



SEATTLE OPERA  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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**Press Contacts:** Hilda Cullen, 206.676.5543, [hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org](mailto:hilda.cullen@seattleopera.org)  
Sara Schweid, 206.676.5559, [sara.schweid@seattleopera.org](mailto:sara.schweid@seattleopera.org)

**Visuals Contact:** Monte Jacobson, 206.676.5545, [monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org](mailto:monte.jacobson@seattleopera.org)

## **City of Seattle Proclaims SPEIGHT JENKINS DAY April 25, 2009**

### **Seattle honors Speight Jenkins, General Director of Seattle Opera**

Seattle—Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels has just proclaimed April 25, 2009, as SPEIGHT JENKINS DAY in honor of Speight Jenkins' 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season as General Director of Seattle Opera. The mayor has urged Seattle's citizens to join him "in commending this exceptional individual for his immeasurable contributions to the city's cultural arts and civic life." Seattle Opera will be celebrating Jenkins' 25 years at the helm on April 25<sup>th</sup> at a special tribute dinner.

Jenkins is recognized nationally as a leading authority on opera, a politically active arts advocate, and one of the most influential and accomplished general directors in the country. He became general director of Seattle Opera in 1983. At that time, he was already well known to opera professionals and aficionados through his hosting of the Metropolitan Opera telecasts, his music lectures, and his articles and reviews (he wrote for the *New York Post* and was once an editor of *Opera News*). He has been cited by *Opera News* as one of the 25 "most powerful" names in American opera.

Under Jenkins' leadership, Seattle Opera's productions have captured national and international attention, raising the profile of the city as an arts destination. Jenkins played a key role in the design and building of Seattle's stunning, award-winning opera house, Marion Oliver McCaw Hall. He has championed a nationally-acclaimed education program that has provided thousands of students with their first experience of opera—bringing opera singers to elementary schools and inviting high school students to attend dress rehearsals of mainstage operas.

Jenkins is a graduate of the University of Texas and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. After gaining his law degree at Columbia University, he served four years in the United States Army as a member of the Judge Advocate General's Corps. In addition to his law degree, Jenkins has received an honorary doctorate of humanities from Seattle University and an honorary doctorate of music from the University of Puget Sound. He is married and has two children and three granddaughters.

The entire text of the SPEIGHT JENKINS DAY proclamation may be found on Seattle Opera's website at [seattleopera.org/news/releases](http://seattleopera.org/news/releases).

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### **About Seattle Opera**

SEATTLE OPERA'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES DEDICATES THE 2008/09 SEASON TO SPEIGHT JENKINS IN CELEBRATION OF HIS 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY AS GENERAL DIRECTOR.

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.