



SEATTLE OPERA
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FOR RELEASE: September 16, 2009

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“Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer” Video Premieres

September 26 at Seattle’s Central Cinema

Video Screening and Q&A with Cassidy Quinn Brettler and Director Sami Kubo

Seattle—Seattle Opera announced today it will host a release party for its “Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer” video on Saturday, September 26 at Seattle’s Central Cinema. The party will feature the premiere of the 18-minute reality-style video which documents the experiences of an opera newbie attending Seattle Opera’s *Ring* cycle, a question-and-answer session with *Confessions* host Cassidy Quinn Brettler and video director Sami Kubo, displays of *Ring* costumes, and a performance by one of Seattle Opera’s Young Artists. To create *Confessions*, Seattle Opera worked with Reel Grrls, a Seattle-based media and technology training program for young girls.

The *Confessions* video project is one of many initiatives Seattle Opera has developed as a Wallace Foundation Excellence Award grant recipient. The four-year grant is geared toward innovative technological approaches to audience-building. Audience Development Manager Aubrey Bergauer organized the video project, and she is excited to give audiences another chance to connect with the company at the release party. “The *Confessions* project is about engaging new people with this art form,” she said. “Guests at the release party can see costumes up close, meet Cassidy and ask questions, and gain exposure to the core of opera, which is live performance.”

Cassidy Quinn Brettler, a 20-year-old student at Boston’s Emerson College, was one of 49 hopefuls who applied to host Seattle Opera’s video project. Over 6,500 votes were cast online for the five finalists, whose videos were posted on the company’s website during a four-day voting period. Throughout the

summer, Brettler received a crash course in Wagner's *Ring*, Seattle Opera's signature production. She "swam" with the Rhine Daughters, ran along the river bottom with Alberich, and learned about the stage magic—the music, the characters, and the opera—from the artists themselves.

Along the way, she was accompanied by a camera crew from Reel Grrls. Sami Kubo, a student at New York City's Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, directed the video. The group spent 11 days filming and captured over 60 hours of content, which was edited down into an 18-minute video.

"With this project, we wanted to extend Seattle Opera's reach," said Bergauer. "We accomplished that—based on the website traffic on the *Confessions* page, the number of hits and responses on our blog, and all the viral social networking activity that went on during the project—from the voting period all the way through the last opera."

Seattle Opera will offer back-to-back screenings of the video on Saturday, September 26. The first screening will begin at 7:00 (doors open at 6:30), and will be followed by a question-and-answer session with Brettler and Kubo, as well as performances by a Seattle Opera Young Artist. The second screening will begin at 8:30, and will feature the same events. Light refreshments will be provided. There is no cost to attend the release party, but reservations are required. Interested guests should reserve a place by calling the box office at 206.389.7676 or by emailing tickets@seattleopera.org

To learn more about the "Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer" project or to catch up on Brettler's summer, visit <http://seattleopera.org/confessions> or <http://seattleopera.blogspot.com/search/label/Confessions>.

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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. Since 1975, Seattle Opera has presented 38 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 operagoers from four continents and fifty states.