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**OPERA SCENES TO PREMIERE A MINI-MUSICAL**

Junior Ben Offringa and sophomore Jake Elliott have written and composed “The Opera of the Elements,” which they will premiere during Opera Scenes on Sunday, Oct. 28, at 8 p.m. in Westmont’s Deane Chapel. The performance, part of the Musical Drama Workshop, will include opera arias, duets and Broadway songs. It is free and open to the public.

The cast includes, sopranos Brianna Stutzman, Emmalee Wetzel, Wendy Kent, Rebecca Hawkins, Nichole Adrain, mezzo-soprano Julee Felts; tenor Ryan Morgan and bass Even Ewert.

Last spring, Offringa and Elliott began writing an operetta, a one-act performance in opera style, but the piece has evolved into a one-act musical, flowing between song, narration and dialogue. “‘The Opera of the Elements’ is an interpretation of the elements’ relationship with humans and with God,” Elliott says. “We do not intend to leave our audience with any environmental or theological argument, but rather to entertain them with a tale in which the elements are personified characters. This musical is a tale of revolution-gone-wrong.”

Offringa starred in “The Servant of Two Masters” during his first year at Westmont and has gone on to perform in “I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change,” “33 Swoons,” “Animal Farm,” and “The Heather,” which was composed by Elliott.

Elliott, who has focused his college studies on music composition, starred in San Marcos High School Performing Arts Department’s “Damn Yankees,” “Grease” and “Me and My Girl.” He is a percussionist with the Westmont Worship Team.

The Music Drama Workshop is taught by adjunct professor Celeste Tavera, a Metropolitan Opera National Council winner who has taught a variety of opera scenes and Broadway musicals for the past five years for the class. For more information, please contact Trinity Schwartz at (805) 565-6040.