



**SEATTLE OPERA**  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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**Asher Fisch and Mariusz Kwiecien  
Named  
Seattle Opera Artists of the Year**

**Seattle Opera Board Announced for 2007/08**

SEATTLE—On Tuesday, July 10, during its Annual Meeting at McCaw Hall, Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins announced that the company’s Artist of the Year awards went to Asher Fisch, who conducted Richard Strauss’s *Rosenkavalier* and the International Wagner Competition at Seattle Opera in August 2006, and Mariusz Kwiecien, who sang the title role in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* at Seattle Opera in January 2007.

“The choices couldn’t have pleased me more,” said Jenkins. “Asher is not only one of the greatest conductors of Strauss and Wagner of our time, he was eager to work with us on our inaugural International Wagner Competition, and displayed an astounding grasp of the whole Wagner repertory. Mariusz is one of the world’s great baritones and in my opinion the world’s best Giovanni. I’m honored whenever he sings with Seattle Opera.”

Fisch is currently in rehearsal at Seattle Opera for Wagner's *Flying Dutchman (Der fliegende Holländer)*, which opens August 4 and runs through August 25, 2007. Kwiecien will next be seen at Seattle Opera as Riccardo in Bellini's *I Puritani*, which opens May 3 and runs through May 17, 2008.

In 1991, the Seattle Opera's Artist of the Year award was created to honor the individual singer, conductor, director, or designer who had 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 for the season: 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 sixteenth 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 (twice), soprano Harolyn Blackwell, tenor Ben Heppner, countertenor Brian Asawa, soprano Sheri Greenawald, bass Alexander Anisimov, baritone Christopher Maltman, director Stephen Wadsworth, contralto Ewa Podlés, bass Stephen Milling and director Chris Alexander (twice), and bass John Relyea. Last season, baritone Greer Grimsley (Wotan/Wanderer in the 2005 *Ring des Nibelungen*) and conductor Nicola Luisotti (2006 production of *Macbeth*) were named Artists of the Year.

### **Short Biographies of Asher Fisch and Mariusz Kwiecien**

Asher Fisch  
Conductor

A native of Jerusalem, Asher Fisch made his company debut conducting Seattle Opera's first production of Wagner's *Parsifal* in 2003. He returned the following year for Wagner's *Lohengrin* and, in 2006, conducted *Der Rosenkavalier* and the International Wagner Competition. The music director of New Israeli Opera, Fisch made his U.S. debut in 1995 conducting Wagner's *Fliegende Holländer* at Los Angeles Opera. Since then, he has conducted Lehar's *Merry Widow* and Verdi's *Rigoletto*, and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at the Metropolitan Opera, as well as conducting *Madama Butterfly*, Verdi's *Macbeth*, and J. Strauss's *Fledermaus* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Janacek's *Katya Kabanova* at Houston Grand Opera. Fisch has conducted operas in Europe at Vienna Staatsoper, Royal Opera Covent Garden, Berlin Staatsoper, Bayerische Staatsoper, and

Royal Danish Opera, among others. In Adelaide, he conducted Wagner's *Ring* at the State Opera of South Australia. His many symphony credits include the Munich Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Japan's NHK Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Seattle Symphony, New York Philharmonic, and Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. Also a pianist, Maestro Fisch has conducted several Mozart piano concerti and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* from the keyboard, and has performed the four-hands version of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* with Daniel Barenboim in Berlin. Fisch is currently in rehearsal at Seattle Opera for Wagner's *Flying Dutchman (Der fliegende Holländer)*. In 2008, he will make his debut at the Teatro alla Scala conducting Lehar's *Merry Widow*.

Mariusz Kwiecien  
Baritone

Mariusz Kwiecien made his Seattle Opera debut singing Malatesta in the 2003 production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*. He returned to the company in 2007 as Don Giovanni, a role that he has sung in Europe, the United States, and Japan. The Polish baritone began his career at the Krakow Opera in 1993, performing Aeneas in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. He has appeared in theaters across Europe, including Teatro alla Scala, Vienna State Opera, Royal Opera Covent Garden, and the Glyndebourne Festival, among others. He has also appeared in Teatro Municipal in Sao Paulo, Brazil, as Enrico in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. In the U.S., Kwiecien has performed at such houses as Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera, where his roles have included Guglielmo, Mozart's Count Almaviva, Ali in Rossini's *Italiana in Algeri*, Marcello in Puccini's *Bohème*, and, in 2006, Malatesta. Other regular roles for Kwiecien are Belcore in Donizetti's *Elisir d'amore*, Silvio in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, and the title role in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Kwiecien will next be seen at Seattle Opera as Riccardo in Bellini's *I Puritani*.

## **Seattle Opera 2007/08 Board of Trustees Announced at Annual Meeting**

At Seattle Opera's Annual Meeting, the 2007/2008 Board of Trustees was announced.

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Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. The company is recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances, especially the Opera's interpretations of the works of Richard Wagner. Seattle Opera's Wagner tradition began under the leadership of the company's founding general director, Glynn Ross, and has continued since 1983 under General Director Speight Jenkins. Since 1975, Seattle Opera has presented 35 cycles of the *Ring* (three different productions), in addition to acclaimed productions of all the other major operas in the Wagner canon. Seattle Opera has achieved the highest per capita attendance of any major opera company in the United States, and draws opera-goers from four continents, nineteen countries, and forty-nine states.