



FOR: NORTH SHORE HOTEL
1611 Chicago Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERA IDOL COMPETITION TAKES CENTER STAGE IN CHICAGO

A talent-search-style contest meets the opera in the Windy City

WHAT: "Opera Idol," a vocal competition for young, aspiring opera singers

WHERE: North Shore Retirement Hotel, located at 1611 Chicago Avenue in **Evanston, IL**

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- ❖ *January 29:* All general audition tapes are due at The North Shore Hotel
- ❖ *February 4:* Qualified participants are notified and will be assigned a preliminary round competition date (see dates listed below)
- ❖ *February 21, February 29, March 8:* Preliminary Rounds held, all at 7:30 pm. Winners proceeding to the Finals are announced at conclusion of each Preliminary Round.
- ❖ *March 3:* Junior Division audition tapes are due at The North Shore Hotel
- ❖ *March 21 and 22:* Junior Division Competition
- ❖ *March 30:* Final round begins at 7 pm. Grand Prize Winner is announced. Final round is conducted in a combination competition and **Master Class format with Maestro Sherrill Milnes directing.**

PRIZE: Full tuition scholarship (\$2,750) and airfare to attend the national "V.O.I.C.Experience" workshop in Orlando, FL. led by world-renowned baritone Sherrill Milnes, soprano Maria Zouves and distinguished colleagues. (Junior Division is \$500 scholarship toward "Generation X" national workshop in Orlando, FL or for continued vocal studies of winner's choosing.)

-MORE-

OPERA IDOL FACT SHEET/ Add One

CONTEST RULES:

Under the direction of Chicago born opera star Sherrill Milnes, John Evans Distinguished Professor of Music Emeritus at Northwestern University and founder of the non-profit "V.O.I.C.Experience," the structure of the competition will loosely resemble the many national television talent-search shows.

1. Qualified participants must be between the ages of 20 and 34 years old.
2. Contestants must currently be working with a voice coach or be enrolled in a vocal music program of studies.
3. The Opera Idol competition is free to join. Contestants must submit an Opera Idol application form and audition tape/CD with two selections, at least one operatic, by January 29, 2012. Selected participants will be notified by February 4 and assigned a preliminary round performance date.
4. All rounds of the contest will be presented at the North Shore Hotel, with a panel of professional musicians and North Shore's residents judging the preliminary rounds. North Shore's residents and their guests in the audience will act as sole judges for the Final Audition.
5. Five to six singers will participate in the Final Competition on March 30, 2012 and vie for the full tuition scholarship (\$2,750) and airfare to attend the Florida "V.O.I.C.Experience" workshop conducted by Milnes, Soprano Maria Zouves and other world-renowned coaches and personalities of theater and opera. (www.voicexperiencefoundation.com)
6. Preliminary round presentation is allotted 7-10 minutes total and should include two pieces, one operatic. Contestants may provide their own accompanist or may use a university rehearsal accompanist provided by North Shore Hotel for preliminaries. Final round accompanist will be provided by North Shore Hotel in consultation with Mr. Milnes and V.O.I.C.Experience.
7. After completion of the VE workshop, Grand Prize Winner returns and offers concert for North Shore residents and their guests in the fall of 2012 at a date and time to be announced.

JUNIOR DIVISION CONTEST RULES

1. Qualified participants must be between the ages of 14 and 19 years old.
2. Contestants must currently be working with a voice coach or be enrolled in a vocal music program of studies.
3. The Opera Idol Jr. Division competition is free to join. Contestants must submit an Opera Idol application form and audition tape/CD with two selections, at least one classical, by March 3, 2012. Selected participants will be notified by March 13, 2011.
4. Competition will be held March 21 and 22, 2012 at the North Shore Hotel, with a panel of professional musicians and the North Shore's residents judging the contest. Winner will be announced at the conclusion of the competition.
5. Up to six singers will participate in the final contest round to vie for a \$500 scholarship to be applied toward Generation X workshop conducted by Sherrill Milnes and V.O.I.C.Experience in Orlando, FL this summer (www.voicexperiencefoundation.com) or continued vocal studies of the winner's choosing.
6. Contestants may provide their own accompanist or may use a university rehearsal accompanist provided by the North Shore Hotel.
7. Winner of the Junior Opera Idol contest will be given the opportunity to perform at the Opera Idol finals on Friday, March 30, 2012 and will offer concert for North Shore residents and guests in the fall of 2012 .

#

*For further information regarding contest rules or auditions, please call 847-864-6400, ext. 622
For press info or to schedule an interview, please call Falk Associates at 847-675-2580*