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## Three IWU Music Students Will Head to Rome to Perform in Mozart's The Magic Flute

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## **Three IWU Music Students Will Head to Rome to Perform in Mozart's The Magic Flute**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University students Jennifer Cowgill, Jaime-Rose Guarrine and Suzanne Shields will have the opportunity to perform in *The Magic Flute* from June 28 to July 23, in Rome as part of the Operafestival di Roma.

Composed in 1791 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *The Magic Flute* was first performed at the Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna two months before Mozart's death. It is a fantasy tale of a noble prince and his birdcatcher friend, who, armed with magic bells and an enchanted flute, set out to rescue a princess and find true love.

Cowgill, a senior music major from Plainfield, Ill., will perform the part of one of the spirits. Guarrine, a senior music education major from Peoria, Ill., will perform the role of the first lady and also will serve as an understudy for the leading role of Pamina. Shields, a junior vocal performance major from Riverside, Ill., will appear in the role of the third lady.

Founded in 1994, the Operafestival di Roma is a non-profit institution in association with the Italian production company, Opera Estate, offering opportunities to musicians to study and perform opera in Rome each summer. Past productions of the Operafestival di Roma have included *L'elisir di amore*, *Le nozze di Figaro* and *Suor Angelica*.

"The Operafestival di Roma is excellent for young, up and coming singers to get valuable professional experience," said Guarrine. "It will be exciting to be completely emersed in another culture--one that is deeply rooted in classical music tradition."

In addition to regular rehearsals for the opera, the students will receive individual voice lessons, master classes and conversational Italian classes to enhance the month-long program.

The Operafestival di Roma faculty is composed of Italian and American professionals including Linda Farquharson, IWU associate professor of voice and a conductor of the Operafestival di Roma, and is led by Maestro Carotenuto and festival founder, Louisa Panou.

Farquharson informed her music students of the campus auditions, and at her suggestion, Cowgill, Guarrine and Shields tried out, and were selected for their roles.

Cowgill plans to use her opportunity to further develop her music career and Shields, who will tour Italy with the Illinois Wesleyan Collegiate Choir in May prior to the Operafestival di Roma, plans to absorb the Italian culture during her stay.

"Participating in the opera," said Cowgill, "will give me experience in staging an operatic role. It will also allow me to work with people with more experience than myself in the field."

"I would like to do a lot of sight-seeing because I have never been to Europe," said Shields. "I also hope to learn some of the Italian language because it is very important for the opera."

### **About Illinois Wesleyan University**

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,070 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts, and a \$1.65 million baseball stadium. Construction is underway on a \$23 million library and \$6 million student center. Kiplinger's Personal Finance Magazine ranks Illinois Wesleyan University 12th among the nation's 1,600 private colleges in providing top-quality education at an affordable cost. Also sharing IWU's ranks are Princeton and Dartmouth.