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## **Hilda Cullen Appointed Director of Public Relations for Seattle Opera**

Seattle— Seattle Opera Administrative Director Kelly Tweeddale announced today that Hilda Cullen has been appointed Director of Public Relations for Seattle Opera. Cullen will be responsible for media relations, public relations, and publications for the Seattle Opera and replaces Tina Ryker, who retired after 25 years of service.

“I am pleased to welcome Hilda Cullen to the company. Her extensive background in publications and destination public relations is a great fit for Seattle Opera, a company known internationally for its compelling and theatrical approach to opera with a special emphasis on the Wagner repertoire. Ms. Cullen’s background will help us to extend our reach not only within our community, but abroad as well.” said Tweeddale.

Cullen has held previous positions as Director of Communications and Film Commissioner for the Santa Cruz County Conference & Visitors Council, Communications Manager for the Oregon Tourism Commission, and Director of Marketing and Communications for Extraordinary Places. She served for nine years as a Media Officer for the Canadian Consulate General in Seattle, working with tourism and arts organizations throughout Canada. Early in her career, Cullen worked for Western Opera Theater, the former touring branch of San Francisco Opera.

Cullen received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Humanities/Music from the University of California at Berkeley. She is a member of the Society of American Travel Writers and has served two terms as an elected board member for SATW’s Western Chapter. She also served for several years on the board of Flamenco Arts NW.

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Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera has developed into 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. In 2006, Seattle Opera presented its first International Wagner Competition, made possible by the Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences.

Seattle Opera is grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast major institutional support: The Boeing Company, Microsoft Corporation, 4Culture, 98.1 Classical KING FM, ArtsFund, C.E. Stuart Charitable Trust, Kreielsheimer Endowment Fund, Mayor’s Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs (City of Seattle), National Endowment for the Arts, Nesholm Family Foundation, PONCHO, The James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers’ Endowment, Washington State Arts Commission, Seattle Opera Guild, and Sherman Clay.