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Opera Colorado Hires New Managing Director Paul Deckard

Denver, CO (June 2, 2017) Opera Colorado announced that they have hired Paul Deckard as Managing Director. Paul Deckard brings a diverse set of experiences as both a leader and an artist. His international exposure and artistic background have enabled him to create innovative and collaborative solutions for arts organizations.

As Managing Director, Deckard fills a key leadership position within the company, providing the General Director with input for increased administrative efficiency and financial oversight and planning. He will be responsible for the development of business and organizational strategies in support of the company's strategic plan and oversee the implementation of these initiatives. His role ensures the smooth running of the daily operations through oversight of the Senior Management team, which includes the Director of Marketing and Audience Development, Director of Development, Director of Education and Community Engagement Programs, and Director of Production.

"I am excited to join the team at Opera Colorado," stated Deckard. "The company is embarking on ambitious initiatives with a captivating vision. I am looking forward to helping the team grow the organization to new heights, and I am thrilled to be joining this community."

"Paul brings a wealth of experience in finance and administration in the opera and theatre industry that will assist us in managing our daily operations as well as helping us achieve the important financial and organizational goals set forth in our five-year strategic plan," added General Director Greg Carpenter. "I am thrilled that Paul has joined the Opera Colorado team and look forward to working with him."

About Paul Deckard, Managing Director

Paul has a deep passion for opera. He began his career in opera working in a variety of artistic and production roles at regional companies in the US and Europe. After gaining experience in the creative side of the arts Paul began focusing on providing business strategy and financial consultation for arts organizations. He has worked as a CFO and management consultant



focusing on financial sustainability and strategic planning. Paul has been widely recognized as an influential leader with a successful track record. Most recently he was responsible for the financial turnaround at The Atlanta Opera, where he developed and implemented strategies to eliminate a \$1.1M deficit over two years and double the number of operas and education programs produced per season. Paul Deckard received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre production from Michigan State University and a Master of International Business from Hult International Business School in Cambridge, MA.

About Greg Carpenter, General Director

The fourth General Director in Opera Colorado's 35-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, D.C. 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 Artist 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, 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 has served 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 postgraduate studies at the University of Maryland School of Music.

About Ari Pelto, Music Director and Conductor

Ari Pelto, Music Director of Opera Colorado, is widely known for performances that 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 the 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 the 2016-2017 season at Opera Colorado, Pelto lead productions of *La Fanciulla del West* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. For the 2017-18 season, Pelto will lead productions of *La Bohème*, *Steal a Pencil for Me* and *Falstaff*. 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 U.S., 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 upcoming 2017-2018 season will feature Puccini's *La Bohème* and Verdi's *Falstaff* at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House, as well as the World Premiere of *Steal a Pencil for Me* by Gerald Cohen and Deborah Brevoort at The Wolf Theatre at the Mizel Arts and Culture Center in Denver. Season tickets and more information at www.operacolorado.org

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