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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mount Baker Theatre Main Stage Reopens December 6, 2008

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Bellingham, Washington – On December 6, 2008, the Mount Baker Theatre's main stage will reopen after 9 months of renovations with a Gala featuring Bernadette Peters performing classic Broadway show tunes while supported by a 34-piece orchestra. The renovations include new wiring and electrical systems, new heating, ventilation and air conditioning, improved acoustics and improved lighting. The public is invited to tours of the theatre at an open house on Wednesday, December 10, 2008 between 3 and 5:30 p.m.

Funding for the renovations was provided by the Bellingham-Whatcom Public Facilities District (PFD), grants and private donations from the Campaign for the Arts. David Warren, President of the PFD, says he is extremely pleased with how well this renovation project has progressed. "Dawson Construction has worked closely with the City of Bellingham and LMN Architects from day one and we are really impressed with how they completed the project on time and within budget. I am proud to have been involved with this fine upgrade of our wonderful theatre."

The PFD was greatly assisted by the City of Bellingham on the Mount Baker Theatre renovations, specifically by staff from the Public Works, Planning & Community Development, Finance, and Legal Departments. Says Mayor Dan Pike, "This project was successful because of great partnerships among the PFD, the City, the Mount Baker Theatre and the Campaign for the Arts."

Mount Baker Theatre Project

General Contractor:	Dawson Construction, Inc.
Project Architects:	LMN Architects of Seattle
Project Manager:	City of Bellingham
Mechanical Engineer:	CDi Engineers
Electrical Engineer:	Sparling
Acoustical Consultant:	Jaffe Holden Acoustics, Inc.
Structural Engineer:	Magnusson Klemencic
Lighting/Theatre Consultant:	Candela

Phase II renovations include the installation of a code-compliant fire suppression and notification system, and total replacement of the asbestos covered wiring and circuits for the lobby and 1,517-seat auditorium. Where possible, incandescent lights are being replaced with energy-efficient LEDs. Historic light fixtures are being rewired and upgraded to produce brighter light, and emergency lighting is being installed in the Theatre lobbies.

The Theatre's antiquated heating and ventilation system is being replaced and a zoned, non-coded, annunciated intrusion alarm system installed to protect the historic facility from vandalism and secure backstage equipment from theft. A new air conditioning system will provide more flexibility in the

programming schedule, and allow for rental of the facility to other community organizations throughout the summer. Acoustic upgrades will improve the audience's theatre experience.

Renovations also include reinforcement of the building's foundation beneath the rear stage wall, installation of new concrete walls in the boiler room, repairs to the concrete floor of the Main Stage Auditorium, new exterior doors and windows, repairs to the building's exterior facing and roof, and a new ticketing office layout that is handicap accessible.

The Bellingham-Whatcom Public Facilities District would like to thank its partners:

- The State legislature for creating the public facilities districts legislation;
- The City of Bellingham for providing interim financing, administration, financial, and legal services;
- The Campaign for the Arts (CFA) for its commitment to raise \$4 million in grants and private funds for construction and an additional \$4.2 million for operations;
- The Whatcom Community Foundation for serving as the fiscal sponsor for the CFA, managing campaign funds and providing important administrative support to the dedicated fundraising group;
- The State of Washington for providing the state sales tax rebate used to fund the Arts District and for providing the CFA with over \$1.2 million in grant funding;
- Whatcom County and the Cities of Bellingham, Blaine, Everson, Ferndale, Lynden, Nooksack, and Sumas for forming the BWPFD which used their portions of the state sales tax rebate to fund the Arts District;
- The Mount Baker Theatre and the Whatcom Museum Foundation for their team spirit in working towards the common goal of the Arts District;
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for \$120,280 in grant funding for acoustical work at the Mount Baker Theatre; and
- The City of Bellingham and CFA for providing streetscape improvements.

For more information, see the Mount Baker Theatre's website at www.mountbakertheatre.com.

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