sidney Paget, his most famous illustrator, for "The Strand Magazine".

