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**Winter Opera St. Louis Gala to Celebrate COMPANY’S 8th Season**

 Winter Opera St. Louis will celebrate its eighth season of world class operatic performances with its annual Gala on Friday, September 26, 2014 at Dominic’ Trattoria in Clayton. The event features a Taste of Italy wine tasting, an authentic five-course Italian dinner, and entertainment by the Opera’s talented artists. Tickets are $125 each and may be purchased at [www.winteropeastl.org](http://www.winteropeastl.org) or by calling 314/865-0038.

 Jorge Pita Carreras, an internationally renowned tenor who studied under the guidance of Placido Domingo and has appeared with such opera greats as Pavarotti, Jose Carreras, and Rene Fleming among others, will be the featured guests star at the gala. Sig. Carreras will be starring in Winter Opera’s January production of *L’Amico Fritz*. Throughout the evening, the company’s artists will also perform numbers from past and future performances, including: “Libbiamo” from La Traviata; “Dove Sono” from Le Nozze di Figaro; “Recondita Armonia” from Tosca; “Angelo Casto” from Il Duca D’Alba; “Cherry duet” from The L’amico Fritz; “Forse La Soglia Attinse” from Ballo in Mascera by Giuseppe Verdi; and various Neapolitan songs performed by the resident artists.

 “The Gala marks the start of our biggest season to date,” said Gina Galati, general director. “Highlights include our first Mozart opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, in November; the St. Louis premiere of Mascagni’s *L’Amico Fritz* in January; and an amazing production of Verdi’s *Otello* in March. In addition, we are putting on an entire Christmas Opera, *The Wise Women* by Conrad Susa, which will be a great holiday treat for the whole family.”

 Galati added that Winter Opera St. Louis also plans to showcase more local artists, both in its productions and in a special outreach opera, *Speed Dating Tonight*, which will be presented at five area colleges in October. “There is so much local talent in St. Louis,” she said. “Our goal is to help them develop and get exposure on a broader stage.”

 Winter Opera St. Louis is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide St. Louis with world-class operatic performances during the winter months. The Opera’s productions features nationally and internationally known artists, performing classic operas in their original languages, with English subtitles. Winter Opera St. Louis also highlights local performers and strengthens the local artist community year-round through community outreach programs and workshops. For more information, go to [www.winteroperastl.org](http://www.winteroperastl.org).