



For Immediate Release

Grimsley and Luisotti Seattle Opera Artists of the Year

McQuaid, Pagos, and Weyerhauser Join Seattle Opera Board

SEATTLE—On Tuesday, July 11, during its Annual Meeting at McCaw Hall, Seattle Opera’s Artists of the Year were announced: Italian conductor Nicola Luisotti, who conducted Verdi’s *Macbeth*, and American baritone Greer Grimsley, who sang Wotan in Wagner’s *Ring* (biographies below).

Seattle Opera’s Artist of the Year awards are meant to honor the individual singer, conductor, director, or designer who has made the most significant contribution to the success of the season. At the conclusion of the 2003/04 season, Seattle Opera began honoring two Artists of the Year: one a conductor, director, or designer; the other a singer.

Participating in the selection process of Seattle Opera’s Artists of the Year are members of Seattle Opera’s Board of Trustees, Diamond Level and Platinum Circle donors, and staff, as well as selected members of the local press. This is the company’s fifteenth annual selection of Artist of the Year. The voting was tabulated by Clark Nuber P.S. Previous winners include (in chronological order, starting with the 1990/91 season): stage director Francesca Zambello, soprano Sally Wolf, baritone Robert Orth, soprano Jane Eaglen, soprano Harolyn Blackwell, tenor Ben Heppner, countertenor Brian Asawa, soprano Sheri Greenawald, soprano Jane Eaglen, bass Alexander Anisimov, baritone Christopher Maltman, director Stephen Wadsworth, contralto Ewa Podles, bass Stephen Milling and director Christopher Alexander, and last season, bass John Relyea and, once again, director Christopher Alexander.

Greer Grimsley

Wotan, The Wanderer (*Ring*, August 2005)

Bass-Baritone

Greer Grimsley made his Seattle Opera debut in the 1994 production of Wagner's *Lohengrin*, singing Telramund, a role he reprised with the company in 2004. Grimsley's other roles with Seattle Opera include Méphistophélès in Gounod's *Faust*, Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen*, Scarpia in Puccini's *Tosca*, Jack Rance in Puccini's *Fanciulla del West*, and Wagner's Kurwenal (*Tristan und Isolde*), Gunther and Donner (the *Ring*), and Amfortas (*Parsifal*). He reprised Amfortas with Gran Teatre del Liceu and both Telramund and Scarpia at the Metropolitan Opera, where he has appeared in the past as Kurwenal, Jochanaan in Richard Strauss's *Salome*, and Balstrode in Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Other North American credits for this New Orleans bass-baritone include Wotan in Wagner's *Rheingold* and Bluebeard in Bartók's *Bluebeard's Castle* with L'Opéra de Montréal, the Dutchman in Wagner's *Fliegende Holländer* with Pittsburgh Opera, the four villains in Offenbach's *Contes d'Hoffmann* with Minnesota Opera, and engagements with Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and San Francisco Opera. Recent roles in Europe include the Dutchman and Jochanaan with Deutsche Oper Berlin.

Nicola Luisotti

Conductor (*Macbeth*, May 2006)

Nicola Luisotti's Seattle Opera debut conducting *Macbeth* was one of a series of recent North American debuts for Luisotti. In 2003 he conducted Verdi's *Ballo in maschera* at Canadian Opera Company. He has since conducted Bizet's *Carmen* and Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* with LA Opera and Verdi's *Forza del destino* with San Francisco Opera—and he makes his Metropolitan Opera debut with Puccini's *Tosca* in October. Luisotti has conducted for many of the major European opera companies. Recent engagements abroad include Verdi's *Oberto* at Teatro alla Scala, Verdi's *Trovatore* at Arena di Verona, Verdi's *Traviata* and *Otello* at Paris Opéra, *Tosca* at Bayerische Staatsoper and Teatro Regio (Parma), and five productions with Stuttgart Opera: Verdi's *Otello* and *Trovatore* and Puccini's *Turandot*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*. Luisotti's symphonic credits include leading the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra, the Teatro San Carlo Orchestra, the Orchestra National de France, and the Zagreb Symphony Orchestra.

**Seattle Opera 2006/2007 Board of Trustees
New Trustees Announced at Annual Meeting**

At Seattle Opera's Annual Meeting, the company welcomed new trustees Tom McQuaid, George C. Pagos, and Dr. William T. Weyerhaeuser.