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## Opera Colorado Welcomes New Board Members

**Nancy Cochran, John R. Dye, Joanne Dell Fisher, Agatha Kessler,  
Lindsay Arnold Sugden and Bryant Veazey**

**Denver, CO (October 11, 2016)** Opera Colorado announces the appointment of six new members to its Board of Directors. The newly appointed board members include: Director of the Lamont School of Music Nancy Cochran; Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of The Western Union John Dye; Former Retail Executive, National Outlet Regional, Non-profit Event Manager and Consultant Joanne Fisher; Chairman at Fentress Architects Agatha Kessler; Vice President at DaVita Lindsay Arnold Sugden; and Business Executive and Non-profit Director Bryant Veazey.

“I am pleased that such distinguished members of our community have elected to serve on the Opera Colorado Board of Directors,” stated General Director Greg Carpenter “Expanding the board is a major focus of our strategy to broaden our reach in the community and to tap into the talents of a more diverse group of individuals. I am confident that the addition of these new board members will strengthen Opera Colorado as we implement our expanded vision for the company.”

Opera Colorado is excited to welcome these new board members and looks forward to working with them, the full Board of Directors and Opera Colorado Staff towards fulfilling and achieving the plans set forth in the company’s new five-year strategic plan.

“We are pleased to add such a fine group of new members to the Board of Directors and take this great step forward in our strategic plan to enhance our board,” stated Opera Colorado Board Chairman Mike Bock.

### **ABOUT THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

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### **NANCY COCHRAN**

Nancy Cochran currently holds the position of Director of the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. Previously she has served as Director of the Division of Music at Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University, Director of the School of Music at Texas Tech University and for 28 years as Professor of Horn in the Conservatory of Music at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She has appeared as a soloist, chamber music artist, clinician and orchestral player in the United States and abroad. Solo performances and master class presentations have taken her to Poland, Russia, Siberia, Korea, Hungary, China, Japan, England, Estonia, Colombia and Canada as well as throughout the United States. Her international activities include serving two terms as President of the International Horn Society and as a member of its Advisory Council. A featured soloist and speaker at numerous International Horn Workshops, she has also adjudicated a variety of international horn and brass solo competitions including the American Horn Competition, the Gdansk (Poland) International Brass Competition, the Far Eastern Competition of Young Artists (Siberia) and the Nizhny Novgorod (Russia) International Brass Competition. Her students have distinguished themselves as winners and finalists of various competitions and many have gone on to successful performing and teaching careers. For seven summers, she served on the faculty of the National Music Camp at Interlochen, Michigan and, prior to coming to UMKC, taught at the Universities of Montana and Indiana. She has performed with the Aspen Festival Orchestra, New Haven Symphony, Kansas City Symphony, Seoul (Korea) Philharmonic and numerous other ensembles. While in Texas, she served as chair of the Ethics Committee and member of the Executive Committee at the Texas Association of Music Schools and Chair of the College Music Society's Mentoring Committee and member of its Committee on Outreach to Higher Education. She is also active within the National Association of Schools of Music for which she held a regional vice-president position from 2005-2008 and, since 2005, has been a Visiting Evaluator for Accreditation.

### **JOHN R. DYE**

John R. Dye is Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Secretary of The Western Union Company. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing the company's legal and regulatory compliance matters. He is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Western Union Foundation and a member of the Colorado State Banking Board. Prior to joining Western Union in November 2011, Dye was Senior Vice President, Interim General Counsel and Corporate Secretary of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (FHLMC) from July 2011. From July 2007 to July 2011, Dye served as Senior Vice President, Principal Deputy General Counsel



Corporate Affairs of FHLMC, where he worked on corporate transactions and managed attorneys in the areas of corporate disclosure, securities, intellectual property, contracts and human resources. Dye also held senior leadership positions at Citigroup, Inc. and served as Senior Vice President and Senior Counsel at Salomon Smith Barney. Dye began his legal career at the New York-based law firm Brown & Wood. Dye earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from Middlebury College and a Juris doctor degree from the University of Virginia School of Law.

### **JOANNE DELL FISHER**

Joanne Fisher is a former Retail Executive, National Outlet Regional, Non-profit Event Manager and Consultant. Due to her varied careers in business, management, and non-profit consulting, Joanne has a strong background to bring to Opera Colorado. Joanne was formerly a Divisional VP, Store Manager for May D and F and Foley's, Cherry Creek. She guided the store from its opening with the new Cherry Creek Shopping Center in 1990 to 1995 after many successful years with May Department Stores. Following her time at the new Cherry Creek Shopping Center, Ms. Fisher was the Center the Regional Manager for Maidenform Outlet Stores, which covered twenty-eight states. As a result of her volunteer work for the Alzheimer's Association of Colorado, she was hired to be an event manager for the Memories in the Making event in Denver with oversight of events in Greeley, Colorado Springs, Pueblo and Ft Collins. The event grew each year, ultimately including 800 attendees and raising over \$250,000 for the important cause of Alzheimer's. For several years Joanne has worked with local non-profits doing volunteer consulting on event structure and growth. Other volunteering includes 16 years at the Denver Botanic Gardens and Chatfield Farms. Joanne's love of opera came from listening to her father's records as she grew up and from meeting her opera-loving husband, Dr. Larry Fisher. She is excited to be joining Opera Colorado as a board member during a time of growth and exciting change.

### **AGATHA KESSLER**

Agatha Kessler, Chairman at Fentress Architects, guides a global design firm that passionately pursues the creation of sustainable and iconic architecture. Designs by Fentress Architects have won over 500 distinctions for innovation and design excellence, and are visited by more than 450 million people every year. Her fascinating journey, before taking the helm as CEO at Fentress Architects in 2007, includes being an executive in the worlds of finance and technology at Visa and Hewlett Packard. She has earned an MBA, spent four years as a lecturing professor, and has 27 years of international business experience. Her career, and passion toward inspiring



a brighter future through charity work, has taken her across the world. She has lived in Hong Kong, England, the Caribbean, South Africa, Canada, San Francisco and Denver. A believer that educating the next generation of leaders is essential to the company and the world's future; Agatha nurtures mentorship across all levels of the design studio while fostering intellectual growth, strategic thinking and fearless creativity. She has built a team of leaders, achieving a 'people-focused culture' and creating a dynamic, internationally lauded design firm. As Chairman, Agatha brings leadership and learning to her role where she oversees the advancement of the firm's strategic vision while she pursues a Ph.D. in Aviation at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

#### **LINDSAY ARNOLD SUGDEN**

Lindsay Arnold Sugden serves as a Vice President at DaVita, Inc. She holds a dual leadership role as Acting Chief Operating Officer for FullWell, also based in Colorado. Lindsay took a winding path to the business world; her first career was in public service and international non-profit work in Washington, D.C. In Washington D.C., Lindsay served as a Legislative Assistant in the Senate and later, as Program Officer for IRI, a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing democratic principles worldwide. Lindsay managed the organization's programs in Haiti and Cuba and participated in multiple election observation delegations around the world. Lindsay joined DaVita in 2010 after completing her MBA at Stanford Graduate School of Business. She also spent a summer interning with DaVita between her first and second years of business school. Lindsay was attracted to DaVita because of the company's purposeful focus on mission and culture. Lindsay moved to Denver in April 2010 with her husband and son. Together with their dog, they love to camp, hike and raft and are frequent visitors to the Denver Performing Arts Complex.

#### **BRYANT VEAZEY**

As a business executive and non-profit director, Bryant Veazey has worked domestically and abroad with companies in emerging economies to help craft business plans to attract sustainable investment and provide local jobs. Additionally, he helped establish and build \$1.1 billion services business to reduce energy consumption of large industrial end-users to generate energy savings, and played an instrumental role in creating emissions reductions and trading carbon and greenhouse gas credits in the United Kingdom, Germany and Brazil. He has guided due diligence efforts on investments in the gold and energy markets, and presented recommendations to investors, securing investment participation of \$12.6 billion. He currently serves as a board member and treasurer of Lionhearted Kids, CEO of Champa Holdings and as a



volunteer chaplain at the Compassus Hospice & Palliative Care. He previously held the position of CEO for Behre Dolbear Group, Inc. and Treasurer of Golden Star Resources in Denver, CO. He also has worked in Paris, London, and St. Petersburg and Moscow in Russia. From 2014-2016 he served as a board member for Bessie's Hope Senior Services in Denver, CO. He is very thrilled to join Opera Colorado's Board of Directors. In addition to opera, he enjoys hiking, skiing and international travel.

## **ABOUT EXECUTIVE/ARTISTIC TEAM**

### **Greg Carpenter, General Director**

The fourth General Director in Opera Colorado's 33-year history, Greg Carpenter guides both the artistic and administrative operations of the company. His role as General Director began in 2007, prior to which he served as Opera Colorado's Director of Development from 2004–2007, overseeing all fundraising and Board of Directors activities. Prior to joining Opera Colorado, he worked for four years for the National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. His work there included Special Projects Manager for the President of the National Symphony Orchestra from 2000–2001 and Manager of Development from 2001–2004. Carpenter's extensive experience working in the arts also includes two years as the Arts and Event Services Manager for the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland and Special Projects Coordinator for the University of Maryland School of Music. From 1986–1998, Greg Carpenter performed as a professional opera singer. His work as an opera singer included both lead and supporting roles at Glimmerglass Opera, Central City Opera, Sarasota Opera, Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia, Cleveland Opera and Lyric Opera Cleveland. Carpenter currently serves on the Board of Directors for OPERA America, the national service organization for the opera industry. For the 2008 National Performing Arts Convention held in Denver, he served as Chairman of the Fundraising Committee. In 2009 Carpenter received a Livingston Fellowship Award in Leadership from the Bonfils-Stanton Foundation. He also regularly serves as a judge for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and has served as a judge for the Fritz and Lavinia Jensen Foundation Competition. Greg Carpenter received a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from Wittenberg University, a Master of Music degree in vocal performance from Michigan State University and he completed post-graduate studies at the University of Maryland School of Music.



### **Ari Pelto, Music Director**

Ari Pelto, music director of Opera Colorado, is widely known for performances, which have been called poetic, earthy, vigorous and highly individual. He is in demand in opera houses and with symphony orchestras throughout the United States. At age of 24 Pelto was appointed Assistant Conductor at the Spoleto Festival and has gone on to conduct on stages worldwide. His international appearances include symphonic performances with the Bochumer Philharmoniker, productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Falstaff* at New National Theatre of Tokyo, and *Faust* at the Teatro Nacional Sucre in Quito, Ecuador. In 2004 he made his highly-praised debut with New York City Opera conducting *La Traviata*, after which he became a regular guest conductor, returning for productions of *Madama Butterfly*, *La Boheme* and *Carmen*. In 2015, Pelto was named Opera Colorado's first ever Music Director, where he has conducted acclaimed performances of *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Aida* and the recent world premiere of Lori Laitman's long-awaited work, *The Scarlet Letter*, a recording of which will be released in fall 2017 on the Naxos label. In upcoming seasons at Opera Colorado Pelto will lead productions of *La Fanciulla del West*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and more. Highlights of his 2015/16 season included *Aida* at Utah Symphony and Opera, for which the *Salt Lake Tribune* raved "Whether in the grandeur of the triumphal scene or the exquisite beauty of the Nile scene, one couldn't have asked for a more inspiring performance of Verdi's score," a double bill of *La Voix Humaine* starring Patricia Racette and *Gianni Schicchi* at Chicago Opera Theater, and return appearances at Atlanta Ballet and at Opera Memphis. He conducted a variety of symphonic programs with orchestras in the US, including Omaha Symphony and the NYU Symphony. After earning his Bachelor of Music in violin performance at Oberlin Conservatory, he studied conducting at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Rubin Academy in Jerusalem and with Imre Pallo at Indiana University.

### **About Opera Colorado**

Great cities need great art, and for more than three decades, Opera Colorado has brought world-class performing arts to Colorado audiences. Today Opera Colorado serves as a cornerstone of Denver's cultural community, bringing grand opera to the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, its Denver home since its opening in 2005. Alongside standard repertoire in the grand opera tradition Opera Colorado presents new works or rarely performed productions each season. The company reaches more than 37,000 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs throughout the Rocky Mountain region. Opera Colorado's Young Artists, singers at the beginning stages of their careers, perform during their eight-month residency with the company in schools and community centers across the



State – including an annual tour on the Western Slope. Recognized nationally for its excellence, the Young Artists program provides training for the next generation of American opera singers. The 2016-2017 Season productions at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House will feature Puccini's *La Fanciulla de West* in November 2016 and Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* in May 2017, and Laura Kaminsky's *As One* at the Performing Arts Complex at PCS in March 2017. [www.operacolorado.org](http://www.operacolorado.org)

*Music Director Ari Pelto is sponsored by Mike and Julie Bock. Season sponsors for the 2016-2017 Season include the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), Marriott The Residence Inn, Rassman Design and media partner Out Front Magazine.*

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