

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

My trip to St. Petersburg was made an enjoyable experience by the good offices of Peter Fleming. I had not intended to go there on this trip until he brought some singers to audition for me in March in New York. He spoke so warmly of the quality of artist to be found at the Mariinsky Theater, both onstage and at the Academia, that I was convinced to come.

He met me when I arrived at the airport in St. Petersburg, a kindness for which I had not asked, and went with me in the taxi to an excellent hotel he had recommended that is about two blocks from the theater. He helped me plan an itinerary for seeing again many of the great sights in St. Petersburg (I had been there several times before but a long time ago) and made sure that I had the time to accomplish what I wanted. He arranged my tickets at the theater, and set up auditions for the Academia singers, an audition that presented some really wonderful artists.

Finally, he arranged for the car to get me to the airport to leave. That I paid for everything I did was not the important part. Russia is still a complicated country, and it is one where to speak Russian, as Peter does fluently, is essential to success in what one wants to do. He made sure that I didn't get myself into any situation that was difficult, negotiated to make sure that the hotel took care of me properly, and in short did everything that anyone could do to make my stay comfortable and successful. He did all this, let me emphasize, without strings: I didn't agree to engage any of his singers or do anything for him.

I suggested writing this endorsement, because others who might want to come here would find their stay much more pleasant if they let him help them with their location and their activities. I have to say also that I enjoyed being with him a lot. His facility with Russian and his easy way with the people makes him much more of a vital help than I can possibly say.

Mr. Speight Jenkins
General Director of Seattle Opera