



## **Press Release**

**ORGANIZATION: Midwest Young Artists**  
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### **Tickets Now On Sale for Lyric Opera's Lauren McNeese and Lauren Curnow with Midwest Young Artists; Evening Concert Includes Special Lecture and Book Signing by Studs Terkel**

FT. SHERIDAN-Welcome to MYA's exploration of the world of opera! Dr. Allan Dennis, Director of MYA, is ecstatic about the upcoming *A Night at the Opera with special guests Lyric Opera's Lauren McNeese and Lauren Curnow*. *A Night at the Opera* will take place at 3:00 and 7:30 p.m., December 11, 2005, at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Millennium Park (205 East Randolph Drive, Chicago Millennium Park, 312-334-7777).

Both McNeese and Curnow have received critical acclaim. Of her debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, critics have described Lauren McNeese's mezzo-soprano voice as "creamy" and "with bright shimmer." The Sun-Times has referred to Lauren Curnow as "outstanding" and Opera News applauded her as an "enchanted actress with a sweetly expressive face and reams of shimmering tone." The biographies of the young singers are as impressive as someone twice their age. From Curnow's Julliard School of Music and Curtis Institute of Music vocal degrees to McNeese's performances with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Ravinia Festival, little is left to accomplish for these sopranos.

"I am honored to feature McNeese and Curnow with MYA. You can't top these singers. They are unbelievable. I've heard them at the Lyric and I just melt every time," exudes Dennis. This season the Lyric Opera will feature McNeese as *Mercedes* in *Carmen* and *Second Lady* in *The Magic Flute* and Curnow as *Papagena* in *The Magic Flute* and *Clorinda* in *Cinderella*.

Along with the memorable experience of seeing these outstanding special guests perform, the MYA ensembles will take the stage for an afternoon of inspiring music. Your mouth will drop in awe when you hear the talent and groove of the Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Orchestra performing selections by Lenny Niehaus, Count Basie and Lars Halle at the 3:00 p.m. Matinee Concert. Sponsored by **Northern Trust**, the matinee concert will feature the Reading, Cadet, and Prep Orchestras performing selections by Mozart and Puccini. In addition, the Choristers will perform the delightful *Prayer* from the opera *Hansel and Gretel* by Humperdinck. The celestial voices of McNeese and Curnow will take the stage with the Concert Orchestra in a program including La Boheme's *Quando me'n vo* by Puccini and the Marriage of Figaro's *Duet Sull'aria* by Mozart.

**MORE MORE MORE**

Prize-winning author and radio broadcast personality **Studs Terkel** joins MYA for a special lecture and book signing for his recent book *And They All Sang: Adventures of an Eclectic Disc Jockey* at 6:30 p.m. Immediately following, McNeese and Curnow perform alongside the award-winning MYA Symphony Orchestra at 7:30 p.m. for a passionate night at the opera, filled with music by Berlioz, Beethoven, Mozart, and Verdi. Sponsored by **Michael Becker Fine Violins**, the program includes *La Traviata: Prelude to Act III* by Verdi and *Der Freischütz Overture* by Weber. The concert will also feature the MYA Chorale in a performance with McNeese and Curnow on selections from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Bizet's *Habanera* from *Carmen*. Adding to the excitement of the program is a performance by the MYA Big Band. Big Band selections will include Bill Holman's *A View from the Side*, George Gershwin's *Summer Time*, arranged by Bill Potts, and *Waltz for Debby* by Bill Evans arranged by Don Sebesky.

Don't miss the sensational voices of this dynamic duo as they team up with MYA for an unforgettable musical celebration of youth. **Tickets may be purchased at [www.harristheaterchicago.org](http://www.harristheaterchicago.org) or call 312-334-7777.**

**Midwest Young Artists** (878 Lyster Road, Highwood, IL, 847-926-9898), is the leading youth-music ensemble program in the Midwest. Founded in 1993 by Dr. Allan Dennis with one orchestra, MYA has grown into a full-curriculum music school with a distinguished faculty of 22. Presently, MYA has five youth orchestras, more than 50 chamber music ensembles, three vocal ensembles, an all-inclusive jazz program, as well as classes in music theory and history. The program is for serious young musicians and dedicated amateurs. MYA is housed in its own state-of-the-art facility in the town of Fort Sheridan, which provides its students with large rehearsal halls, classrooms, a recording studio, and music library. MYA graduates are accepted at the most selective conservatories in the country.

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