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# Houston Grand Opera's 23rd World Premiere Released on Naxos DVD: Mark Adamo's Popular Setting of *Little Women*

COMPOSER AND LIBRETTIST: MARK ADAMO  
TITLE: *LITTLE WOMEN*  
LABEL: NAXOS DVD  
ASIN: B0040AT65Q  
Average Retail Price: \$32.98  
Picture/Sound Format: NTSC 16:9/ PCM Stereo, Dolby Digital 5.1, DTS 5.1  
1 DVD; Total Run Time 115 mins

HOUSTON—**Houston Grand Opera** (HGO) is pleased to announce the commercial DVD release of its 23<sup>rd</sup> world premiere, *Little Women*, by the American composer Mark Adamo on the Naxos label. *Little Women*, recorded for this release at its HGO revival in 2000, had its premiere in 1998 in the Cullen Theater at the Wortham Theater Center in Houston. Mr. Adamo's adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's classic novel was the first of HGO's forty-one world premieres to receive a revival.

*Little Women* was the first opera for which Adamo composed both music and libretto. It has since been nationally telecast on the PBS series "Great Performances," released on CD by Ondine Records, and heard in over 70 national and international engagements including New York, Mexico City, Minneapolis, Adelaide, Tel Aviv, Calgary and Tokyo.

Following the 1998 premiere, William Albright of *Opera News* described *Little Women* as "a musically and emotionally satisfying work" with "characters sympathetically and crisply drawn." Wayne Gay of *The Fort Worth Telegram* wrote, "Musical motifs that stick in your head, characters that come to life both dramatically and musically, [and] superbly managed orchestra resources... make this opera look and sound like a winner." Of the revival performance, *New York Times* music critic Anthony Tommasini called it "visually stimulating" and Barrymore Scherer of the *Wall Street*

*Journal* heralded it as a “major miracle of success.” Richard Dyer of the *Boston Globe* called the PBS “Great Performances” broadcast “a grand success.”

Singing the roles of the four March sisters are American mezzo-sopranos and HGO Studio Alumnae **Stephanie Novacek** and **Joyce DiDonato** as Jo and Meg, and American sopranos **Stacey Tappan** and **Margaret Lloyd**, making their HGO debuts, as Beth and Amy. Former HGO Studio artists baritone **Daniel Belcher** and tenor **Chad Shelton** sing the roles of John Brooke and Laurie.

Houston Grand Opera Music Director **Patrick Summers** leads the HGO orchestra. The production is directed by **Peter Webster** with sets by **Christopher McCollum**, costumes by **Melissa Graff** and lighting by **David Plevan**. It is directed for video by **Brian Large**.

This DVD marks Houston Grand Opera’s third video release following Rossini’s *La Cenerentola*, (London/Decca, 1996) and Joplin’s *Treemonisha*, (Kultur Video, 1982).

Since its inception in 1955, Houston Grand Opera has grown from a small regional organization into an internationally renowned opera company. The company has a reputation for commissioning and producing new works (41 world premieres and six American premieres since 1973) as well as a reputation for reaching out to new audiences. HGO has toured extensively, including trips to Europe and Asia, and it is the only opera company to have won a Tony, two Grammy, and two Emmy awards. Houston Grand Opera’s productions are broadcast nationally over the WFMT network, and internationally over the European Broadcasting Union, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The production of *Little Women* received support from  
**Edward and Frances Bing Fund** through the Houston Grand Opera Endowment, Inc;  
**The Clayton Fund, Inc.; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**  
**Helda C. and H.J. Lutcher Stark Foundation** and **The Tobin Foundation**

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