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SEATTLE OPERA NAMES ASHER FISCH AS PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR

SEATTLE—General Director Speight Jenkins announced today at Seattle Opera's fall board meeting that the company has named Asher Fisch as Principal Guest Conductor. Fisch, the Music Director of the Israeli Opera, conducted Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* for Seattle Opera this past August. He was awarded the company's Artist of the Year award for the 2006/07 season. Fisch will conduct Seattle Opera's eagerly awaited second International Wagner Competition on August 16, 2008. As the company's principal guest conductor, he will play a large role in future conducting and he will serve as an important musical advisor to Speight Jenkins.

"Asher Fisch has conducted some of the greatest performances of Wagner and Strauss that Seattle Opera has ever enjoyed," said Speight Jenkins. "He is vastly knowledgeable about opera, has impeccable taste, has a great deal of experience in the practical decisions of working in an opera company, and finally, has great rapport with the musicians who comprise our orchestra. I consider it an honor to Seattle Opera that he has accepted my offer to be Principal Guest Conductor."

Fisch conducted Seattle Opera's first International Wagner Competition in 2006. He has been working with Jenkins to audition new singers for the 2008 competition. A native of Jerusalem, Maestro Fisch is currently the music director of the Israeli Opera. In 2003, he made his Seattle Opera debut with *Parsifal* for the company's first production in Marion Oliver McCaw Hall.

Short Biography of Asher Fisch

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 Richard Strauss' *Rosenkavalier* and the International Wagner Competition. Fisch recently conducted Wagner's *Flying Dutchman (Der fliegende Holländer)* for Seattle Opera in August 2007. The music director of Israeli Opera, Fisch made his U.S. debut in 1995 conducting Wagner's *Fliegende Holländer* at Los Angeles Opera. Since then, he has conducted Lehár'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. He returns to Seattle Opera to conduct the International Wagner Competition on August 16, 2008. In 2008, he will also make his debut at the Teatro alla Scala conducting *The Merry Widow*.

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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.

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