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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**DONALD RUNNICLES TO BE HONORED AT
SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC COMMENCEMENT**

First at NEW Civic Center home

SAN FRANCISCO, May 16, 2007: **Donald Runnicles**, music director and principal conductor of San Francisco Opera since 1992, will receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's commencement ceremony, May 25, 2007 at 10:30 a.m. Maestro Runnicles will also deliver the first commencement address since the Conservatory's relocation to the Civic Center in the fall of 2006.

San Francisco Opera invited **Donald Runnicles** to conduct two Wagner Ring cycles in 1990, and he was soon invited to become music director, succeeding Sir John Pritchard. He has led more than 50 productions with the Opera, including the highly-acclaimed North American premiere of Olivier Messiaen's *St. François d'Assise* and world premieres of Conservatory faculty composer, Conrad Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons* and Michael Korie and Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk*. Other notable productions include rarities like Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's *The Mother of Us All*, Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, Busoni's *Doktor Faust*, and Janáček's fable *The Cunning Little Vixen*—as well as the 1990 Ring cycles and a wide variety of repertory staples.

Says Conservatory President Colin Murdoch: "We are delighted to honor an artist who has made such a significant contribution to the musical life of San Francisco. Donald has been a source of inspiration to our students, generously sharing his insights in master classes and fully supporting the Conservatory's continued growth as an institution. It is only fitting that he should be honored at our first commencement ceremony at 50 Oak Street." A total of 80 students will receive bachelors and masters degrees.

(more)

ABOUT THE CONSERVATORY:

Founded in 1917, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music is recognized as one of the leading music schools in the world. Each year, the Conservatory serves more than 1,300 students through its Collegiate, Preparatory, and Adult Extension divisions and summer programs, and its students and faculty present more than 1,600 public performances to more than 100,000 Bay Area residents and visitors annually. The new San Francisco Conservatory of Music at Civic Center opened in September 2006, delivering dramatic improvements in classroom, studio and rehearsal spaces, as well as three new high-quality public performance venues. For more information and a complete schedule of concerts and events, please visit www.sfcm.edu or call the Conservatory box office at (415) 503-6275.

Editors Note: Commencement is by invitation only.