



**For Release: Saturday, April 1, 2006**

**Peter Kazaras named Artistic Director  
of  
Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program**

***The Turn of the Screw*, which Kazaras directs,  
Opened March 31  
At Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, Washington**

Seattle—General Director Speight Jenkins announced today that Peter Kazaras has been named Artistic Director of Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program. This is a new position for the program, which began in 1998. The addition of the position is designed to enhance the quality and effectiveness of Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program, which is already regarded as one of the finest in the country. The artistic director will act as stage director of the program's fall events and spring opera, and will serve as the primary acting instructor for the program. Kazaras will play a major role in auditioning singers for the program and in selecting the repertoire.

Kazaras, a tenor, has had a long career on the opera stage and is known in major opera companies across the U.S. (including the Metropolitan Opera) and abroad; in recent years, the noted "singing actor" has established himself as a stage director. In 2003, he directed Seattle Opera's new production of Bellini's *Norma*; in 2005, he directed the Seattle Opera Young Artists' production of Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro*; this season he directs the Young Artists' production of Britten's opera *The Turn of the Screw*, which is based on Henry James' ghost story. (The production opens Friday, March 31, at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue.)

In making the announcement about the new position, Jenkins stated: "Peter Kazaras has a remarkable facility for bringing out the best in young artists. I have seen him coach them, direct them, and advise them, all with great success. I am delighted that we are establishing this new position, which is vital to ensuring the continuity of the Young Artists Program and providing it with the highest quality of leadership."

Prior to the creation of the position of artistic director, stage directors were contracted on a year-by-year basis for the annual opera performances. Kazaras's work was such a success last season when he directed *Figaro* that he was asked to return this season to direct. He has proved particularly effective in knowing and addressing, as a singer, the challenges singers face, while bringing to the table a director's overview and insight into how everything should come together.

Kazaras's knowledge of opera was another factor in his selection. In opera circles, he is well known for his knowledge of the opera repertoire and his keen understanding of the dramatic and intellectual underpinnings of individual works. ("Peter is a passionate opera intellectual who knows how to reach you emotionally," said Tina Ryker, Seattle Opera's communications and public relations director.)

Kazaras last sang with Seattle Opera in the summer of 2005, performing the role of Loge in Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*; the tenor has sung several other roles with the company, including the role of the mysterious Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw* when Seattle Opera presented it on the mainstage in 1994.

As Artistic Director of the Young Artists Program (which is not a full-time position), Kazaras will continue with his career as a singer and director, performing roles and staging opera for companies throughout the U.S. and abroad.

### ***THE TURN OF THE SCREW*** (New production)

Music by Benjamin Britten  
Libretto by Myfanwy Piper  
Sung in English with English captions

Performed at the Theatre at Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, Washington

### **March 31, April 1, 2m, 7, 8, and 9m, 2006**

Estimated Running Time: 2 hours, 15 minutes including one intermission

Evenings: 7:30 p.m. Sunday Matinees: 2:00 p.m.

**Single Ticket Prices: \$15 Student, \$35 Adult**

**Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 800-426-1619 or 206-389-7676**

Order Online: [www.seattleopera.org](http://www.seattleopera.org)

### **ARTISTS**

The Governess: Robyn Driedger-Klassen (3/31, 4/2, 4/8), Alexis Martin (4/1, 4/7, 4/9)

Quint/Prologue: Wesley Rogers (3/31, 4/2, 4/8), Ted Schmitz (4/1, 4/7, 4/9)

Miles: David Korn

Flora: Maureen McKay (3/31, 4/2, 4/8), Anya Matanovic (4/1, 4/7, 4/9)

Mrs. Grose: Teresa S. Herold (3/31, 4/2, 4/8), Lucia Cervoni (4/1, 4/7, 4/9)

Miss Jessel: Sarah Heltzel (3/31, 4/2, 4/8), Elizabeth Schultz (4/1, 4/7, 4/9)

Conductor: Dean Williamson

Director: Peter Kazaras

Set Designer: Donald Eastman

Lighting Designer: Connie Yun

Costume Designer: Cynthia Savage

***Biographies of the artists in the production can be found on Seattle Opera's Web site. Click on Young Artists Opera and go to the "Artists" page. On the "Artists" page, click on the artist's name to see his or her biography.***

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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.

Seattle Opera is grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast major institutional support: ArtsFund, Bank of America, The Boeing Company, Classical KING FM 98.1, Charles E. Stuart Charitable Foundation, The James and Sherry Raisbeck Singers' Endowment, 4Culture, Kreielsheimer Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, National Endowment for the Arts, Nesholm Family Foundation, PONCHO, City Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, Seattle Opera Guild, Sherman Clay Pianos, and Washington State Arts Commission. Seattle Opera wishes to thank Education's major supporters which includes The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, The Charles Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, Peach Foundation, The Herman Lissner Foundation, William J. and Sandra Dunn, Mr. and Mrs. Everil E. Loyd, Jr., Citigroup Foundation, National Endowment For The Arts, Seattle Foundation, and The E.K. and Lillian F. Bishop Foundation.