



CHRISTOPHER MATTALIANO
GENERAL DIRECTOR

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OPERA AMERICA SELECTS PORTLAND OPERA BOARD MEMBER JEFF EVERSHERD FOR NATIONAL HONOR

Portland, OR—OPERA America, the national service organization for opera, today announced that Jeff Evershed, president of M & T Bank’s West Division and Portland Opera past board chair and current board member, will receive the 2010 National Opera Trustee Recognition Award.

“We are delighted to celebrate the substantial achievements of dedicated trustees,” stated Marc A. Scorca, president and CEO of OPERA America. “The National Opera Trustee Recognition Award provides OPERA America and the opera community with the opportunity to recognize those who have been so generous in their passion for the art form, vision and support of their opera companies.”

Portland Opera General Director Christopher Mattaliano commented that “this award could not have gone to a more worthy person. Jeff’s efforts on our behalf have truly been extraordinary.”

Prior to joining Portland Opera’s Board of Directors in 1990 as a corporate representative from one of the organization’s major sponsors, Mr. Evershed had never attended a single opera. That first exposure to opera sparked a passionate commitment to both Portland Opera and to the art form. In his 19 years on the board, he has amassed an astounding resumé of inspired leadership, advocacy and governance. During his tenures as president of the board and as chairman, he led the *Fresh Aria Campaign*, a five-year, \$16.7 million effort to enhance the sustainability of Portland Opera and the artistic quality of productions. It also placed the company on a strong financial footing that has resulted in Portland Opera’s completing 11 of the past 12 years in the black. He also played a pivotal role in helping acquire our new home in 2003 and, in the same year, heading the search for a new general director to replace retiring general director Robert Bailey. The purchase and renovation of The Hampton Opera Center marked the first time that Portland Opera was able to consolidate its administrative, artistic and rehearsal facilities

and a studio theater under one roof. Together with General Director Christopher Mattaliano, he has helped establish the new Portland Opera Studio Artist program and launch a new chamber opera series. Mr. Evershed also led the company in the launch of the *New Era Initiative*, a five-year strategic effort focused on creating sustainability in virtually every area of operations – from earned revenue and fund raising to program planning and endowment.

Learning of the award, Mr. Evershed said: “This is truly a great honor. While it has been my distinct pleasure to work on behalf of such a great company, this award belongs as much to my fellow board members as it does to me. The greatest part of this honor is that it shines the national spotlight once again on Portland Opera and underscores the importance of the Company on the national opera scene.”

OPERA America will pay tribute to Mr. Evershed and the three other 2010 honorees at a February dinner and reception in New York City.