



SEATTLE OPERA  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

NEWS

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## **Seattle Opera Uses Digital Projection For the First Time in *Parsifal***

Seattle—Seattle Opera's *Parsifal* is the first Seattle Opera production utilizing digital projection technology. Seattle Opera Scenic Studios selected this technology to create designer Robert Israel's vision of a world where time and space become one. Although Seattle Opera pioneered the use of slide projection and film for opera sets as early as the 1960s and used slide projection as recently as 2003's *Norma*, the new technology employed for *Parsifal* creates a completely different visual feel for the audience.

"We can pull leaves off trees; we can change a desert into a forest before your eyes," said Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins about the capabilities of the new technology for *Parsifal*.

Seattle Opera's new digital projection capabilities are made possible through the generous in-kind support of two leading companies in the projection industry. **Scharff Weisberg** supplied an eight-screen WATCHOUT system and **Digital Projection, Inc.** has provided four of its THUNDER10000Dsx projectors (with additional Digital Projection projectors coming from Scharff Weisberg) for this production.

"We are delighted our high-performance THUNDER displays are contributing to the Seattle Opera as an integral set element in the Marion Oliver McCaw Hall," said Mike Levi, president of Digital Projection, Inc. "Audiences will be astounded by the dynamic imagery that will help make the Seattle Opera's production of *Parsifal* one of a kind."

The projectors are configured backstage and behind the screen that forms the back of the *Parsifal* set. The two-projector-high, four-projector-wide configuration allows for a screen size of 79-feet by 34-feet, and delivers 72,000 lumens and a total pixel resolution of nearly 10.5 million pixels.

Using WATCHOUT, the projection area can be programmed as a seamless, continuous image with video and graphics panning the entire screen. The WATCHOUT content consists of high resolution stills supplied by the projection designers Bob Bonniol and Colleen Bonniol of Seattle's **MODE Studios**, created from artwork of Israel.

The WATCHOUT system allows images to span or move among several video projectors and automatically applies smooth edge blending to overlapping projection areas, which generates a seamless image suitable for live events such as *Parsifal*. WATCHOUT maintains the combined resolution of all projectors/monitors in the system, avoiding the pixelization effect often associated with video walls and other large format video and graphics systems.

Digital Projection's THUNDER 10000Dsx displays deliver brightness of 9,000 ANSI lumens and utilize 3-chip DLP technology by Texas Instruments. These, along with other performance characteristics, provide the brightness, high-quality imagery and digital stability necessary for large-scale theatrical work. Digital Projection's displays have been used exclusively during the Academy Awards®, Grammy Awards® and Emmy Awards® shows, and are held in high regard in the entertainment industry.

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### ***Parsifal* Tech Talk**

For this new production of Wagner's *Parsifal*, Jenkins has reunited Swiss director **François Rochaix** and American designer **Robert Israel**. Rochaix and Israel created Seattle Opera's second *Ring* production (1986-1995). **Michael Chybowksi**, who won an Obie Award in 1999 for his work on *Wit*, designed the lighting. *Parsifal* runs August 2 through August 24, 2003. Tickets are \$47 to \$125, and are available through Seattle Opera Ticket Office, 206-389-7676 or 800-426-1619.

The *Parsifal* scenery and costumes were built by Seattle Opera Scenic Studios and by the Seattle Opera Costume Shop. The Scenic Studios and Costume Shop build sets and costumes for Seattle Opera productions, outside productions, and provide rentals to other companies.

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Seattle Opera Technical Director Robert Schaub presents a behind-the-scenes look at the making of *Parsifal*, including the state-of-the-art technology used for this production, on August 8, 2:00 p.m., and August 16, 2:00 p.m., at the Nesholm Family Lecture Hall in McCaw Hall. "*Parsifal* Tech Talk" tickets are \$20.

All tickets for *Parsifal* and related events are available through Seattle Opera Ticket Office, 206-389-7676 or 800-426-1619. Tickets may also be ordered through [www.seattleopera.org](http://www.seattleopera.org). Further information on the production is available at [www.seattleopera.org](http://www.seattleopera.org).

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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 dedicates its inaugural season in the new Marion Oliver McCaw Hall to Priscilla "Patsy" Bullitt Collins.

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