



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

FOR RELEASE: June 8, 2009

Press Contacts: Hilda Cullen, 206.676.5543, hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org

Sara Schweid, 206.676.5559, sara.schweid@seattleopera.org

Visuals Contact: Monte Jacobson, 206.676.5545, monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org

Seattle Opera's
"Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer"
Has its Host:

Cassidy Quinn Brettler to Lead Behind-the-Scenes Video

Seattle—Seattle Opera has found its host for "Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer." The company's reality-style video project will chronicle 19-year-old Cassidy Quinn Brettler's first experience attending Seattle Opera's renowned production of Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* this summer.

Brettler, a Seattle native, was one of 49 hopefuls who applied to host the program. Over 6,500 votes were cast online for the five finalists, whose videos were posted on the company's website for the four-day voting period starting June 1. The other four finalists were Colton Michael Carothers, Jeff Powell, Amy Tower, and Howard Wu.

A broadcasting and acting double-major at Boston's Emerson College, Brettler has always been intrigued by opera, but has had very little exposure to it, save for attending a production of Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* a few years ago. This summer she will have a second chance to experience German opera—the Mount Everest of all opera experiences, at that—as an attendee of Wagner's *Ring* cycle.

Brettler's *Ring* journey will begin long before opening night on August 9. Throughout the summer she will learn about what it takes to put this monumental opera on stage. She will talk to artists who perform in and create the production, take behind-the-scenes tours, attend rehearsals,

and meet some die-hard *Ring* fans—and she will be sharing her impressions and insights along the way.

The public will be able to follow Brettler’s adventures with the *Ring* by watching for updates on her Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as on Seattle Opera’s Twitter account, Facebook page, and website, seattleopera.org. Additionally, Brettler will be a guest blogger throughout the summer on Seattle Opera’s blog, seattleopera.blogspot.com.

The “Confessions” video project is one of many initiatives Seattle Opera is undergoing as a Wallace Foundation Excellence Award grant recipient. The four-year grant is geared toward innovative technological approaches to audience-building, and begins with projects related to this summer’s *Ring*.

Filming will begin in mid-June, and will continue through the first cycle of the *Ring*, August 9 to 14. The filmmakers at Reel Grrls, a media training program for young girls that will be providing the film crew, will edit the footage into a short video that will be released in September.

###

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 operagoers from four continents, nineteen countries, and forty-nine states.