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For Immediate Release
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 Monday, February 6, 2006

Day Of Opera Transforms Cultural Center Into A Wonderland Of Music

2nd Annual Cultural Center Day of Opera Sunday, February 19, 1-5 pm

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs continues its Sunday Salon Series of innovative music and performance programs in 2006 with the 2nd Annual Cultural Center Day of Opera on Sunday, February 19, from 1 to 5 pm. The Chicago Cultural Center, a 107-year-old Beaux-arts palace located at 78 East Washington Street, transforms into a wonderland of opera music for this special event. Visitors have the opportunity to hear six talented Chicago ensembles, including some of the area's finest young singers, performing under one roof.

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The event features a range of operas, from 17th century Italy to contemporary America, as well as scenes from favorites like Verdi's *La Traviata*. All scenes are under 30 minutes each, and many are sung in English. There are **six rooms of operatic scenes** by Mozart, Beethoven, Mechem, Humperdinck, Britten, Cavalli, Menotti, and Verdi, featuring performances by talented students from DePaul, Northwestern, and Roosevelt universities, as well as OperaModa, Intimate Opera and Chamber Opera Chicago. This **building-wide event** takes place in GAR Hall, Randolph Café, Sidney Yates Gallery, Preston Bradley Hall, Claudia Cassidy Theater, and on the 4th floor landing. **Admission is free and families are welcome.** For more information about the Day of Opera or the Sunday Salon Series, please call the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs at 312.744.6630 or visit www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalAffairs/.

Featured Ensembles and Operas

OperaModa

OperaModa's mission is to highlight American operas and bring modern masterworks of operatic talent to the Chicago public. They are dedicated to providing young professional Chicago-area singers with quality performance opportunities through the production of modern and other infrequently performed operas. From Kirke Mechem's hilarious *Tartuffe* to Mark Adamo's lush re-telling of *Little Women*, OperaModa finds the newest and most exciting opera works out there. Their scintillating shows, sizzling opera singers, and intelligent modern themes knock their audience's socks off.

At the "Day of Opera," OperaModa performs Act I, Scene III from *Tartuffe*.
 Fourth Floor Landing, 3 pm and 4 pm

Intimate Opera The mission of Intimate Opera, Inc. is to provide an opportunity for talented young opera singers to perform grand opera in an intimate, community setting. The vision propelling Intimate Opera is Nancy Henninger's dedication to vocal artistry through teaching, performance, and outreach programs. Intimate Opera's unique, up-close and personal format provides a rare opportunity for audiences to be an integral part of the performance, and for the singers to spring the boundaries that exist between audience and singer.

At the "Day of Opera," the Intimate Opera performs excerpts from Act I of Verdi's *La Traviata*.
 Preston Bradley Hall, 2:30 pm and 4:30 pm

Chamber Opera Chicago

At the "Day of Opera," the Chamber Opera Chicago Séance performs the Séance scene from Act I of Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Medium*. The plot concerns Baba, who, as Madame Flora, conducts bogus séances with her daughter Monica and a gypsy deaf-mute named Toby to extract money from bereaved parents. At a séance, she feels a pair of hands on her throat and panics. Has the spirit world come to punish her, or was it merely Toby, whom she treats abusively? Unable to get an answer this question, she retreats to the bottle. At the end of the opera, startled from her stupor, she shoots the banished Toby, mistaking him for a ghost. "Was it you?" she rasps over his dead body. Claudia Cassidy Theater, 3:30 pm and 4:30 pm

Northwestern School of Music

The Voice and Opera Program at Northwestern University School of Music offers a healthy learning environment with a world-class faculty, whose collective professional experience covers virtually every area of voice, including opera, concert and song repertoire, and vocal pedagogy. There are three fully staged opera productions each year, along with multiple performance opportunities in choral and orchestral concerts. In addition, there is a Music Theatre certificate program for our undergraduate majors. The students who choose to come to Northwestern University School of Music in Voice and Opera are clearly motivated to achieve vocal excellence in a nurturing, yet challenging environment.

At the "Day of Opera," the Northwestern School of Music performs Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*: Act I, scene 1 (*Suse, liebe Suse*) and Act I, scene 2 (*Holla! Himmel, die Mutter*), as well as Beethoven's *Fidelio*: Act I (*Duet: Jetzt, Schaeztchen, jetzt sind wir allein*). GAR Hall, 1 pm, 2 pm, 3 pm, and 4 pm

DePaul University

Always a venue for exceptional talent, the DePaul Opera Theatre produces two full-length operas each year. Repertoire has included *Carmen*, *La Boheme*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Candide* and the U.S. premiere of an opera by Philip Glass. A third production of musical theater is produced, directed, conducted, and performed annually by students with faculty supervision. Recent productions have included *Into the Woods*, *The Fantasticks*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Little Women*. Graduates of the program are currently performing with such opera companies as the Metropolitan, Chicago Lyric, Berlin, Vienna, Zurich, Houston, Dallas, and Santa Fe. The opera program is led by Harry Silverstein, who has directed at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco, New York City, and English National Operas and for companies in Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and The Netherlands.

At the "Day of Opera," DePaul University performs Mozart's Marriage of Figaro: Act II (finale) and the final scene from Cavalli's L'Egisto. Yates Gallery 1pm and 2 pm; Randolph Café, 1:30 pm and 2:30 pm

Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University

Founded in 1867 as Chicago Musical College, and long recognized as one of the nation's outstanding schools for the intensive and rigorous training of professional musicians, this premier institution became a part of Roosevelt University in 1954. Students in The Music Conservatory and The Theatre Conservatory develop their artistic voices through study and interaction with an internationally recognized faculty and a curriculum designed to meet the highest standards of professional development.

At the "Day of Opera," students from the Chicago College of Performing Arts and the Millennium Chamber Players perform Act I, Scene 2 from Benjamin Britten's chamber opera, The Rape of Lucretia. The central tragedy, focusing on the rape of the Roman noblewoman Lucretia by the Etruscan prince Tarquinius, is related by a pair of modern Christian narrators who also serve to highlight the tensions inherent in rigid gender roles. The stage direction is provided by Brian von Rueden, musical preparation by conductor Robert Katkov-Trevino, and piano accompaniment by Dana Brown. Preston Bradley Hall, 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Programs presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs are partially supported by grants from the Chicago Cultural Center Foundation the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

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