

## **Westminster Place**

A Non-Sectarian Member of Presbyterian Homes  
3200 Grant Street  
Evanston, IL 60201  
800-570-3422

### **Second Annual Young Artists Opera Workshop Underway At Westminster Place**

*Four Performances During Month of July*

Evanston, IL (June 21, 2011) – The Second Annual Young Artists Opera Workshop for junior and senior college students, graduate students and young professionals is taking place during the month of June at Westminster Place, a non-sectarian member of Presbyterian Homes. Developed by the Opera Training Institute of Chicago (OpTIC), the workshop will provide master classes and coaching in vocal and dramatic techniques taught by accomplished opera professionals.

“This year we have 35 young artists participating in the summer workshop, many of them returning from last summer’s workshop” said Soprano Tracy Watson of Evanston-based Watson Studios and one of the founders of OpTIC. “The workshop has been very successful. We have so appreciated the interest and support of Westminster Place through sharing its excellent performance spaces again this year. We have also enjoyed the support of the Westminster Place residents, many of whom are long-time opera supporters.”

On Saturday, June 18, Roger Pines, dramaturg at Lyric Opera Chicago, taught a class to help guide the singers towards the proper repertoire for their particular voice. Mr. Pines has an extensive knowledge of opera and participates in the intermission features for the Metropolitan Opera live Saturday afternoon broadcasts.

On Sunday evening, June 19, William Watson, tenor and co-director of OpTIC and the Young Artists Opera Workshop, performed a Schubert song cycle from “Die Winterreise” (The Winter’s Journey) in Elliott Chapel of Westminster Place. Mr. Watson has been teaching voice for over 15 years, including eleven years on the faculty at Northwestern University, North Park University and Loyola University. He is one of the foremost Bach evangelists in the country and has performed with numerous symphony orchestras in the U.S. and throughout Europe.

Jane Bunnell, mezzo-soprano, along with her husband Marc Embree, bass-baritone, will lead a master class on June 25, 2011 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Westminster Place Assembly Hall. Ms. Bunnell has sung with the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera Chicago and last summer at Ravinia. Mr. Embree was a principal singer with the New York City Opera and has performed throughout the United States. Both Ms. Bunnell and Mr. Embree teach voice at DePaul University.



On Saturday July 2, Robert Orth, baritone, will lead a master class from 1-4:00 p.m. in the Westminster Place Assembly Hall. Mr. Orth has sung with the New York City Opera, the San Francisco Opera and the Houston Grand Opera. He is well known for creating new contemporary operas and was instrumental in the

Harry Silverstein, stage director and head of the opera department at DePaul University, directs young artists in a scene from Mozart's opera "The Impresario."

The month will conclude with four performances by the summer workshop participants. On Wednesday, July 6, and Thursday, July 7, opera scenes from Mozart operas will be performed in Elliott Chapel at 7:15 p.m. On Friday, July 8, and Saturday, July 9, the young artists will perform opera scenes from operas inspired by Shakespeare at 7:15 p.m. in Elliott Chapel.

OpTIC and the Young Artists Opera Workshop was created by Mezzo-Soprano Tracy Watson and Tenor William Watson of Watson Studios, a collaborative classical vocal studio at 9457 Central Park Ave., in Evanston, IL, along with Michael Ehrman, director and dramatic coach.

Ms. Watson has performed seven times at Carnegie Hall and spent two years performing in opera houses in Germany and has appeared with Music of the Baroque, the Grant Park Symphony and Ravinia as a guest artist of the Joffrey Ballet. She has been on the faculty of Northwestern University's National High School Music Institute since 2000.

Mr. Ehrman is Director of Opera at Northwestern University. He had previously been director of opera at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Roosevelt University. He has also directed at Yale University and was stage director/acting coach for the Young Artists Programs at Central City Opera in Colorado and Wolf Trap in Virginia.

###

## **ABOUT PRESBYTERIAN HOMES**

Founded in 1904, Presbyterian Homes is a not-for-profit, non-sectarian organization with a national reputation for creating extraordinary retirement communities. Presbyterian Homes serves more than 1700 older adults through its residential and healthcare programs on campuses

in Evanston, Lake Forest and Arlington Heights. The organization is accredited by the CARF/CCAC, the nation's only accrediting body for retirement communities.

###