



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Press contact: Matt Gray, AOP Projects Manager, email: [mgray@operaprojects.org](mailto:mgray@operaprojects.org) phone: 718-398-4024  
Press material is available at: [www.operaprojects.org](http://www.operaprojects.org)

## **AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS OFFERS SERIES OF UNIQUE CLASSES FOR SINGERS LED BY LAUREN FLANIGAN**

**CLASSES WILL BEGIN JANUARY 14th AND RUN FOR  
SIX CONSECUTIVE WEEKS ON MONDAYS, 7 PM - 10 PM**

NEW YORK, NY, December 13, 2007— **AMERICAN OPERA PROJECTS (AOP)** will present a series of classes focusing on dramatic preparation, interpretation and performance of operatic literature in English led by dynamic soprano, **Lauren Flanigan**.

20 singers will be personally selected by Ms. Flanigan and AOP to study for six weeks **learning how to build their own individual vocabulary for creating an operatic character**. Classes begin on January 14th and will be held from 7 PM to 10 PM at the SITI Company Studio on 520 8th Avenue at 36th Street.

The first half of each class will be acting exercises from the **Viewpoints Training Program** led by Lauren Flanigan and a member of the SITI Company. The Viewpoints Training allows actors to function together spontaneously and intuitively and to generate bold, theatrical work. It develops flexibility, articulation, and strength in movement, which contribute to increased confidence and ability in ensemble work. The second half of the class will incorporate the training into the interpretation of arias and songs. Singers will work individually in front of the class in the course of the series.

"As I have begun to coach singers and teach Master Classes," Flanigan states, "I am asked how I train and study. Who are my influences and how do I put together characters and approach so many different musical styles? I am surprised that many young singers, especially those not selected for apprenticeships and young artist programs, are left rather high and dry when it comes to continuing study and training after they leave college. I was very fortunate early in my education, first as an actress at ACT in San Francisco and then at Boston University, to receive very specific and rigorous training."

**Called "the thinking man's diva" by TIME magazine** and with a repertoire that extends from the bel canto to Berio, soprano Lauren Flanigan has been lavishly praised for the dynamism and unique approach to interpretation she brings to a variety of operatic repertoire. "She turns any kind of note spinning into the highest of art" said the *San Francisco Chronicle* of her performances of the final scene of *Salome* and Luciano Berio's *Epiphanies*. Some of the many companies she has appeared with are: La Scala,

The Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Glyndebourne, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Teatro San Carlo, New York City Opera, Santa Fe and Glimmerglass. She has collaborated with Michael Tilson Thomas on a large number of projects including *Philomel*, *The Mouse's Tail*, *Epiphanies*, *Cantata para America Magica*, *Time Cycle*, and Mahler's Eighth Symphony and has been associated with more than 7 world premieres including *Esther*, *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *Central Park*, *A Wedding*, *Frau Margot*, and *Marina: A Captive Spirit*, produced by American Opera Projects in 2003.

Most recently, Flanigan embodied the titular character in the 2007 production of Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* at New York City Opera in a performance that was met with universal acclaim. *The New York Times*: "Flanigan... gives a smoldering portrayal of the title role... her singing was vibrant, alluring and powerful. Through sheer vocal and dramatic determination she convinces you that this Vanessa is still a striking, impulsive and sometimes girlish beauty." *Variety*: "Lauren Flanigan, widely considered one of the best singing actresses in the business, gives a poignant performance in the title role as a self-deluded, faded beauty whose last chance at happiness promises to be short-lived. Her voice has recently grown in size and thrust, yet she has the rare ability to draw an audience close with the intimacy and naturalness of her portrayals."

"In the mid 80's I met and worked with the innovative director/teacher **Anne Bogart**. We worked on a number of projects together (including one with American Opera Projects) and through that work I became very familiar with her Viewpoints technique and I began to study and train with her company, SITI. Those projects with **SITI Company** have enabled me to construct my own particular vocabulary when it comes to character building and interpretation especially as it relates to opera singing. As a performer, I strive to communicate these ideas simply and in a straight forward and exciting manner that does not interfere with my singing technique."

"In the work we do as performers," states Flanigan, "we enter into collaborative relationships with stage directors and we need a diverse set of tools to build characters. For me, acting has been the window through which I take on every challenge."

## **CREATING THE DRAMATIC CHARACTER FOR OPERA**

**Lauren Flanigan, instructor**

**Mon. Jan 14 – Feb 25, 2008 7 PM – 10 PM**

**SITI Studio, 520 8th Avenue at 36th Street, New York NY**

**COST: \$300 - 6-week session**

Information on how to apply can be found at [www.operaprojects.org/flaniganclass](http://www.operaprojects.org/flaniganclass).