

News Release

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Eight Students Set to Shine in University of Saint Mary "Opera Scenes" Production

7:15 p.m. Tuesday, March 15

(Leavenworth, Kan.)— Six long, hard months of planning, preparation and practice come to ahead as the University of Saint Mary Opera Workshop class prepares to take center stage presenting a dazzling performance of classical opera music at 7:15 p.m. Tuesday, March 15 in Xavier Theatre. The opera includes select solos, duets and stage performances from some of the university's brightest stars. Admission is free and the public is cordially invited. A reception will be held in the Saint Mary Social Room following the conclusion of the performance.

The magic of the two-part opera is sure to sweep you off your feet featuring the melodies of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Gilbert and Sullivan and Aaron Copland. Scenes from Mozart's "*Marriage of Figaro*," "*Don Giovanni*," "*Così fan Tutte*" (*The Little Magic Flute*) open the opera, accompanied by an abridged version of Mozart's singspiel (sung play) "*Bastien and Bastienna*," which he wrote at just 12 years old. The program's second half highlights duets from two classic Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and the opening scene from Aaron Copland's populist opera "*The Tender Land*." Each student is assigned three different roles which are suitable for their voice and age.

Dr. William Krusemark, chair of the University of Saint Mary Fine Arts Department, is eager to direct what he calls an extremely talented core of performers. "The goal and challenge of the Opera Workshop class and the art of acting in opera is the intricate action and movement involved with singing," Krusemark said. "This group of eight students has done an excellent job training and preparing."

Senior Kim Simpson, junior Ryan Harris and sophomore Taylor Gillespie headline what is sure to be a performance unlike any other they have ever done before. Also featured are Matthew Lockwood and Whitney Jaster, both natives from the Leavenworth area.

Simpson is a center piece to the performance. She said she's honored that Krusemark selected her to play such a large role. "We've come a long way," she said. "When we first got the music, you couldn't comprehend it at all. You had to put in hour after hour of rehearsing time both in class and on your own. I think it's all starting to come together now. It's definitely exciting."

The historic Xavier Theatre is located on the beautiful University of Saint Mary campus at 4100 South 4th St., Leavenworth, Kan. For more information about the University of Saint Mary Fine Arts Department or the Opera Workshop performance, call (913) 758-6460.

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