

News Release

FOR RELEASE:

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Music of Mozart opens February 6

Project Opera, Minnesota Opera’s youth ensemble, presents a pastiche of Mozart’s operas at The Lab Theater

MINNEAPOLIS (January 14, 2015) – Project Opera, Minnesota Opera’s educational youth opera training program, presents *Music of Mozart*, February 6–7, 2015, at The Lab Theater in Minneapolis.

Molly Hayes, an Anoka High School senior, has been performing with Project Opera for four years. She debuted in *Tom Thumb* as a Ragazzi student, learning the basics of opera and multi-part singing. As an advanced student in the Apprentice program, she’s preparing the role of Madame Goldentrill from *The Impresario* for *Music of Mozart*, developing skills in stage presence and German language skills. Last October, Hayes had the unique opportunity to participate in Minnesota Opera’s workshop for *The Shining*, where she played the role of one of the twin sisters.

Molly’s younger sister Maggie has followed in her Project Opera footsteps, recently performing at Ordway in Minnesota Opera’s production of *Hansel and Gretel*. In April, she’ll take the stage again with Minnesota Opera’s Children’s Chorus in *Carmen*. The Hayes sisters’ mother Michelle is the choir director at Anoka High School and has sung in the Minnesota Opera ensemble for many years.

“Performing the music of Mozart is a perfect way to showcase the talents of our dedicated young singers and their passion for the operatic art form and to also commemorate Project Opera’s tenth anniversary,” said Project Opera Music Director Dr. Dale Kruse. “It’s incredible to see so many kids, some who drive two hours one way, participate in this very unique training program,” added Minnesota Opera Community Education Director Jamie Andrews.

It’s a Mozart Dance Party – 1980s style. Project Opera’s *Music of Mozart* reimagines scenes from several of Mozart’s operas as they might be experienced by contemporary teenagers – first loves, making up and breaking up, popularity contests and cliques – with Mozart orchestrating it all. Excerpts from *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Così fan tutte* and *The Magic Flute* create a neon-baroque world that mashes up classical formalism with pop culture references ranging from John Hughes to Katy Perry.

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“We want our young performers to bring their own personalities to this traditional repertoire in order to create a fresh interpretation of this wonderful music,” explains Minnesota Opera Resident Artist and Co-Stage Director Alison Moritz. Co-Stage Director Heidi Spesard-Noble continues, “We explore the difficulties of coming into adulthood by transplanting the action of Mozart’s operas into the defining moments of a high school dance – complete with a Prom King coronation and fights in the bathroom.”

About Project Opera

Project Opera is Minnesota Opera’s vocal training program for students in grades 4–12. Participants from around the Metro area are led by Music Director Dr. Dale Kruse. Project Opera encourages young people in the discovery of their individual voices in a supportive environment through high quality choral programs and stage experiences with unique access to America’s most exciting opera company. Over the course of the year, students in Ragazzi (grades 4–8) and Giovani (grades 9–12) learn healthy vocal technique, fundamentals of acting and perform repertoire in the major operatic languages.

For more information, contact Community Education Director Jamie Andrews at 612-342-9573.

Minnesota Opera’s education programs are supported through generous contributions from the following sponsors: 3M Foundation, Ameriprise Financial, Inc., Aroha Philanthropies, Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation, Best Buy Children’s Foundation, Comcast, Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Harlan Boss Foundation for the Arts, Medtronic Philanthropy through Medtronic Foundation, Pine River Capital Management, L.P., RBC Wealth Management, Sewell Family Foundation, Target, Thompson Reuters, Travelers, Wenger, Xcel Energy Foundation and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation.

What: *Music of Mozart*
Music by composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.
Sung in English, German and Italian with English titles projected above the stage.

Where: The Lab Theater, 700 North First Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

When: Friday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, February 7, 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$15/Adult and \$5/Children under 18.
Recommended for ages 8 and above.
Call the Minnesota Opera Ticket Office at 612-333-6669, Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., or purchase online at mnopera.org.

Media: Minnesota Opera hosts press members, bloggers and tweeters to attend the final dress rehearsal at The Lab Theater on **Thursday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.**

Contact Communications Manager Julie Behr to take advantage of interview, photo and video opportunities.

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Minnesota Opera combines a culture of creativity and fiscal responsibility to produce opera and opera education programs that expand the art form, nurture artists, enrich audiences and contribute to the vitality of the community.