December 31, 2014, marked the close of Inspiring Performance—The Campaign for Houston Grand Opera, HGO’s first comprehensive fundraising campaign and the largest fundraising effort in the history of Houston’s performing arts. While our goal was $165 million, your overwhelming support pushed us nearly eight million dollars over. We raised an unprecedented $172.9 million.

You, our donors, supported us as never before. A record-setting 6,648 people gave during the seven years of Inspiring Performance. In addition to our dedicated base of individual, corporate, government, and foundation supporters, an incredible 4,558 new donors joined or rejoined the HGO family.

HGO’s Historic Fundraising Campaign Raises $172.9 Million

(continued)
Thanks to you, we were able to fund all six priority areas of *Inspiring Performance*. Each of these priorities helps HGO to achieve its vision to be the most innovative, inclusive, and transformative opera company in America.

**Artistic Excellence**

$94.2 million

Thanks to the success of *Inspiring Performance*, Houston audiences have experienced 17 new productions, 7 world premieres, and 25 co-productions with top companies around the world.

With your support, we launched:

- our first-ever *Ring* cycle, Wagner’s epic masterwork, continuing with this season’s *Die Walküre*
- HGO’s Holiday Opera Series, continuing next season with *The Little Prince*
- our Great American Musical Series, continuing with this year’s *Sweeney Todd*
- two new mariachi operas: *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna / To Cross the Face of the Moon* (2010) and *El Pasado Nunca Se Termina / The Past Is Never Finished* (coming in May 2015)

**Relevance: HGOco**

$11 million

To better connect the company to the community it serves, in 2007 HGO launched HGOco, a far-reaching initiative that breaks down barriers to the arts. HGOco creates opportunities for Houstonians to observe, participate in, and create their own art through words and music.

Since its launch in 2007, HGOco has reached an incredible 1.25 million people, collaborating with 150 schools, 100 organizations, and over 100,000 Houstonians each season. HGOco’s programs include *Song of Houston*, which brings the unique stories of Houstonians to life through music, and our popular arts education initiatives *Opera to Go!*, *Storybook Opera*, and the High School Voice Studio. Thanks to your support, HGOco continues to blaze a trail in the way an arts company serves its community and engages people in the arts from infancy through adulthood.
Affordability: NEXUS Initiative
$13 million

It’s time for opera to exist for everyone.

The number one reason more people do not experience the performing arts is cost—it is simply too expensive. With your generous support of the NEXUS Initiative through Inspiring Performance, we have become one of the most affordable opera companies in the country. Since its inception in 2007, the NEXUS Initiative has allowed over 175,000 families, students, young professionals, senior citizens, and underserved community members to experience opera for free or at drastically reduced ticket prices.

HGO Studio
$6 million

During Inspiring Performance, the HGO Studio grew in essential ways. In 2011, we added the Young Artists Vocal Academy (YAVA), which provides serious training for young artists at the undergraduate level who are ready for their next step. The testament to YAVA’s early success can be found in our alumni—our first-prize winner in 2015’s Concert of Arias, Mane Galoyan, is a YAVA alum, as are current HGO Studio member Megan Samarin and incoming HGO Studio member Ben Edquist.

The HGO Studio continues to grow in prestige and our alumni are in the top echelon of international singers. Joyce DiDonato, Rachel Willis-Sørensen, Jamie Barton, Scott Hendricks, and Ana María Martínez all trained in the HGO Studio and regularly come back to sing at HGO, their first musical home.
HGO Endowment
$17.1 million

The HGO Endowment ensures that the company is a permanent part of the life of our city—a transformative force in the lives of future generations of Houstonians. During *Inspiring Performance*, gifts and pledges helped to grow the value of the HGO Endowment—ensuring perpetual, predictable financial stability—from $28.7 million in 2007 to an astounding $51 million by the campaign’s end.

Legacy Gifts
$31.6 million

Legacy giving is an essential part of our continued success as a company. During the span of *Inspiring Performance*, HGO’s Laureate Society, a group of dedicated supporters who have made commitments to HGO in their estate plans, increased its membership from 130 members to an incredible 235 members. By giving today, we create the future legacy of great opera for Houstonians. The campaign was successful in identifying younger patrons interested in leaving a legacy to HGO.

Our Thrilling Future

We are thrilled with the success of *Inspiring Performance* but we know that an opera company can never stand still. As we turn 60 this season, we look forward to inspiring lives in the decades to come. We want more people than ever before to experience our art. We want to impact more people than ever in our young, diverse, dynamic city. We know that with your generous support, HGO, already known as one of the great opera companies in the country, will be known as one of the premier opera companies in the world.

When asked why HGO matters to them, new Young Patrons and Laureate Society members Darrin Davis and Mario Gudmundsson, who joined HGO during *Inspiring Performance*, said, “We found an amazing community within HGO, and our lives are forever changed.”
On New Year’s Eve, while many poured champagne and watched the ball drop in Times Square, one special person celebrated the end of 2014 by raising a glass to HGO and making the final gift to *Inspiring Performance—The Campaign for Houston Grand Opera*.

The campaign, which began on August 1, 2007, concluded with a flourish at midnight on December 31, 2014. We surpassed our $165 million goal by nearly eight million dollars—the final total was an inspiring and overwhelming $172.9 million.

Fittingly, the final gift of the seven-year campaign came from longtime HGO family member Glen Rosenbaum. In addition to serving as the chairman emeritus of the HGO Board of Directors, Glen is a member of HGO’s Founders Council for Artistic Excellence and the Laureate Society. There is no area of the company that hasn’t benefited from Glen’s generosity, passion, and creativity.

Glen’s gift in support of HGO’s 60th Anniversary Gala, March 19, 2015, holds special significance, as all proceeds from the Gala support the HGO Endowment. “The HGO Endowment guarantees great opera for future generations of Houstonians by ensuring the company’s financial stability,” says Glen. The Endowment’s value now stands at more than $53 million, up from $28.7 million at the beginning of the campaign.

Glen helped finish what his fellow 6,647 donors had started. To all of you who helped make *Inspiring Performance* such a success, we say: thank you!
Q: Hey amigo, what’s up with the new mariachi opera? Should I go and see it?

**Rudy:** Sí, sí. Don’t even think about missing it! The first mariachi opera, *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna/To Cross the Face of the Moon*, was a huge hit...beautiful romantic music and a great story. I loved it! Besides Houston it has played in Chicago, San Diego, Phoenix/Tucson and Paris, France. The same team—José “Pepe” Martínez and Lenny Foglia—have created the second mariachi opera, *El Pasado Nunca Se Termina/ The Past Is Never Finished*. It promises to be even better. And, the amazing musicians from Mariachi Vargas are back!

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**In the Media**

**Puccini’s *Madame Butterfly***

“As Martínez’s vibrant, full-bodied voice welled up again and again, it was more than a feast for the ear... Tenor Alexey Dolgov sang with a ring, freshness and fire that captured Pinkerton's ardor in Act 1 and his remorse in Act 3.

The Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, led by Giancarlo Guerrero, lashed out ferociously as Butterfly’s plight bore down on her. But the transparency, sweetness and poetry that Guerrero and the group brought Puccini’s lyricism were even more arresting.”

—*Houston Chronicle*

**Mozart’s *The Magic Flute***

“The production proves as potent in its stagecraft as in its musical values. Those are never in doubt, given the capable cast's consistent vocal excellence and astute conducting by Robert Spano, who maintains crisp tempi and a light touch attentive to the mercurial ingenuity of Mozart’s muse.”

—*Houston Chronicle*