

HoustonGrandOpera



High-resolution production photos and headshots can be found at  
[www.houstongrandopera.org/PressPhotos/PressPhotos.htm](http://www.houstongrandopera.org/PressPhotos/PressPhotos.htm)

**For Immediate Release:** August 04, 2010  
Press Contacts Chris Novosad, 713-546-0278 [cnovosad@houstongrandopera.org](mailto:cnovosad@houstongrandopera.org)

## **Houston Grand Opera Presents Britten's *Peter Grimes***

HGO CONTINUES ITS BENJAMIN BRITTEN CYCLE WITH A NEW PRODUCTION BY ACCLAIMED DIRECTOR NEIL ARMFIELD.  
OPENS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2010

HOUSTON—**Houston Grand Opera** (HGO) continues its 2010-11 season with *Peter Grimes*, British composer Benjamin Britten's masterful opera about the human struggle of the individual versus the masses against the backdrop of the raging sea. Following HGO's acclaimed productions of *Billy Budd* (2008), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2009) and *The Turn of the Screw* (2010), *Peter Grimes* is the fourth opera in HGO's highly successful and innovative Benjamin Britten series. "Peter Grimes is an opera that delivers a punch like no other," explained HGO General Director **Anthony Freud**. "It's an opera that has a visceral power, an emotional impact and an immediacy that is truly overwhelming." HGO will present a series of Britten operas through the 2012-13 season, which marks the centennial of the composer's birth.

"This opera is so inviting and friendly for the audience even though the subject matter is so incendiary" explains HGO Music Director **Patrick Summers**, who will conduct *Peter Grimes*. "There is an extraordinary energy in the music that accents the corruption of innocence and the turmoil caused by the judgment of society. I am excited to bring this amazing work to life for Houston."

*Peter Grimes*, last performed at HGO in 1984, returns to the Wortham Theater Center in a new production by Australian movie and stage director **Neil Armfield** (Tony Award nominee for *Exit the King* – Broadway 2009), who also directed HGO's three previous Britten operas. This co-production with Opera Australia, West Australian Opera and Perth Festival, which recently won the Australian Helpmann Award for Best Opera, received enthusiastic accolades at its opening last October in Australia. *Sydney Morning Herald* claimed that "a better *Grimes* would be hard to find...Neil Armfield's production is a triumph." *Opera* magazine hailed it as "The most compelling piece of drama seen in Sydney all year—in any theater, bar none."

Celebrated American tenor **Anthony Dean Griffey**, last seen at HGO as Lennie Small in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, returns to sing the title role. Griffey has garnered critical acclaim

as Britten's troubled fisherman at Paris Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and The Metropolitan Opera. "Singing with exemplary artistry and raw emotion," wrote *The New York Times*, "Mr. Griffey found his own way into the daunting role of Grimes... (a) triumph for a selfless artist who rose through the ranks of the Met." Soprano **Katie Van Kooten** (Helena in HGO's production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2009) sings the role of school teacher Ellen Orford, Grimes's only ally. British baritone **Christopher Purves**, fresh from his success as Falstaff at the Glyndebourne Opera Festival in 2009, makes his U.S. operatic debut as Captain Balstrode. Contralto **Meredith Arwady**, who created the role of Myrtle Bagot in André Previn's *Brief Encounter* (2009), sings the role of Auntie. **Patrick Carfizzi**, who last appeared here as Papagano in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* in 2008, is the lawyer Swallow.

HGO Music Director **Patrick Summers** leads the cast with the the HGO Orchestra and Chorus. (**Richard Bado**, HGO Chorus Master). Sets are designed by **Ralph Myers**, costumes by **Tess Schofield** and lighting by **Damien Cooper**. Choreography by **Denni Sayers**.

*Peter Grimes* opens on Friday, October 29, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the Brown Theater at the Wortham Theater Center. *Peter Grimes* will be sung in English with English surtitles.

### **Performance Summary**

All performances of Houston Grand Opera's production of Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* are held in the Wortham Center's Brown Theater, Texas Avenue at Smith Street, Houston, TX. Sung in English with English surtitles.

### **Performance Dates**

Friday, October 29, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. \*  
Sunday, October 31, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.  
Saturday, November 06, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, November 10, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.  
Friday, November 12, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

\* ON for Young Professionals intermission mixer and performance

### **Ticket Information:**

- Season tickets are on sale now starting at \$84.00 for all six operas. Single tickets for *Peter Grimes*, are on-sale now. Single tickets range from \$24-\$313.
- Tickets maybe obtained online at [www.houstongrandopera.org](http://www.houstongrandopera.org) or by phone at 713-228-OPERA (6737) or 1-800-62-OPERA (800-626-7372)
- Tickets are also available at the HGO Box Office (in the lobby of the Wortham Theater Center) from 10 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday. The Box Office operates on weekend performance days from 11:00 a.m. till the first intermission (hours are subject to change).
- All performances will take place at the Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002. The Wortham Theater Center features wheelchair access to both theaters, with a choice of seating locations and ticket prices. An infrared listening system, underwritten by Shell Lubricants, is available and free of charge at all performances. Disabled access and TDD: 713-228-OPERA (6737) or 1-800-62-OPERA (800-626-7372); Descriptive Services: 713-546-0230.
- **Opera Insights Lectures** take place forty-five minutes before each performance. Guest speakers present a twenty-minute informal lecture in the orchestra level of the Brown Theater. These lectures, free and open to all ticket holders, are intended to enhance the audience's enjoyment by preparing them for the production they are about to attend.

Since its inception in 1955, Houston Grand Opera has swiftly moved from a small regional organization into an internationally renowned opera company. The company has a reputation for commissioning and producing new works (40 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.

### **About the opera:**

*Peter Grimes* is an opera in a prologue, an epilogue and three acts by Benjamin Britten, with a libretto adapted by Montagu Slater from the *Peter Grimes* section of George Crabbe's poem *The Borough*. It was first performed at Sadler's Wells (now English National Opera) in London on June 7, 1945 and was the first of Britten's operas to be a critical and popular success. It had its US debut at the Berkshire Festival in 1946. It is still widely performed internationally and is considered part of the standard repertoire.

### **About the artists:**

#### **Neil Armfield (Director)**

*Peter Grimes* is Australian director Neil Armfield's fourth Britten opera at HGO. He made his company debut in 2008 directing Britten's *Billy Budd* and his most recent credit here is *The Turn of the Screw*, a production that originated at Opera Australia and has also been seen at Brisbane Opera. His critically-acclaimed production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* had its premiere here in 2009 starring Laura Claycomb; it has since been seen at Canadian Opera Company, and will be presented by Lyric Opera of Chicago this season. He has directed *Billy Budd* at Opera Australia, English National Opera, Canadian Opera Company and Welsh National Opera—his production of that opera won a Barclay's Award and six Dora Mavor Awards. Other operatic credits include a new production of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* for West Australian Opera and *Bliss* by Brett Dean at Opera Australia in Melbourne and Sydney, and at the Edinburgh Festival. Mr. Armfield is an accomplished theater director, having recently directed Ionesco's *Exit the King* on Broadway to critical acclaim. He has directed for all of Australia's state theatre companies and for international opera companies such as Welsh National Opera, Zurich Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Mr. Armfield holds the title Officer of the Order of Australia, which he was given for his service to the arts. Further awards and honors include six Helpmann Awards at Dublin International Festival of the Arts for *Cloudstreet* and multiple Green Room Awards and Sydney Critics' Circle Awards in the category of best director. Mr. Armfield is Artistic Director of Company B at the Belvoir Theatre in Surry Hills, Australia, where his most recent new production is the world premiere of Tommy Murphy's play *Gwen in Purgatory*, a collaboration with La Boite Theatre Company. His production of Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* was presented by Boston Lyric Opera last spring, and will be seen at both Welsh National Opera and Canadian Opera Company this season.

#### **Patrick Summers (Conductor)**

*Mr. and Mrs. Albert B. Alkek Music Director Chair*

HGO Music Director Patrick Summers conducts four productions during Houston Grand Opera's 2010/11 Season: Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, Britten's *Peter Grimes*, *Dead Man Walking* by Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally and Richard Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Summers made an acclaimed company debut in 1999 conducting Verdi's *La traviata* and has since conducted more than thirty operas here, including Wagner's *Lohengrin* last fall and Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* and Puccini's *Tosca* last winter. His HGO world premieres include *Brief Encounter* by André Previn; *Three Decembers* (Last Acts) and *The End of the Affair* by Jake Heggie; *The Refuge* by Christopher Theofanidis; and *Resurrection* by Todd Machover. Maestro Summers also led the world premiere of Carlisle Floyd's *Cold Sassy Tree*, which is available on CD from Albany Records. He recently conducted the world premieres of Moravec's *The Letter* at the Santa Fe Opera and Heggie's *Moby Dick* at the Dallas Opera, to great acclaim. His diverse credits at the Metropolitan Opera include *Salome* and *Madama Butterfly*. Other highlights include *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Three Decembers* (Last Acts) at San Francisco Opera, where he is principal guest conductor; *La Cenerentola* at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona; and Verdi's *Nabucco* and Puccini's *Turandot* with Opera Australia. Maestro Summers led the Orchestra of Saint Luke's on Renée Fleming's Grammy Award-winning solo recording *Bel Canto*, available from Decca.

#### **Tama Matheson (Associate Director)**

Tama Matheson makes his Houston Grand Opera debut as associate director for Britten's *Peter Grimes* this fall. He has collaborated with director Neil Armfield at Opera Australia on productions of Janáček's *The Makropulos Case* and Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Mr. Matheson has worked internationally as an actor and director, with such directors as Franco Zeffirelli, Elijah Moshinsky, Bill Gaskill and Ian Judge. Both founder and director of Classic Productions in Brisbane, he

also serves as artistic director of Brisbane's Shakespeare on Oxford festival. His directing credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Tempest*, *Amadeus*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Night before Christmas*, *Prometheus Unbound*, *Don Giovanni*, *Tosca* and *Orpheus in the Underworld*. He assisted on Zeffirelli's production of Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* and the Wagner productions of *Lohengrin* directed by Elijah Moshinsky at Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *Tannhäuser* directed by Ian Judge in Madrid and *The Flying Dutchman* in St. Petersburg. He has been assistant director at Opera Australia for two seasons, during which time he has worked on John Copley's production of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Bizet's *The Pearlfishers*, and Gale Edwards's production of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, in addition to his collaborations with Neil Armfield. Future engagements include a new production of Mills's *The Love of the Nightingale* with Opera Australia, and Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* in Brisbane. As an actor he has performed in *Heartbeat* and *Eastenders*, and played the roles of Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Lysander and Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Ariel in *The Tempest*, Mozart in *Amadeus*, Sgt. Troy in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, and Duke Ferdinand in *The Duchess of Malfi*.

#### **Ralph Myers (Set Designer)**

Australian designer Ralph Myers makes his Houston Grand Opera debut with *Peter Grimes* this fall: the production garnered critical acclaim at its world premiere at Opera Australia in 2009 and was since presented by the Perth International Arts Festival. Mr. Myers's other operatic credits include Mozart's *Così fan tutte* for Opera Australia and Puccini's *La bohème* for New Zealand Opera. He also designed sets for Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale*, presented by the Australian Chamber Orchestra in collaboration with Bell Shakespeare. An accomplished theater designer, he designed the sets for Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire* for the Sydney Theatre Company (STC), which was seen at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 2009. He has designed numerous productions for STC, including *The City*, *Blackbird*, *A Kind of Alaska*, *Reunion*, *The Lost Echo*, *Mother Courage and her Children*, *Dissident Goes Without Saying*, *Boy Gets Girl*, *Far Away*, *Frozen*, *This Little Piggy*, *The 7 Stages of Grieving*, *Endgame* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. At STC, he also directed productions of *Frankenstein* and *The Magic Flute*. Mr. Myers's other theater design credits include a number of productions for Company B at the Belvoir Theatre, where he is an associate artist: *Toy Symphony*, *Parramatta Girls*, *Ray's Tempest*, *The Spook*, *The Fever*, *Conversations with the Dead*, and *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union*. He has also designed *Enlightenment*, *Frozen*, *Cruel and Tender*, and *Dinner* at Melbourne Theatre Company. He also designed *Othello* for Bell Shakespeare. He is an alumnus of Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art.

#### **Tess Schofield (Costume Designer)**

This fall's *Peter Grimes* marks the HGO debut of costume designer Tess Schofield. Her costumes for Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* were seen on the stages of Lyric Opera of Chicago and Royal Opera, Covent Garden. She also designed costumes for the triple-bill program of *The Prisoner*, *Berio Folk Songs* and *La Strada* at English National Opera, and for Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, Janáček's *Jenufa* and the Australian Bicentennial opera *Whitsunday*, by Julie Barnes, at Opera Australia. She is an associate artist at Company B at the Belvoir Theatre in Surry Hills, Australia, where she has collaborated frequently with director Neil Armfield. Among her credits there are costumes for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As You Like It*; Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and Chekhov's *The Seagull*. She also designed the costumes for Ray's *Tempest*, directed by Richard Roxburgh, also for Company B. Her costumes have been seen in the musicals *Shane Warne The Musical*, *Chess* and *The Wedding Song*—she also designed the costumes for *Spring Awakening* at Australian Theatre for Young People. Ms. Schofield received the 2008 Sydney Theatre Critics Award for her costumes for *The Great* at Sydney Theatre Company, and the Green Room Award for her work on *Cloudstreet* at Company B. The Australian Film Institute has honored her with three awards for the films *Dirty Deeds*, *Bootmen* and *Spotswood*. Ms. Schofield's other feature film credits include *Greenkeeping*, *Mr. Reliable* and *Radiance*.

#### **Damien Cooper (Lighting Designer)**

Damien Cooper is lighting designer for this fall's production of Britten's *Peter Grimes*—his lighting designs for that opera have been seen at West Australian Opera and the Perth International Arts Festival. Mr. Cooper made his HGO design debut with Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2009—that year he also designed lighting for HGO's critically-acclaimed premiere production *Chorus!* His lighting designs for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* were seen last season at Canadian Opera Company—the production will be presented by Lyric Opera of Chicago later this season. Mr. Cooper's designs for Verdi's opera *Aida* will be seen at Opera Queensland in Brisbane this fall. His other operatic credits include Handel's *Alcina*, Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Britten's *Death in Venice* at Opera Australia; Lens's *Flamma Flamma* for South Australia Opera at the Adelaide Festival; and Meij's *The Lord Of The Rings Symphony* for Sydney Opera House. He has designed lighting for numerous productions for Belvoir Street Theatre's Company B including Gow's *Toy Symphony*, Benvenuto's *Keating!*, Ionesco's *The Chairs*, and Nigel Jamieson's *In Our Name*. He has also lit numerous productions at Sydney Dance Company, Sydney Theater Company, Malthouse Theatre, and Kookaburra Theatre Company, and designed lighting for Universal Playground at the 2004 Adelaide Festival and Swan Lake at Australian Ballet.

**Richard Bado** (Chorusmaster)

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Richard Bado made his professional conducting debut in 1989 leading Houston Grand Opera's acclaimed production of *Show Boat* at the newly restored Cairo Opera House in Egypt. Since then, Mr. Bado has conducted at Teatro alla Scala, Opéra National de Paris, Houston Grand Opera, New York City Opera, the Tulsa Opera, and Wolf Trap Opera, and for the Aspen Music Festival, the Russian National Orchestra, the Florida Philharmonic, the Montreal Symphony and the Houston Ballet. He has also conducted the Robert Wilson production of Virgil Thomsen's *Four Saints in Three Acts* at the Edinburgh Festival. He has appeared regularly in recital with Renée Fleming and has also accompanied Cecilia Bartoli, Frederica von Stade, Denyce Graves, Susan Graham, Marcello Giordani, Ramón Vargas, Samuel Ramey and Nathan Gunn. Mr. Bado, who holds music degrees from the Eastman School of Music, where he received the 2000 Alumni Achievement Award, and West Virginia University, has studied advanced choral conducting with Robert Shaw. Mr. Bado has served as Houston Grand Opera's Chorus Master since 1988. This season marks Mr. Bado's sixth year as Director of the Opera Studies Program at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He has been on the faculty of the Aspen Music Festival and School, the International Vocal School in Moscow and has served on the music staff of the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Australia, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Chautauqua Opera and Wolf Trap Opera. Mr. Bado regularly judges for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and served as Houston Grand Opera's Head of Music Staff for 14 seasons.

**Anthony Dean Griffey** (Peter Grimes)

Tenor Anthony Dean Griffey appears at Houston Grand Opera in title role of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, a role he has sung recently to great acclaim at West Australian Opera and at the Metropolitan Opera, and has also performed at the Santa Fe Opera; Paris Opera, Bastille; and San Diego Opera. He was last heard here as Lennie Small in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*, a production that is available on CD from Albany Records. Mr. Griffey has appeared in other leading roles at major opera companies throughout the U.S. and Europe, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco, Glyndebourne, Paris Opera, and the Teatro Comunale in Florence, among others. He has collaborated with an impressive list of top conductors, including Maestros James Levine, Seiji Ozawa, André Previn, Michael Tilson Thomas, Sir Andrew Davis, Esa Pekka Salonen, Alan Gilbert, Bernard Haitink, Kurt Masur, Donald Runnicles, Sir Colin Davis, Christoph Eschenbach, Valery Gergiev, James Conlon, and Charles Dutoit. His most recent engagements include Peter Quint in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw* at Portland Opera in Oregon, the Drum Major in Berg's *Wozzeck* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio* at Opera Company of Philadelphia, Jimmy Mahoney in Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahogony* at the Edinburgh Festival, and Lennie Small in Carlisle Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* at Fort Worth Opera. Mr. Griffey appears on the two-time Grammy Award-winning DVD recording of *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahogony*, on which he sang alongside Patti LuPone and Audra McDonald, with Los Angeles Opera. His discography also includes the Philips Classics recording of Poulenc's *Les mamelles de Tirésias* and the Deutsche Grammophon premiere recording of *A Streetcar Named Desire* by André Previn. Mr. Griffey's recent concert engagements include Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the New York Philharmonic; highlights from Beethoven's *Fidelio* and his *Symphony No. 9* with the New World Symphony; Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the London Symphony Orchestra; and Britten's *War Requiem* at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. He also appeared at Carnegie Hall as the Preacher in *The Grapes of Wrath* by Ricky Ian Gordon with the Collegiate Chorale.

**Katie van Kooten** (Ellen Orford)

Soprano Katie van Kooten returns to Houston Grand Opera this fall as Ellen Orford in Britten's *Peter Grimes*, having made her Houston Grand Opera debut as Helena in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 2009. She recently made her Metropolitan Opera debut as Magda in Puccini's *La rondine*, a role he also performed as a member of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme at Royal Opera, Covent Garden. She has also appeared at Royal Opera as Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème*, Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust* and, most recently, as Antonia in Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann* opposite Rolando Villazón under the musical direction of Antonio Pappano. Other credits include Aminta in Mozart's *Il re pastore* for the Linbury Theater, her Japanese debut as Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen* under the direction of Seiji Ozawa, Mozart's *Requiem* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Strauss's *Four Last Songs* with the Halle Orchestra under the baton of Edward Gardiner. A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Ms. Van Kooten holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from Biola University in California where she graduated from the Torrey Honors Institute, of which she is a lifetime member. Her upcoming engagements include Countess Almaviva in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at Kansas City Opera.

**Christopher Purves** (Captain Balstrode)

Christopher Purves makes his Houston Grand Opera debut in Britten's *Peter Grimes* with the role of Captain Balstrode, a role he has previously sung at Opera North. His operatic engagements include Marco in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* at Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Figaro in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* for Scottish Opera and Opera North; Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and Faninal in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* for Welsh National Opera and Opera North; the Forester in *Cunning Little Vixen*; Siegfried in Schumann's *Genoveva*, Dulcamara in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*, Lescaut in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* for Opera North; the Count in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, Germont in Verdi's *La*

*traviata*, title roles in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Berg's *Wozzeck* for Welsh National Opera; Sharpless in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* for English National Opera, Alcina at Bavarian State Opera in Munich. He created the role of Executioner in James Macmillan's *Ines de Castro* at the Edinburgh International Festival where he has also appeared as Cecil in Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*. His discography includes *The Marriage of Figaro* (Figaro) on the Chandos label. He has performed as a concert soloist in Mozart's Mass in C at Aix-en-Provence, Stravinsky's *Les Noces* in Brussels, Bach's *B Minor Mass* at the Chaise Dieu Festival, Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* in Nuremberg and *Saul* at the Covent Garden and La Chaise Dieu Festivals, John Tavener's *Apocalypse* at the Proms with the City of London Sinfonia, the St John Passion in Madrid, Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass* with Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Handel's *La Resurrezione* with Les Musiciens de Louvre, *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* with the London Sinfonietta under Sir Simon Rattle, Britten's *War Requiem* and Haydn's *Creation* with the Ulster Orchestra, and Lucifer in Handel's *La resurrezione* in Rome. He studied English at Kings College Cambridge before performing and recording with the highly innovative vocal rock & roll group *Harvey and the Wallbangers*.

**Meredith Arwady** (Auntie)

Contralto Meredith Arwady sings Auntie in Britten's *Peter Grimes* at HGO this season. She made her company debut in 2009 as Myrtle Bagot in *Brief Encounter* by André Previn, to great acclaim. Her recent credits include the Abbess in *Suor Angelica* and Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* in Puccini's *Il Trittico* at San Francisco Opera. She also appeared as the Marquise of Berkenfield in Donizetti's *La Fille du Régiment* at both San Francisco Opera and the Metropolitan Opera. In Europe, she made her debut at Frankfurt Opera as Erda in Wagner's *Das Rheingold*. Her recent concert credits include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Loren Maazel and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with the Washington National Symphony and Mahler's Eighth Symphony at the Vienna Konzerthaus under the baton of Bertrand de Billy. Ms. Arwady made her debut at the Santa Fe Opera as Gaea in Richard Strauss's *Daphne* and performed there as Pasqualita in *Doctor Atomic* by John Adams, a role she has also sung at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, English National Opera and with the Atlanta Symphony. Her other Lyric Opera of Chicago credits include Mistress Quickly in Verdi's *Falstaff*, Tisbe in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, the Third Lady in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and She-Ancient in *A Midsummer Marriage* by Michael Tippett. She also appeared there in productions of Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* and Poulenc's *Dialogues des Carmélites*. The Michigan native was a winner of the 2004 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and is an alumna of the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera Center. She holds a master's degree from the Curtis Institute of Music.

**Patrick Carfizzi** (Swallow)

Bass-baritone Patrick Carfizzi sings both Swallow in Britten's *Peter Grimes* and Figaro in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at Houston Grand Opera this season. A frequent artist at the Metropolitan Opera, he appeared there last season as Brander in Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust*, Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro* and in the Puccini roles of a Mandarin in *Turandot*, Betto di Segna in *Gianni Schicchi* and as Schaunard in *La bohème*. He appeared most recently at Houston Grand Opera as Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* in 2008 and has also performed at HGO as Don Magnifico in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Paolo in Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, the Loudspeaker in Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*. Other recent credits include Paolo in *Simon Boccanegra* at San Francisco Opera, Nourabad in Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles* at Seattle Opera, Taddeo in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri* at the Dallas Opera and Dr. Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, also by Rossini, at Canadian Opera Company. He has performed Masetto in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Tanglewood Music Festival under the musical direction of James Levine, Pandolfe in Massenet's *Cendrillon* at Central City Opera, and Frank in Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* at Seattle Opera. He has been a soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the San Francisco Symphony and in Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with Seattle Symphony. An alumnus of the Yale University School of Music, Mr. Carfizzi has won several awards including the Richard Tucker Career Grant Award, the George London Award, the Sullivan Foundation Award, the Richard F. Gold Career Grant from the Shoshana Foundation and the Sergio Franchi Memorial Scholarship from the National Italian American Foundation. His upcoming engagements include Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at Cologne Opera in Germany.

**Peter Grimes is supported in part by**

**Premier Guarantor**

Houston Grand Opera Endowment, Inc.

**Grand Underwriters**

Mr. and Mrs. J. Landis Martin

Mr. John G. Turner and  
Mr. Jerry G. Fischer

**Underwriters**

M. David Lowe and Nana Booker / Booker • Lowe Gallery

*The Britten Series* is supported in part through The Britten-Pears Foundation

**Opening Night Series  
supported in part by**

**Huron**  
CONSULTING GROUP

**Weeknight Series  
supported in part by**

**Schlumberger**

**Friday Series  
supported in part by**

FAYEZ SAROFIM & CO.

---

**Continental Airlines**   
*Official Airline of Houston Grand Opera*

**Methodist** The Methodist  
Hospital  
Center for  
Performing Arts Medicine  
*Official Healthcare Provider to Houston Grand Opera*