

W.R. (BOB) MCPHEE, General Director & CEO Calgary Opera Association

With over twenty-five years in artistic and administrative leadership, Bob McPhee has become recognized as a leading force in the Canadian arts scene.

Bob was born and raised in Winnipeg where he received his initial education and music training. He began his career as a baritone performing in theatre, opera and on radio and television. He served as artistic director and conductor for several choral groups and taught a large private class of students. Gradually, Bob became more involved in arts administration and studied at Grant MacEwan University and at The Banff Centre School of Management. His first administrative position was with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet as Development Officer and then Director of Development. He joined the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra as Director of Development and was later appointed Assistant General Manager.

Bob was General Manager of Orchestra London prior to joining the Edmonton Symphony as General Manager. In 1992, Bob was appointed President and CEO of the Edmonton Symphony Society and Edmonton Concert Hall Foundation. He successfully led these organizations to the completion of the state-of-the-art 2000 seat concert hall, The Winspear Centre for Music. The project was on schedule and on budget with a \$5M operating endowment in place. The orchestra was in a very stable fiscal position with a solid base of support of over 13,000 subscribers. They introduced a very successful summer festival, began a touring program, made significant commitments to the development and creation of Canadian works and released numerous recordings. In addition, the organization had grown to a total operating budget of \$12M with just over 200 employees.

In the Canada Council Peer Review, Edmonton Symphony was cited as *“a text book on how an orchestra should operate in 1996 achieving high performing standards. With a strong commitment to Canadian artists and repertoire there is a positive and visionary artistic and administrative leadership that includes calculated risk taking.”*

Bob McPhee joined Calgary Opera as General Director and CEO in 1998 allowing him to return to his first love, opera. During his tenure Calgary Opera has moved from a \$2M opera to \$5.1M and has achieved 11 consecutive surplus seasons performing to 96% sold out performances. Calgary Opera has become a leader in the country for the development and presentation of new works. They have presented 4 World premieres, 3 Canadian premieres, 11 company premieres with 3 more newly commissioned works scheduled for 2011 and 2012.

Calgary Opera has developed a significant Education and Outreach curriculum including the Emerging Artist Development Program, a 24-week training residency for 8 singers, the only program of its size and scope in Western Canada. The company has cited the presentation and development of Canadian Artists as one of its core priorities. Calgary Opera holds the distinction of being one of the most recorded companies in Canada, having been broadcast a minimum of once a season for the past 12 seasons. The Company has moved into its first permanent home at the Arrata Opera Centre allowing for the further expansion of all areas of the company's programming.

“In the past seasons Calgary Opera has leaped to national prominence under the leadership of Bob McPhee”

- Kenneth Delong, **Opera Canada Magazine**

Throughout his career, Bob has been active in many community associations and is in demand as a clinician and lecturer. Bob has been an adjudicator, assessor and board member for numerous organizations. He was the first Canadian invited to speak at an Opera Europa Conference (Paris 2006). He is a founding board member of the Calgary Arts Development Authority, Past Chair of Opera.ca, sits on the University of Calgary Fine Arts Faculty Advisory Committee and has been a member of the board of directors for Opera America for the past 2 years.

During his career, Bob has worked with some of the great artists of the world from Itzhak Perlman to YoYo Ma, from Renee Fleming to Pavarotti. He has co-produced works with many Canadian and international companies, and is presently co-commissioning and producing Jake Heggie's newest opera with San Francisco Opera, San Diego Opera, Dallas Opera and the State Opera of Australia which will have its Canadian premiere with Calgary Opera in 2012.