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Raffi Armenian conducts Opera Laurier's 40th anniversary performance of *The Cunning Little Vixen*

WATERLOO – In celebration of Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty of Music's 40th anniversary, Opera Laurier will perform *The Cunning Little Vixen* by Czech composer Leoš Janáček. The performance will be directed by Brent Krysa and conducted by the legendary Maestro Raffi Armenian. Performances will take place Feb. 26 and 27 at 8 p.m. and Feb. 28 at 3 p.m. in the Theatre Auditorium on Laurier's Waterloo campus.

"Raffi Armenian is a legendary figure in Waterloo Region, but his reputation is truly global. It is an honour for us to bring Maestro Armenian back to our community," said **Glen Carruthers**, dean of music at Laurier. "I am especially pleased, of course, that we can provide this opportunity for our students. Maestro Armenian's residency lasts six weeks while he prepares what promises to be an outstanding event celebrating the Faculty of Music's 40th anniversary. I expect that our opera production, which is always very popular, will be standing room only for all three performances!"

Leoš Janáček's opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, is a charming tale of a young female fox that takes the audience with her as she explores the forest on her own for the first time, through her many adventures, to falling in love, eventual motherhood and her untimely death. The story explores the intricate relationship between humans and the natural world and the cyclical nature of life.

Opera Laurier, made up of Laurier voice performance students enrolled in The Practice of Opera course, stages two productions a year—an evening of operatic scenes around a unifying theme in the fall term and a full production with orchestra in the winter term. Students gain hands-on experience by learning and practicing stagecraft, stage makeup and costuming, as well as all aspects of production from the physical set to stage management, publicity and marketing. Practitioners with broad professional experience work with the students as stage directors and facilitators.

Since 1975, Laurier's Faculty of Music has grown from 69 students in one undergraduate program to over 400 students across seven degree and diploma programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Laurier also operates the Laurier Conservatory with over 1,000 students, is home to the National Youth Orchestra of Canada and has been named Canada's Best Music Campus by CBC Radio.

A number of [concerts and events are planned](#) to celebrate the faculty's 40th anniversary and to recognize Laurier alumni, faculty and students.

Tickets to *The Cunning Little Vixen* are free for Laurier students, \$1 for high school and elementary students, \$20 for adults, and \$10 for seniors and non-Laurier university students.

Tickets can be purchased at the door before each performance, or in advance by emailing concerts@wlu.ca or calling 519-884-1970, ext. 4439. Tickets are offered online through ticketscene.ca.

Members of the media are welcome to attend Opera Laurier's *Cunning Little Vixen* rehearsals, which take place the week of Feb. 15. Please email concerts@wlu.ca for details.

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