



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 2, 2008

VANCOUVER OPERA AND BALLET BC RETURN TO RENOVATED QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE IN FALL 2008

June 2, 2008; Vancouver, BC – Vancouver Opera and Ballet British Columbia (“Ballet BC”) announced today that the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, home to both the opera and the ballet, will welcome back patrons in October 2008 with a new interior ceiling and dramatically improved acoustics following a preliminary series of renovations to the venue.

The City of Vancouver, the owner of the venue, has informed Vancouver Opera and Ballet BC that the work will be completed before the 2008/2009 Vancouver Opera season, which begins November 22nd with a new production of *Eugene Onegin*, and before Ballet British Columbia returns to the theatre earlier that month with the second production of its season, *The Faerie Queen*. (The Ballet’s first production, in October, has previously been scheduled to be performed in another venue.)

The City of Vancouver has also informed Vancouver Opera and Ballet BC that a decision to proceed with planned renovations to the audience chamber, including the planned reconfiguration of the seating, has been deferred due to complications arising from the presence of lead-based paint in concealed areas of the theatre. The City of Vancouver has assured Vancouver Opera and Ballet BC that it has followed all of the WorkSafeBC procedures for work completed to date.

Vancouver Opera and Ballet BC are engaged in ongoing discussions with the City of Vancouver regarding the planned upgrades to the audience chamber as well as a number of potential additional improvements to the venue that would enhance the experience of opera and ballet audiences.

Vancouver Opera’s General Director James W. Wright said, “We are very excited about the upcoming season and look forward to experiencing the acoustic improvements when our new production of *Eugene Onegin* opens in November – improvements that build upon those already achieved last season. It is unfortunate that the seating reconfiguration could not be completed as planned, but we were faced with a choice between the seats or the season, and we chose the season.”

“While we are continuing to talk to the City about the best way to approach future renovations, we felt it was important to reach out to our subscribers and donors now and begin planning for the upcoming season. We need to turn our attention back to producing opera to the very high standard that our audiences have come to expect from us,” added Mr. Wright.

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Vancouver Opera will be returning its renewing subscribers to their 2007/2008 seats and prices, and will be seating new subscribers at the same rates. The company is now in the process of contacting its subscribers and donors regarding this development. Additional information is available by calling the Vancouver Opera Ticket Centre at 604-683-0222.

Ballet BC's Executive Director, Susan K.E. Howard, said, "We too are disappointed with this development but we are confident our guests will enjoy the improvements in the theatre when they return in November."

- 30 -

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