

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Modesto, California – January 12, 2010**

**Townsend Opera announces \$10 general admission tickets for two performances of *The Merry Widow***

Townsend Opera is pleased to announce that on Thursday, January 28 (7:30 pm) and Saturday, January 30 (7:30), all tickets for *The Merry Widow* will be \$10 general admission. This is made possible by the continuing collaboration between Townsend Opera and the Department of Music at CSU Stanislaus. Tickets for these two performances can be purchased at the Gallo Center Box Office or online at [www.galloarts.org](http://www.galloarts.org).

For these two performances, the principal roles of Hanna, Danilo, and Valencienne will be performed by the vocal performance majors at CSU Stanislaus that are covering the roles for the professional cast; the rest of the cast will be the same as the regularly scheduled three performances.

This production of *The Merry Widow* is presented in collaboration with the Department of Music at CSU Stanislaus. This is the second collaboration between Townsend Opera and CSU Stanislaus, the first being the January 2009 production of *The Magic Flute*, which was recently selected the #2 staged production in the region by the arts critic of the Modesto Bee. In this collaborative production, vocal performance majors will be featured in secondary and ensemble roles, and three students are covering principal roles. This collaboration offers students a rare opportunity to gain professional experience while still undergraduates, learning vital lessons about the profession they are preparing to enter.

By far the composer's most famous work, Franz Lehar's romantic comedy *The Merry Widow* tells the story of a recent widow whose wealth keeps her small country from bankruptcy and the grand scheme that her countrymen devise to marry her off to a fellow countryman to keep her wealth in the country. Along the way, there are multiple love stories, cheating wives, and hilarious twists and turns that are guaranteed to keep you laughing throughout the show.

Designed by Corey Strauss, with costumes from West Bay Opera, this production is set in a fictional country in eastern Europe.

**Tickets and Information**

Tickets for *The Merry Widow* range from \$10 to \$53 each, and may be purchased online at [www.galloarts.org](http://www.galloarts.org) or by calling the Gallo Center Box Office at 209.338.2100. The Gallo Center is located at 1000 I Street, Modesto, CA 95354.

**Production Information**

*The Merry Widow*  
*Die Lustige Witwe*

Libretto by Viktor Leon and Leo Stein, based on a play by Henri Meilhac  
New dialogue by Dr. Joseph Wiggett  
First performance: Theater an der Wien, Vienna on December 30, 1905  
First Townsend Opera performance:  
Most recent Townsend Opera performance:  
Approximate running time: 2 hours 30 minutes, with two intermissions  
Sung in English with English supertitles

**Cast:**

*Hanna Glawari*

*Count Danilo*

*Baron Zeta*

*Camille*

*Valencienne*

*Njegus*

**Carrie Hennessey**

**Courtney Nance** (1/28, 1/30)

**Vincent Chambers**

**Max Hosmer** (1/28, 1/30)

**Eric Graber**

**Owen McIntosh\***

**Ani Maldjian\***

**Vanessa Rosas** (1/28, 1/30)

**Donn Bradley**

**Production Team:**

*Conductor*

*Director*

*Production Designer*

*Costumes*

*Lighting Designer*

**Ryan Murray**

**Dr. Joseph Wiggett**

**Corey Strauss**

**Megs Lydon\***

**Erik Vose**

\* Company debut

Contact:

Matthew Buckman

209.523.6426

[mbuckman@townsendoperaplayers.com](mailto:mbuckman@townsendoperaplayers.com)

605 H Street

Modesto, CA 95354

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