

**For Release: Friday, October 25, 2002**    Press Contact: Tina Ryker, 206-676-5543  
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## **Seattle Opera and Classical KING FM 98.1 Launch New “OperaMania!” Program**

Seattle—Seattle Opera and KING FM’s “Classic Kid FM” have teamed up to create a new radio program: “OperaMania!” An extension of Seattle Opera’s education program “Experience Opera,” the new radio program features Washington State high school students sharing the stories and music of their favorite operas and competing in opera quizzes.

“OperaMania!” is hosted and produced by KING FM’s Marta Zekan (the popular DJ known to “Classic Kid FM” listeners), Seattle Opera’s Education Director Perry Lorenzo, and the Opera’s Education Associate Jonathan Dean. “OperaMania!” can be heard on Saturday mornings after “Classic Kid FM” and before “Live from the Met.” The show premieres Saturday, October 26, 2002, at 10:00 a.m.

“OperaMania!” says Dean, who heads the Opera’s high school education programs, “will showcase the clever insights and infectious enthusiasm of this region’s opera-loving high school students and give them an opportunity to share their favorite art form with a wider audience.”

Explaining KING FM’s interest in the project, Zekan adds, “As a judge for the Chevron-Texaco Quiz Kids competition for the past two seasons, I was bowled over by these wonderful students who have such a passion for opera. When Perry and Jon came to me with their ideas for a radio program, I realized this would be the perfect way to bring our listeners’ attention to these great kids.”

In six introductory broadcasts (beginning October 26), “OperaMania!” will feature local finalists from the ChevronTexaco Quiz Kids competitions held in Seattle the last two years. Mara Caden, a finalist on the Metropolitan Opera broadcast in spring 2001, will be the first guest; she will discuss Puccini’s *Turandot*. In the seventh week, the program shifts to feature students from schools participating in the “OperaMania!” competition this season.

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Seattle Opera's Education Department has invited approximately thirty schools to compete in the "OperaMania!" tryouts in early December. Teams of three students from each school will take a written and aural exam testing their knowledge of six specific operas. The twelve top-scoring students will become the official "OperaManiacs" and advance to the "OperaMania!" elimination heats, which will be broadcast December 21 through April 19. Arranged in four heats of three students each, the students will script "solo spots" highlighting a specific opera, singer, composer, or tradition. Seattle Opera and KING FM will help the students review, edit, and produce their spots for broadcast. Following each group of three "solo spots" is an opera quiz, from which one student will advance as the winner. (In the quizzes, the students answer interpretive and factual questions about opera and identify musical excerpts.)

The "OperaMania!" finals will be broadcast April 26 to May 10. All participating students will receive a prize.\*

Educators interested in participating in Seattle Opera's "Experience Opera" program should contact Seattle Opera's Education Associate Jonathan Dean at 206-389-7600.

\*Prizes generously provided by the Seattle Opera Guild

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**Press Alert:**

**Seattle Opera will announce its 2003/04 season—its first in Marion Oliver McCaw Hall—  
Tuesday, November 5, 2002.**

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Seattle Opera is recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances. Seattle Opera's summer presentations, particularly of Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, have been acclaimed often and widely as the Pacific Northwest's premier cultural events.

Seattle Opera is grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast major institutional support: Bank of America; The Boeing Company; Classical KING FM 98.1/Beethoven, a nonprofit corporation; Corporate Council for the Arts/ArtsFund; The James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers' Endowment; Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds; King County Arts Commission; Kreielsheimer Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; Nesholm Family Foundation; PONCHO; Washington State Arts Commission; Seattle Arts Commission; Seattle Opera Guild; and Sherman Clay Pianos. Seattle Opera is a participant in the Seattle Arts Stabilization Project, a joint venture of the Seattle Arts Stabilization Committee and the National Arts Stabilization Fund.

Seattle Opera is also grateful to the sponsors of the Opera's education programs: Allen Foundation for the Arts, Corporate Council for the Arts/ArtsFund Cultural Education Enhancement Fund, E.K. and Lillian F. Bishop Foundation, Ex Officio, Fales Foundation, Irene S. Barnett Foundation, King County Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, PONCHO, Seattle Arts Commission, Seattle Opera Guild, Target, U.S. Bank, Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds, Washington State Arts Commission, and Washington Commission for the Humanities.