

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



CBC's Hamilton brings opera quizzes and master class to Laurier *Quizmaster will tape semifinal competition for airing on 'Saturday Afternoon at the Opera'*

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WATERLOO – CBC quizmaster Stuart Hamilton will put opera students and Laurier music faculty to the test when he brings the Student Opera Quiz to Wilfrid Laurier University. Hamilton will tape two segments of the popular quiz – which airs on CBC Radio 2's 'Saturday Afternoon at the Opera' – and conduct a master class on Thursday, October 25.

The first of two 20-minute quizzes will pit three Laurier professors against one another in a competition designed to put student competitors at ease. Following the preliminary event, a student from Laurier will square off against competitors from the universities of McGill and Western Ontario in the central-region semifinal round. The questions will test the students' knowledge of five Verdi operas, with the winner advancing to the final round.

"This is really a fun and informal approach to some of Verdi's better-known works – *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Aida* and *Falstaff*," says CBC producer Jurgen Petrenko. "There really aren't winners or losers, though only one will advance to face a competitor from the east coast and another from the west in the national round."

Hamilton, an accomplished accompanist and vocal coach, will later conduct a master class for opera students. Five or six students will prepare and perform one or two arias. Hamilton will comment on their interpretation and offer performance suggestions.

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“This later event presents our students – and members of the wider community – with a rare opportunity to watch an internationally renowned coach work with young performers,” explains Daniel Lichti, coordinator of the voice program with Laurier’s faculty of music.

Both the quizzes and the master class are open to the public. The quizzes will be taped between 4 and 5 p.m. in room 318 of Laurier’s John Aird Centre. The master class begins at 7 p.m. in the Maureen Forrester Recital Hall.

Saturday Afternoon at the Opera will broadcast the student competition on November 10 and the faculty competition sometime in the new year. Hamilton will tape the finals of the third-annual student competition in Ottawa on November 10 for broadcast on November 17.

Hamilton is the founder and artistic director emeritus of Toronto’s Opera In Concert, now in its 25th season, and was the first music director of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble. His contributions to Canada’s musical life have earned him the Order of Canada and the Governor General’s Award.

To learn more about Hamilton and Saturday Afternoon at the Opera, please visit www.radio.cbc.ca/programs/sato. To learn more about Laurier’s faculty of music, please go to www.wlu.ca/~wwwmusic/index.shtml.