

UNLEASHED

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Your Guide to HGO's 2012-13 Season

Patrick Summers Tells Why You Won't Want to Miss a Single Opera



Javier de la Cruz

Rossini's opera, *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, is a highlight of the 2012-13 season.

Houston Grand Opera's 2012-13 season is one of the most eagerly anticipated in the company's history.

Like all opera seasons, this one was planned years in advance. HGO Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers says, "The key to planning a season is balance. We have a growing and diverse audience and must appeal to those experienced with our art form as well as anyone coming to us for the first time."



Robert Kusel

Chicago Classical Review called this new co-production of *Show Boat* "a triumph – stylish, fast-paced and colorful... the capacity audience on its feet cheering loud and long..."

Summers gives his thoughts on each of the 2012-13 productions:

Puccini—*La bohème* (Oct. 19–Nov. 20, 2012)

"John Caird has created a beautifully realized new production that is innovative and unusual but also clearly conveys the story of this core repertory opera. The conductor is **Evan Rogister**, who was trained in the HGO Studio. We're extraordinarily proud that he will lead our production of *La bohème*!"

Rossini—*The Italian Girl in Algiers* (Oct. 26–Nov. 11, 2012)

"Planning a season is rather like planning a great six-course meal, and next season, we're having dessert first. *The Italian Girl in Algiers* is a great dessert—a

real soufflé. It's the third of the great Rossini comedies that have been done by **Joan Font** and **Joan Guillén**. For those of you who saw *The Barber of Seville*, you know this will be a fantastic world of color, vibrancy, humor, and energy."

Kern/Hammerstein—*Show Boat* (Jan. 18–Feb. 9, 2013)

"*Show Boat* is one of a handful of classic American musicals that greatly benefit from the resources of an opera company: a live orchestra, a fine chorus, and opera singers who can deliver the music as Kern and Hammerstein intended."



► *The Bricklayer*
MARCH 15

► *Don Carlos*
APRIL 13–28

► *Mary Stuart*
APRIL 21–MAY 4

► *The Barber of Seville*
MAY 18 & 19, Miller Outdoor Theatre

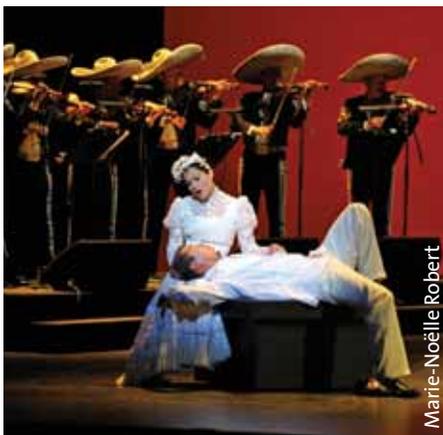
Mozart—*Don Giovanni*
(Jan. 25–Feb. 10, 2013)

“*Don Giovanni* is one of the great ensemble operas and our cast includes a number of great singers and will be led by distinguished British conductor **Trevor Pinnock**. Most thrillingly, the title character will be sung by **Adrian Eröd**, who has burst onto the European scene and will be making his HGO debut. I’ve seen him in several things at the Vienna State Opera and he is extraordinary. Another highlight is welcoming back recent Studio alumna **Rachel Willis-Sørensen** singing the role of Donna Anna.”

Martínez/Foglia—*Cruzar la Cara de la Luna/To Cross the Face of the Moon*
(Mar. 22–24, 2013)

“We are thrilled to revive the mariachi opera featuring the acclaimed Mariachi Vargas led by Cruzar’s composer, **José “Pepe” Martínez**.

Last year, *Cruzar* had a rapturous reception at the Châtelet in Paris, and a very successful CD release. It’s a work that pushes the boundaries of two musical forms, with a story that speaks to anyone who has roots in a place other than that which they now call home.”



Marie-Noëlle Robert

Cruzar la Cara de la Luna returns to HGO in March, 2013.



Brett Coomer

Don Giovanni will make an appearance in our winter repertoire.

Wagner—*Tristan and Isolde*
(Apr. 18–May 5, 2013)

“Two of the greatest living singers make their HGO debuts in the title roles of *Tristan and Isolde*: soprano **Nina Stemme** and tenor **Ben Heppner**. There’s no better pair in the world for this opera, and we’re thrilled to welcome them here for the first time.”

Verdi—*Il trovatore*
(Apr. 26–May 11, 2013)

The spring repertoire period features the work of Wagner and Verdi. This was intentional—2013 is the bicentennial of the birth of both composers.

Dolora Zajick, who, as Summers says, “will be in the history books forever as one of the great Verdi mezzos,” returns to HGO to sing the role of Azucena.



Bill Cooper

Nina Stemme will make her HGO debut in *Tristan and Isolde*.

Thank You!

The 2012–13 season will feature 44 performances, 11 more than the current season. Word is out about the quality of HGO, and the generosity of our supporters makes it possible for us to meet increased demand.

BRAVO

To Our Production Funders!



Dian and Harlan Stai, Production Funders

The Production Funders are a special group of HGO supporters who are in the business of bringing opera to life. Through major underwriting contributions of \$50,000 or more, these generous supporters ensure that the company's high standards of artistic excellence are met onstage.

Thanks to these generous donors, dreams come alive on the HGO stage

Among the Production Funders are Dian and Harlan Stai, two long standing members of the HGO family. Subscribers since 1987, they've been providing leadership support of mainstage productions since *Hansel and Gretel* in 1998. Harlan is also a member of the company's Board of Directors.

The Stais are particularly interested in showcasing singers at the beginning of their careers. Dian notes, "One of the things that makes HGO performances so exciting is the chance to hear young singers at the very beginning of spectacular careers. The exceptional quality of HGO productions makes a wonderful showcase for young Studio artists."

The Stais' warmth, generosity, and openness characterize all they do for HGO. As Dian says, "We love being close to HGO, and there's no way to get more involved than to support work on the mainstage!"



Albina Shagimuratova's Studio fellowship was sponsored by the Stais, and they were key supporters of her triumphant performance in this season's production of *La traviata*.

Thanks to Our 2011-12 Production Funders

Anadarko Petroleum Corporation
The Brown Foundation, Inc.
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Margaret Alkek Williams
The Wortham Foundation, Inc.
Lynn Wyatt

To learn how you can join the Production Funders, contact **Greg Robertson** at **713-546-0274** or **grobertson@hgo.org**.

Friendships and fun at the Wortham The Next Generation of Opera Lovers



Young Patrons Circle members toast HGO.

Gabriel and Sara Loperena recently became members of the Young Patrons Circle (YPC), a special group of HGO donors in their twenties and thirties.

A lawyer and avid opera fan, Gabriel says that YPC seemed like a perfect fit.

“We were drawn to the intimate nature of the group. It’s special to experience that with a close-knit group of people who share a love of opera.”

The Loperenas joined other YPC members to meet and mingle at a pre-curtain dinner before the opening night performance of

La traviata. The annual soirée is a favorite of the fun-loving YPC family.

Young Patrons represent a diverse group of Houstonians from all walks of life...yet the atmosphere at their events is always warm and inclusive.

Some of the benefits of YPC membership are:

- Dinners with HGO Studio artists – all of whom are close in age to YPC members!
- Opportunities to network with other YPC members
- Picnics at Miller Outdoor Theatre
- Valet parking and Masterson

Green Room privileges at the Wortham Center

- Events that enhance the opera experience

If you know a young professional – perhaps someone in your company – who’d enjoy a great networking opportunity and the chance to get involved with HGO’s Young Patrons Circle, please contact **Ashley Parks at 713-546-0235 or aparks@hgo.org.**



Viva Italia Fantasy
OPERA BALL 2012

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2012
SEVEN O’CLOCK IN THE EVENING
WORTHAM THEATER CENTER

MR. AND MRS. ANTHONY G. PETRELLO,
CHAIRS

FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION VISIT:
HOUSTONGRANDOPERA.ORG/OPERABALL

VALENTINO

BVLGARI



Neiman Marcus



Don't Miss HGO's 46th World Premiere

The Bricklayer Continues HGOco's Innovative East + West Project

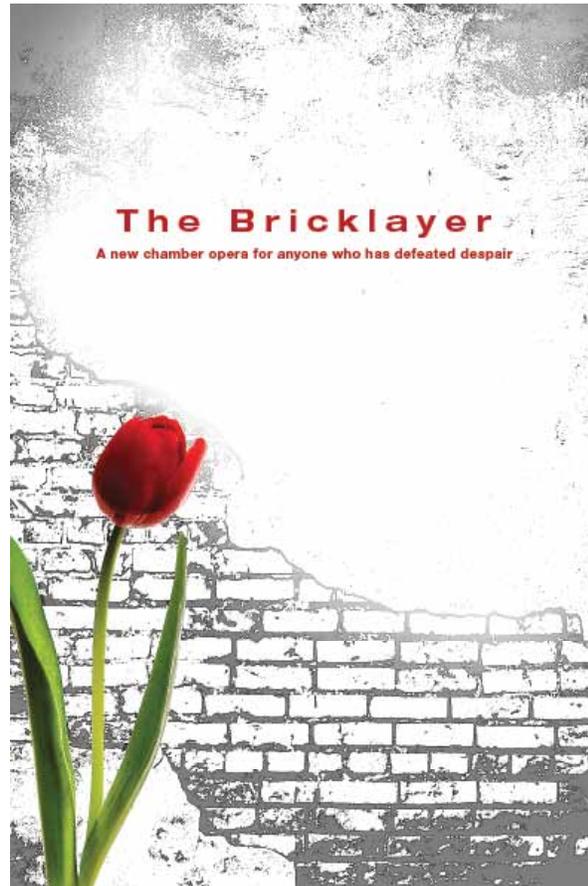
HGO's forty-sixth world premiere, *The Bricklayer*, is scheduled for March 15th at 8 p.m. in the Cullen Theater.

Commissioned for HGOco's *Song of Houston: East + West* project, *The Bricklayer* is based on the short story of the same name in *The Crazy Dervish and the Pomegranate Tree* by acclaimed Houston author Farnoosh Moshiri. It tells the story of an aging couple fleeing the theocratic regime in Moshiri's native Iran.

The score is by prize-winning composer Gregory Spears, whose work has been called "astonishingly beautiful" (*The New York Times*), "remarkable" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), and "coolly entrancing" (*The New Yorker*).

Following the Wortham Center premiere, additional performances will be presented at the Arab American Cultural & Community Center, Discovery Green, and at Baker Ripley Neighborhood Center. Three subsequent performances are scheduled during Houston's Nowruz (Persian New Year) Festival in late March.

For more information on *The Bricklayer*, or to buy tickets, call **713-228-6737** or visit www.hgoco.org/songofhouston/eastwest/.



Farnoosh Moshiri



Gregory Spears

The Bricklayer

World Premiere - March 15, 8:00 p.m.
Cullen Theater, Wortham Center

The evening begins with a talk and performance by Fared Shafinbury and Persian music ensemble Tehranosaurus

For tickets and information, call **713-228-6737** or visit houstongrandopera.org

Houston Corporations Outperform Their Peers in Supporting the Arts



Houston's leaders in business and the arts tour the set of *La traviata* during the BCA 10 awards event.

On January 17, 2012, representatives of Houston's business and arts communities converged on the Wortham Theater Center to recognize corporations in our area that have won the BCA 10: Best Companies Supporting the Arts in America. Each year, this award is presented by the **Business Committee on the Arts** and **Americans for the Arts** to ten companies from all over the nation

who make significant contributions to the arts.

Seven area companies—the most of any city in the nation—were recognized.

Keynote speaker Bob Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, observed, “The message that all of you send to your peers in the business community is crucial in ensuring that the arts and our creative communities continue to thrive.”

Houston has more BCA 10 companies than any other city!

- Anadarko Petroleum Corporation
- Baker Botts L.L.P.
- ConocoPhillips
- Devon Energy
- I W Marks
- Shell Oil Company
- Vinson & Elkins LLP

All these companies have generously supported Houston Grand Opera.

The Reviews Are In...

La traviata

“Shagimuratova’s powerful soprano conveys Violetta’s passions with its clean placement, precise intonation, agility in decorative passages and sheer splendor in emotional outpourings.”

— *Houston Chronicle*

The Rape of Lucretia

“Arbus’ clean-lined, tautly focused direction upholds the writing’s tense, austere tone... Michelle DeYoung invests Lucretia with emotional depth and indestructible dignity... The performance by the 14-person orchestra is exacting yet expressive.”

— *Houston Chronicle*