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# PRESS RELEASE

**Bon Operatit! Serves up an Appetizing Selection of Opera/Musical Hits**  
*Fresh new trio of classical singers putting a twist on the entertainment scene in New Orleans*

**New Orleans, August 12, 2009:** For as long as New Orleans native Lauren Mouney Gisclair can remember, she has relished the joy that others usually feel when she has the opportunity to sing for a crowd. Growing up, she remembers singing every chance she could get, whether it was at church, in the shower, or performing with her sister in their living room for their parents. "I always remembered the smiles on everyone's faces when I sang, and it was those expressions of happiness that encouraged me to do this professionally," Lauren recalls. One of her other most vivid memories of her upbringing is the martini parties her mother, Cathy, used to host at their house. "Those parties were always so fun," Lauren recollects, "and I've tried hard to keep that fun attitude my parents instilled in me while still working hard toward my goals as a singer." As she continued to grow, so did her taste in music, and she began to master other art forms, such as opera and musical theater. "As I got older, I realized there were a lot of people who had the perception that opera was an antiquated genre of music that only appealed to the more affluent type of person. I wanted to change that perception and make it fun, like my mom's parties were [when I was] growing up."

Upon returning from Penn State, where she received her master's degree in vocal pedagogy, Lauren had the opportunity to reconnect with and sing alongside fellow New Orleans Opera Chorus members Mary Penick Akin and Jesse Nolan for a variety of evening engagements at local country clubs and private parties. "Mary and Jesse are great to work with. Our paths had crossed many times as musicians, singing with Jesse in the choir at the historic St. Patrick's Church on Camp Street or with Mary at Tulane's Summer Lyric Theater, which was incidentally also where I met my husband. Both Mary and Jesse are consummate professionals, having studied music at Loyola University in New Orleans, but also share the same fun outlook on life that they incorporate into their performances." The three immediately hit it off and decided to start their own trio. Thus, Bon Operatit! was born, and their mission was clear: to entertain folks, using their classical training to bring joy and smiles to people's faces like Lauren remembers doing in her youth.

"New Orleans is the perfect place for us to set out to accomplish this," Jesse adds. "The city is vibrant. People in this city love their music and entertainment. They love to sip on a cocktail and socialize with each other. And these are the types of people we want to sing for and entertain."

Since the group's inception, Bon Operatit! has performed at a variety of New Orleans area venues, including the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Natchez Steamboat, Metairie Country Club, Chateau Country Club, and recently appeared on the WWL-TV morning show in New Orleans. Each engagement ended in standing ovations.

This past summer, Bon Operatit! released a self-titled CD that can be previewed and purchased on their website, [www.BonOperatit.com](http://www.BonOperatit.com). The group works with a variety of accompanists and other musicians around the city. They also have a fairly extensive repertoire of both opera and musical theater hits from which to choose, allowing them to create a custom program specifically tailored for a particular event.

"It's been a fun ride for us thus far," chimes in Mary, "and this is only the beginning. When our audience is enjoying themselves, so are we, which creates a better experience for all of us. After folks in the crowd have a chance to hear a few songs and drink a few cocktails, we tend to have folks standing, clapping, and even singing along by the end of the performance. It's truly exhilarating and rewarding for us."

As for Lauren, each performance with Bon Operatit! and every smile she brings to an audience member are beautiful reminders of why she decided to pursue a career in music in the first place.

For more information on Bon Operatit!, including upcoming performances, or to inquire about booking Bon Operatit! for your event, visit [www.BonOperatit.com](http://www.BonOperatit.com).

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