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## Vancouver Opera announces key appointments

**Vancouver, BC** ~ Vancouver Opera is pleased to announce two key appointments to the company's administrative staff: **Christopher Libby** will join VO on July 23, 2007 as Managing Director, and **Tom Wright** will commence his tenure June 4, 2007 as Director of Artistic Planning.

**Christopher Libby**, 40, comes to Vancouver Opera after eight years as Managing Director of the Skylight Opera Theater, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, an innovative not-for-profit company that presents opera, musical theatre and cabaret. Under his tenure, the company secured its position as one of most dynamic and the most financially stable arts organizations in Milwaukee, posting three of the company's most successful seasons on record. In addition, under Libby's leadership the Skylight paid off the mortgage on its \$7 million facility, built its endowment and strengthened its cash reserves. Mr. Libby has also held posts as Managing Director for Trinity Irish Dance Company, in Chicago, and General Manager of the University of Chicago's Court Theatre.

Born in Wisconsin, Libby has spent most of his life in the Chicago area. He holds Bachelor's Degrees in both Political Science and Theater from Iowa State University and a Master's degree in Arts Administration from the Bolz Center for Arts Administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is married to photographer wife Michelle. They have two children, aged 5 years and 18 months.

As a senior staff person, Mr. Libby will oversee Vancouver Opera's administrative operations and will play a key role in the planning and implementation of the company's financial, marketing and development strategies. "There are very few companies that could draw me away from the success I have enjoyed at the Skylight Opera Theatre," said Libby, "but Vancouver Opera is an increasingly important and internationally recognized company, and a major cultural asset to Vancouver, BC, and Canada. I look forward to joining Jim Wright's successful team in continuing the company's exemplary creative work and in building on the company's strong community support."

**Tom Wright**, 40, was born in Calgary and grew up in North Vancouver. For the past nine years, he has held the post of Director of Production and Artistic Administration at Arizona Opera. Before that, he spent nine years at Calgary Opera, first as Production Manager and Stage Manager and then as Director of Production. As VO's Director of Artistic Planning, Wright will be responsible for all production and artistic operations and for achieving VO's high standard of excellence in all its artistic activities. He will work closely with the General Director in long-range artistic planning and casting, and will oversee VO's extensive education and touring activities. Wright and his wife Denise have two daughters, aged 9 and 6.

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Upon accepting the position, Tom Wright said, "I'm thrilled to be returning home to Vancouver and joining the team at Vancouver Opera, a company with an international reputation for producing high quality opera and community programming. I plan on helping to build on this solid foundation and to continue the development of the company as one of the best in North America. I am also excited to have the opportunity to raise my two young daughters in the city in which I was raised."

In announcing the appointments, **James W. Wright**, who is not related to Tom Wright, said, "I am very pleased that after a lengthy search in Canada and the United States we have found two experienced arts professionals to fill these important positions. Both are highly regarded in the field and will bring energy, knowledge and creativity to their positions and to the community. All of us at Vancouver Opera are delighted to welcome them."

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