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Kristin Fields

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March 21, 2012

**Contact:** Kristin Fields, '12, (309) 556-3181, univcomm@iwu.edu

## School of Music to Present Spring Opera

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The Illinois Wesleyan School of Music will present its spring opera, *Gianni Schicchi*, on Thursday, March 29 at 8 p.m., Friday, March 30 and Saturday, March 31 at 7:30 p.m. and a matinee on Sunday, April 1 at 3 p.m.

The performances, which are free and open to the public, will be held in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington).

Composed by Giacomo Puccini with Italian librettist Giovacchino Forzano, *Gianni Schicchi* is a comic opera in one act. Set in 1930s Florence, the opera begins after the death of the wealthy Buoso Donati. His relatives gather to grieve, but more importantly to discover the contents of his will. When it is revealed that his fortune has been bequeathed to a monastery, there is an outbreak of indignation in the family. Rinuccio, the nephew of Buoso, must find a way to acquire his uncle's wealth in order to marry Lauretta, the daughter of commoner Gianni Schicchi. Gianni proposes to the family that he disguise as the already deceased Buoso in order to fool the doctor, who is not aware that Buoso has died. The family draws up a new will, with Gianni taking the most inheritance. In order to maintain the ruse, however, the family cannot say anything before the lawyer. Gianni then chases the family from what is now his property and Lauretta and Rinuccio are allowed to happily marry.

Directed by Robert Mangialardi, visiting professor of music and director of the opera theatre program, the show will feature a student cast of 20, with alternate performers on Friday and Sunday. The performance will be given under the musical direction of adjunct faculty member and University organist Susan Klotzbach.

For additional information, contact the School of Music Office at (309) 556-3061.

**Cast:** Michael Hansen (Gianni Schicchi), Shelby Jones and Ashleen Davey\* (Lauretta), Andrea Tucci and Becky Buechel\* (Zita, cousin of Buoso Donati), Peter Moeller and Jonathan Smith\* (Rinuccio), Joe Lewis (Gherardo, Buoso's nephew), Meagan Melloy and Hayley Koch\* (Nella, Gherardo's wife), Dalton Spalding (Gherardino, their son),

John Cossio (Betto di Signa, Buoso's brother-in-law), Mark Koester (Simone, cousin of Buoso), Akash Bhatia (Marco, Simone's son), Hayley Robinson and Mary Nicholas\* (La Ciesca, Marco's wife), Mark Timmerman (Maestro Spinellocchio, a doctor; Guccio, a tailor), Philip Courington (Ser Amantio di Nicolao, a lawyer) and Matt Teeling (Pinellino, a mortician).

\*denotes performers for Friday and Sunday performances