

Seattle Opera
Public Relations
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Press Contact:
Tina Ryker, tina.ryker@seattleopera.org,
206-676-5543
Visuals Contact: Monte Jacobson,
monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org

Seattle Opera Chorus Sings At Mariners' Home Opener

Seattle—Members of the **Seattle Opera Chorus** will sing the national anthem at the Seattle Mariners' first game of the season at SAFECO Field, April 8, 2003. The Seattle Opera Chorus is made up of a group of highly experienced singers noted for their quality. Thirty-six choristers (all of whom belong to the American Guild of Musical Artists AFL-CIO) will perform in this year's home opener against the Anaheim Angels. Soprano **Mary McLaughlin** from Seattle Opera Chorus will sing "God Bless America" during the seventh inning stretch.

Seattle Opera singers have had quite a run at SAFECO Field. Soprano Deborah Voigt and tenor Gary Lakes opened the ballpark with the national anthem on July 15, 1999, when they were in town to sing *Der Freischütz*, and members of the *Rheingold* and *Walküre* casts sang there the following summer. In April 2001, nine members of the *Falstaff* cast took the field. Tenor Alan Woodrow joined the Mariners three times during their playoff run in September 2001, and baritone Richard Paul Fink opened the 2002 season. Seattle Opera singers have stepped up to the plate for ten more games since then. During *Un ballo in maschera* in May 2002, tenor Vinson Cole, baritone Gordon Hawkins, and tenor Raúl Melo each took the field. Later in the season, baritone Erich Parce and soprano Jane Eaglen both made their SAFECO Field solo debuts. Singers from the Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program appeared as a group to sing the national anthem in fall 2002. The last singer from Seattle Opera to appear at a Mariners' game was soprano Helene Schneiderman, Olga in *Eugene Onegin*, who sang the national anthem in September 2002.

Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins, who celebrates his 20th anniversary with the company this summer, is an enthusiastic Mariners fan, and attends as many home games as his busy schedule allows.

The Mariners' home opener begins at 2:05 p.m. at SAFECO Field, April 8, 2003. Seattle Opera's next production is Beethoven's *Fidelio*, opening May 3, 2003, at Mercer Arts Arena.

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. Seattle Opera's summer presentations, particularly of Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, have been acclaimed often and widely as among the Pacific Northwest's premier cultural events.

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