



For Immediate Release

November 17, 2008

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## **OPERA COLORADO SETS SALES RECORD WITH PERFORMANCES OF *MADAMA BUTTERFLY***

DENVER, CO—Opera Colorado General Director Gregory Carpenter announced today that *Madama Butterfly* surpassed sales projections and set a sales record for the company. Puccini's tragic romance played to capacity audiences at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex for four performances, November 8, 11, 14 and 16, 2008.

“While *Madama Butterfly* is consistently one of the best-selling operas in the repertory nationally, given current economic trends and competition for media attention during the recent national election, we were cautious in our budget projections for these performances,” Carpenter said.

Total attendance at all four performances was 8,155 or 101% of capacity. Sales for the opera exceeded projections by over \$73,000 or 13%. Sales for *Butterfly* put it among the top sellers at Opera Colorado in recent seasons.

“*Madama Butterfly* now holds the sales record for Opera Colorado subscription performances at the Ellie,” Carpenter reported. “Not since the opening of the opera house and those first performances of *Carmen* in 2005 have we achieved this kind of enthusiastic support from the community,” he continued.

*Carmen* in 2005 had four subscribed performances and four additional non-subscribed performances. When comparing subscription performances for the two operas, *Butterfly* sales exceeded *Carmen* by 273 tickets.

“Audience reaction was uniformly positive during the run,” Carpenter said. “Our performers enjoyed standing ovations at every performance. Word of mouth was excellent and our box office was flooded with last minute pleas from desperate patrons

trying to get a ticket. What a thrill it was to see that ‘sold out’ sign go up in the box office window every night.”

Carpenter indicated that sales are already climbing steadily for the company’s next performance, the Rocky Mountain regional premiere of Bizet’s *The Pearl Fishers*, opening on Valentine’s Day in 2009.

“Since we announced this production, buzz about *The Pearl Fishers* has been terrific,” Carpenter commented. “Taking the strong response to *Madama Butterfly* into consideration, many patrons are already looking for tickets to *The Pearl Fishers* in February.”

However Carpenter also expressed caution about the February performances. “Sales for *Butterfly* began early, before the current economic downturn. While we expect strong sales for *The Pearl Fishers*, it seems prudent to be guarded in our optimism.” Considering current trends in retail sales and slowing sales at other performing arts institutions nationally, Opera Colorado is currently offering special promotions to arts patrons for upcoming productions.

“Today we launched a two-opera subscription package that includes tickets to *The Pearl Fishers* in February and Mozart’s comedy *Così fan tutte* playing in April and May,” Carpenter said. “With this package, patrons can select good seats early and enjoy special savings to both operas.”

Carpenter also mentioned that Opera Colorado is offering a special opening night dinner package for *The Pearl Fishers*, opening on Valentine’s Day. “Taking advantage of the date, we are able to offer a special package in cooperation with Kevin Taylor’s at the Opera House for opening night. Along with their opera tickets, patrons can enjoy cocktails and a pre-opera dinner, and a post-performance cast party for \$350 per couple.”

Complete information about two-opera season ticket packages and the Valentine’s Day dinner package is available at the company’s website, [www.operacolorado.org](http://www.operacolorado.org) or by calling 303.468.2030.

The Opera Colorado 2008-2009 Season is generously sponsored by Ellie Caulkins, Charles and Ursula Kafadar and Susan and Jeremy Shamos with additional support from The Westin Hotel Tabor Center, the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, *The Denver Post* and KOSI radio.

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