



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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SEATTLE OPERA ANNOUNCES MAJOR GIFTS TOTALING \$21.5 MILLION

**Gerard L. Hanauer, John & Laurel Nesholm and the Nesholm Family Foundation,
and Susanne F. Hubbach make generous commitments to
Seattle Opera**

Seattle—Seattle Opera's general director, Speight Jenkins, announced at the Seattle Opera's Annual Meeting that three major donations have been given to Seattle Opera, totaling \$21.5 million. Gerard L. (Jerry) Hanauer, John and Laurel Nesholm and the Nesholm Family Foundation, and Susanne F. Hubbach, all long-time supporters of Seattle Opera, have made exceptionally generous contributions to help secure the financial and artistic future for the company. These gifts mark three of the most generous gifts made in Seattle Opera's history. Seattle Opera Board President Steve Phelps also announced during the Annual Meeting that Seattle Opera expects to achieve a balanced budget for fiscal year 2006/07. (Audited financials for the 2006/07 season are expected to be available December 2007.)

The three donations were committed as follows:

- \$15 million from Jerry Hanauer with \$10 million going to Seattle Opera's permanent endowment fund immediately and an additional \$1 million to be given in his estate plan, and \$4 million to be used for annual support over the next four years. The Hanauer gift to the endowment will bring the total endowment to \$18.6 million, more than doubling the current assets in the endowment fund.
- \$5 million from the Nesholm Family Foundation and John and Laurel Nesholm in support of artistic initiatives over a five year period, fiscal years 2007 through 2012. Artistic initiatives include the development of new productions and co-productions, a new opera commission scheduled for 2010, and initiatives in support of innovative, educational, and theatrical approaches to the field of opera.
- \$1.5 million from Susanne F. Hubbach with \$1 million in support of annual operations, through fiscal year 2012 and \$500,000 to Seattle Opera's permanent endowment fund.

"I am overwhelmed at the generosity of these four donors," said Jenkins. "To produce opera in these times takes this kind of financial support. To receive it, however, is cause for great joy. Each of these people cares about Seattle, our opera, and our art form. My only means of expressing gratitude is to strive to present the best opera possible now and in the years to come."

Gerard L. (Jerry) Hanauer, a passionate supporter of Seattle Opera, has been a Seattle Opera board member since 1989. "What is important to me is beauty and excellence," said Hanauer. "My company, Pacific Coast Feather Company, is a world-class company, and I have had for numerous years now the same feeling about Seattle Opera. In its administrative as well as artistic thrust, under the auspices of Speight Jenkins and Kelly Tweeddale, Seattle Opera can compete with any opera company in the world. There is a certain passion and spark in the performances of Seattle Opera that are really quite unique, and I love it."

John and Laurel Nesholm, who had one of their earliest dates at a Seattle Opera performance of *Der Rosenkavalier*, have been involved in community activities for more than 35 years. "Laurel and I have attended every Seattle Opera production since January 1969 shortly after we met," said John Nesholm. "We have watched the company grow and develop into its present state of artistic excellence, a consistent quality rarely attained by any of the opera companies we have seen in this country and Europe. Seattle Opera has brought our family its most satisfying artistic experiences. We feel that it is important to be able to realize Seattle Opera's exciting plans for future productions."

In her gracious and understated way, Sue Hubbach explains her support of Seattle Opera. “I thoroughly enjoy listening to opera,” she said. “It’s a marvelous thing for Seattle to have an opera company of this quality, and I’m happy to help it continue to be one of the best opera companies in the world.” Hubbach also commented on Seattle Opera’s Education programs. “We also reach out to the schools and to young people, so they can learn to love and appreciate opera,” she said. “Educational outreach is a very important part of what we do at Seattle Opera.”

Gerard L. (Jerry) Hanauer was born in Stuttgart, Germany. His family moved to Liechtenstein and from there to Seattle. Hanauer graduated from the University of Washington, served in the U.S. Army, and lived in Greenwich Village after the army. He worked on Wall Street as a trader, and worked in public relations. He married Lenore Ettelson and had three children. In 1965, he moved his family to Seattle and joined the family business, Pacific Coast Feather Company (PCFC). The third generation to be involved with the business, he took over the company when his father died. He was president of the company from 1972 to 1993 and CEO from 1993 to 1999. During Hanauer’s tenure, the company grew from being a small regional supplier of bedding to becoming the dominant leader in the industry. PCFC is now the largest US manufacturer of basic bedding. Hanauer is co-chairman of the board of PCFC, with his son Nicholas Hanauer. Hanauer was an early believer and investor in his son Nick’s internet company, which once had offices within PCFC, then went through several transformations and was recently sold (as aQuantive and its subsidiary, Avenue A) to Microsoft. PCFC has always been noted and respected for the quality of its products, and Hanauer respects excellence and high standards both in business and in the arts.

John Nesholm is a founding partner of LMN Architects. He served as Seattle Opera’s Board president from 1993 to 2005, and has served as Seattle Opera’s Board Chair from 2005 to the present. He also serves as president of the Seattle Parks Foundation and the Nesholm Family Foundation, and has been a past president of the Rainier Club.

Laurel Nesholm served on the Seattle Opera Board as a trustee from 1986 to 1992. Past involvements include serving in several capacities at the University of Washington, and she is Executive Director of

the Nesholm Family Foundation. The Nesholms have been Seattle Opera subscribers and donors for 38 years.

The Nesholm Family Foundation is well known in the Seattle area and has been dedicated to supporting local performing arts, health and human services, and educational organizations since 1987. The foundation, which has a dedicated board of 7 (including family and non-family members) is celebrating its 20th year of grantmaking. It is committed to responding to the issues of the day and to contributing to the vitality and vibrancy of the community.

Susanne F. Hubbach has lived in the Pacific Northwest all her life. Her family founded Fisher Communications. Hubbach graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in home economics. The first opera she ever saw was *Lohengrin*, in Seattle, in 1936. Her second opera was *Tosca*, which she saw at the Met during a year's internship in New York as a dietitian. She worked as a dietitian at Swedish Hospital in Seattle, while her husband was overseas during World War II. She then devoted her time to her family, which now includes two children and their spouses, four grandchildren and their spouses, and seven great-grandchildren. Hubbach has an adventurous spirit and she has traveled all over the world in the past two decades. She has been a member of Seattle Opera's board of trustees since 1983. A tireless volunteer, she has served on a number of Seattle Opera Guild committees, and given generously of her time and energy to Seattle Opera.

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About Seattle Opera

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.

Seattle Opera's permanent endowment is held and managed by a separate 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, Seattle Opera Foundation. The foundation was created in 1982 with a mission to receive and invest donations for the benefit of Seattle Opera. Each year, the foundation releases a minimum of five percent of the fund in support of Seattle Opera's annual operations.