



Emma Mansell and Thera Barclay rehearsing *Giiwedín*

Headlines (News Releases)

Communications, Public Affairs & Marketing

Opera Laurier to explore Aboriginal history in *Giiwedín*

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WATERLOO – Opera Laurier will perform *Giiwedín*, an Aboriginal opera composed by local talent, **Feb. 28, March 1** and **March 2** on Laurier's Waterloo campus. The performances commemorate Laurier's Aboriginal Awareness Week, taking place March 1-7.

Giiwedín (The North Wind), blends Baroque and traditional Indigenous music and aesthetics. It was written and co-composed by librettist **Spy Dénommé-Welch**, an Aboriginal education consultant at Laurier, and **Catherine Magowan**. Written in Anishnaabemowin, French and English, and set in Northeastern Ontario, *Giiwedín* tells the story of Noodin-Kwe, a 150-year-old Aboriginal woman, and her struggle to protect her ancestral land.

"This production offers a unique opportunity to our students to engage with First Nations history and culture, most of them for the very first time," said Professor **Kimberly Barber**, administrative coordinator of Opera at Laurier. "It also allows us to tell an important and mostly untold story about first contact and its impacts and implications in a way that is both accessible and theatrically intense, while allowing students to collaborate with the Aboriginal community."

The Saturday-night performance on March 1 is one of three events launching Aboriginal Awareness Week. The Aboriginal Day of Celebration begins with a talk by special guest Susan Aglukark at 2 p.m., a reception and dinner at 6 p.m. and the opera at 8 p.m. For more information about these events and how to purchase tickets, visit www.wlu.ca/aboriginal.

Tickets for the opera are free for Laurier students, high-school students and children, \$10 for adults, and \$5 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.

Performances take place in the Theatre Auditorium at the following dates and times:

- Friday, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m.
- Saturday, March 1 at 8 p.m.
- Sunday, March 2 at 3 p.m.

Opera Laurier consists of voice performance students enrolled in "The Practice of Opera" course and dedicated student volunteers. Every year, Opera Laurier puts on a production of excerpts in the fall and a full opera in the spring.

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