

For Immediate Release
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Children's Opera *Pinocchio* Coming to Arlington October 18-24, 2009

Production Staged by the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia

Arlington, VA—The Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia is presenting six performances of the children's opera *Pinocchio* from October 18-24 at the Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre in Arlington. The 65 minute long production is based on the beloved children's book *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi.

"I am so looking forward to this year's production of *Pinocchio*," said Miriam Miller, a major supporter of the children's opera and President of the Opera Guild. "Last year, 3,200 school children, teachers, and families attended *Cinderella*, so we know there is a demand in the community for programming like this, even though many unfortunately still view opera as an elitist art form. But the children love it! The lighting, costumes, scenery, music, and singing all add up to a rich sensory experience that children are just naturally drawn to."

Pinocchio will be presented during four school day mornings (October 20, 21, 22, and 23) to school children, their teachers, and their chaperones. On Sunday October 18 and Saturday October 24, the opera will be presented in two public performances, when children can attend with their families and community-based groups, such as the Girl Scouts, church choirs, and Sunday schools. Surtitles will be provided during the performance. A twenty-five page study guide is available on the Guild's website at www.operaguildnova.org.

The music for the opera is based on songs written by Gioacchino Rossini, which were adapted by composer Carl Zytowski of the University of Santa Barbara, CA. Past children's opera performances have included *Cinderella*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *The Nightingale*, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, *The Arabolies of Liberty Street*, *The Cricket in Times Square*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *The Mini Magic Flute*.

"We are pleased to have John Dooley performing with us once again, especially since he was just awarded Singer of the Year by the Guild," said Jean Shirhall, President of the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia. "He has a beautiful voice and wonderful stage presence, and, based on his past performances with our company, he will do an expert job at making the music and the character of Geppetto come alive."

Tickets for school children and chaperones during the week day performances cost \$5/seat, while weekend performances cost \$6/child and \$12/adult. Week day performances are at 10am; on Sunday, October 18, the performance will be ushered by clowns and will take place at 3pm, while on Saturday, October 24, the performance will be ushered by local Girl Scout Troops and will take place at 4pm. Tickets can be purchased through the Opera Guild by calling Miriam Miller at 703-536-7557. The

Thomas Jefferson Community Theatre is inside Thomas Jefferson Middle School at 125 S. Old Glebe Road in Arlington.

About the Opera Guild of Northern Virginia:

The Opera Guild of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that was established in 1992 to support the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia and make opera accessible and affordable for all residents of Northern Virginia, particularly children. Through its educational outreach to public, private, and parochial schools in Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, the Guild seeks to bring the joy of opera to the local community and develop regional support and appreciation of all aspects of the performing arts by fostering an appreciation for local theater across generations. The Guild also works with various non-profit groups to develop additional programs to bring underprivileged, elderly, and new immigrants into the community via a universal appreciation for the arts.

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