Houston Grand Opera to Open 2015–16 Season with 
Tosca (October 23) and Eugene Onegin (October 30)

Houston, October 6, 2015—Houston Grand Opera (HGO) opens its 2015–16 season October 23 with Puccini’s heart-wrenching tale of love and tragedy, Tosca, featuring the reprise of HGO’s “gripping” 2010 production and a stellar cast of returning and debut artists. Performances run through November 14.

Puccini’s Tosca was one of three operas HGO presented during the company’s second season in 1956–57, and the work continues to captivate Houston audiences. In 2010, HGO presented a new production by Canadian director John Caird that was hailed by the Houston Chronicle: “From the first chords that explode from the orchestra, Maestro Patrick Summers just about propelling himself out of the pit with them, a gripping sense of urgency drives Houston Grand Opera’s potent new production.” Religious imagery permeates this production. The sets and costumes were created by Tony Award–winning designer Bunny Christie.

Ukrainian soprano Liudmyla Monastyrska, whose portrayal of Aida in her 2013 HGO debut was marked with “power, finesse, and soul” (Houston Chronicle), will sing the fiery Tosca, making her American debut in the role with which she launched her international career in 2010 at Deutsche Oper Berlin. Earlier this year, Ms. Monastyrska returned to Berlin, this time to the Staatsoper, delivering a “fearless and unforgettable” (Bachtrack) Lady Macbeth opposite Plácido Domingo, in his first performances in the title role of Verdi’s opera. Siberian tenor Alexey Dolgov will reprise his passionate interpretation of Cavaradossi, sung at HGO in 2010 with “warm lyricism and…gallant presence” (Houston Chronicle). Polish baritone Andrzej Dobber, who has performed Scarpia at Semperoper Dresden, Berlin State Opera, and Deutsche Oper Berlin, will make his U.S. role debut with these HGO performances.

In the November 14 performance, Tosca will be sung by Kelly Kaduce, Cavaradossi by Chad Shelton, and Scarpia by Weston Hurt. The conductor will be Bradley Moore, HGO’s head of music staff. These artists will also perform at a special performance for high school students.

Director John Caird (Lynn Wyatt Great Artist 2012–13, during which season he directed La bohème at HGO) returns for this revival, along with Maestro Summers in the pit.

On October 30, HGO presents Eugene Onegin, running through November 13. Tchaikovsky’s beloved work based on the Pushkin verse novel receives elegant period treatment in this acclaimed production that Canadian
director Robert Carsen created for the Metropolitan Opera, which the New York Times called “beautiful to see.” Rooted in emotional turmoil and vivid characterizations, Carsen’s austere production is paired with spare sets and rich period costumes by Michael Levine. Carsen’s vision will be realized by revival director Paula Suozzi, who directed it at Lyric Opera of Chicago, and will be making her HGO debut.

As Tatyana, HGO welcomes back American soprano Katie Van Kooten, who sang Mimi in HGO’s new production of La bohème and Elizabeth I in Mary Stuart, both in 2012. Studio alumnus Scott Hendricks, Sharpless in HGO’s Madame Butterfly last season, returns as Onegin. Norman Reinhardt, the versatile Studio alumnus who last season sang both Cassio in Otello and Ferrando in Così fan tutte, sings Lensky, and HGO Studio artist Megan Samarin will sing Olga. Prince Gremin will be sung by Dmitry Belosselskiy, who appeared as Sparafucile in HGO’s 2014 Rigoletto.

Michael Hofstetter, whose “artful” conducting of HGO’s 2011 Fidelio “captured the color and character of the music” (Houston Chronicle), will conduct.

This season also includes the world premiere of Prince of Players by eminent American composer Carlisle Floyd (the Lynn Wyatt Great Artist for 2015–16), opening March 5, three months before Mr. Floyd’s 90th birthday. Wagner’s Siegfried, the third installment of La Fura dels Baus’s imaginative Ring cycle featuring a new generation of Wagnerians, including tenor Jay Hunter Morris in the title role, opens April 16. Dvořák’s fairy tale rarity Rusalka returns to Houston for the first time since 1990 beginning January 29, with soprano Ana María Martínez in the title role. A holiday revival of family favorite The Little Prince from the award-winning composer Rachel Portman and librettist Nicholas Wright opens December 4. HGO’s co-production of The Marriage of Figaro by Michael Grandage begins January 22, and the Houston debut of Broadway sensation Rob Ashford’s take on the classic musical Carousel rounds out the main-stage season beginning April 22. Through its community collaboration program HGOco, the company will present in May the world premiere of The Root of the Wind is Water, a chamber opera by composer David Hanlon and librettist Stephanie Fleischmann about the impact of hurricanes on the Texas Gulf coast.

The full list of events for the HGO season is provided below. More information is available at HGO.org.

About Houston Grand Opera

Since its inception in 1955, Houston Grand Opera has grown from a small regional organization into an internationally renowned opera company. HGO enjoys a reputation for commissioning and producing new works, including 57 world premieres and seven American premieres since 1973. In addition to producing and performing world-class opera, HGO contributes to the cultural enrichment of Houston and the nation through a diverse and innovative program of performances, community events, and education projects that reaches the widest possible public. HGO has toured extensively, including trips to Europe and Asia, and has won a Tony, two Grammy awards, and two Emmy awards—the only opera company to have won all three honors.

Through HGOco, Houston Grand Opera creates opportunities for Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to observe, participate in, and create art. The NEXUS Initiative is HGO’s multi-year ticket underwriting program that allows Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy world-class opera without the barrier of price. Since 2007 NEXUS has enabled more than 200,000 Houstonians to experience first-quality opera through discounted single tickets and subscriptions, subsidized student performances, and free productions.
Houston Grand Opera: 2015–16 Season

* Company debut  
** HGO Studio artist  
# Former HGO Studio artist  
† Alternate cast/date  
‡ Alternate conductor/date

Puccini: Tosca
Sung in Italian with projected English translation

October 23, 25m, 31; Nov. 3, 6, 14 †, 2015

Floria Tosca  Liudmyla Monastyrska  
Kelly Kaduce †

Mario Cavaradossi  Alexey Dolgov  
Chad Shelton #†

Baron Scarpia  Andrzej Dobber *

Conductor  Patrick Sumyers  
Bradley Moore †

Director  John Caird

Set and Costume Designer  Bunny Christie

Lighting Designer  Duane Schuler

Chorus Master  Richard Bado #

Children’s Chorus Director  Karen Reeves

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, Chorus, and Children’s Chorus

A co-production of Houston Grand Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago

Tchaikovsky: Eugene Onegin
Sung in Russian with projected English translation

October 30; Nov. 1m, 7, 10, 13, 2015

Eugene Onegin  Scott Hendricks #

Tatyana  Katie Van Kooten

Lensky  Norman Reinhartd #

Olga  Megan Samarin **

Prince Gremin  Dmitry Belosselskiy

Conductor  Michael Hofstetter

Production  Robert Carsen

Revival Director  Paula Suozzi *

Set and Costume Designer  Michael Levine

Lighting Designer  Christine Binder

Choreographer  Serge Bennathan *

Chorus Master  Richard Bado #

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus

A Canadian Opera Company production, originally created for The Metropolitan Opera

Rachel Portman and Nicholas Wright: The Little Prince
Based on the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Production by Francesca Zambello
Sung in English with projected text

December 4, 6m, 9; 11; 13m; 16, 18, 19 †, 20m, 2015

The Little Prince  Andy Jones *, Cohle H. Smith *

The Pilot  Joshua Hopkins #
Snake/Vain Man
Ben Edquist †

The Fox
Sofia Selowsky **

Conductor
Bradley Moore
Emily Senturia #‡

Production
Francesca Zambello

Revival Director
Ellen Douglas Schlaefer

Set and Costume Designer
Maria Bjørnson

Original Lighting Designer
Rick Fisher

Children’s Chorus Director
Karen Reeves

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Children’s Chorus

A co-production of Houston Grand Opera, Skylight Opera Theatre, Boston Lyric Opera and the Wang Center for the Performing Arts, and Tulsa Opera

Original production made possible by a challenge grant from The Edgar Foster Daniels Foundation

Commissioned through a generous gift of Kathryn and David Berg in memory of Larry Pfeffer


Mozart: The Marriage of Figaro
Sung in Italian with projected English translation

January 22, 24m, 30; Feb. 3, 5, 7m, 2016

Figaro
Adam Plachetka *

Susanna
Heidi Stober #

Count Almaviva
Joshua Hopkins #

Countess Almaviva
Ailyn Pérez

Cherubino
Lauren Snouffer #

Dr. Bartolo
Peixin Chen #

Marcellina
Catherine Cook

Conductor
Harry Bicket *

Production
Michael Grandage

Revival Director
Ian Rutherford

Set and Costume Designer
Christopher Oram

Original Lighting Designer
Paule Constable

Movement Director
Ben Wright *

Chorus Master
Richard Bado #

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus

A co-production of Houston Grand Opera and Glyndebourne Festival Opera

Dvořák: Rusalka
Sung in Czech with projected English translation

January 29, 31m; Feb. 6, 9, 12, 2016

Rusalka
Ana María Martínez #

Prince
Brian Jagde *

Vodník, a water sprite
Richard Paul Fink #

Je živá je, a witch
Jill Grove #

Foreign Princess
Maida Hundeling *

Conductor
Harry Bicket

Production
Melly Still *

Revival Director
Donna Stirrup *

Set and Costume Designer
Rae Smith *

Original Lighting Designer
Paule Constable

Movement Director
Rick Nodine *

Chorus Master
Richard Bado #

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus
World Premiere
Carlisle Floyd: Prince of Players
Sung in English with projected text
March 5, 11, 13m, 2016
Edward Kynaston  Ben Edquist **
Margaret Hughes  Mane Galoyan **
Charles II  Chad Shelton #
Sir Charles Sedley  Joseph Evans
Villiers, Duke of Buckingham  Scott Quinn #
Conductor  Patrick Summers
Director  Michael Gieleta *
Set Designer  Shoko Kambara *
Costume Designer  Gregory Gale *
Lighting Designer  Renée Brode
Chorus Master  Richard Bado #
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus

Commissioned by Houston Grand Opera
Based on Compleat Female Stage Beauty by Jeffrey Hatcher
By Special Arrangement with Lionsgate

Wagner: Siegfried
Sung in German with projected English translation
April 16, 20, 23, 28; May 1m, 2016
Siegfried  Jay Hunter Morris
Wanderer  Iain Paterson
Brünnhilde  Christine Goerke
Mime  Rodell Rosel
Alberich  Christopher Purves
Erda  Meredith Arwady
Fafner  Andrea Silvestrelli
Conductor  Patrick Summers
Production  La Fura dels Baus
Director  Carlus Padrissa
Set Designer  Roland Olbeter
Costume Designer  Chu Uroz
Lighting Designer  Peter van Praet
Projection Designer  Franc Aleu
Movement/Associate Director  Esteban Muñoz
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra

A co-production of Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, Valencia, and Maggio Musicale, Florence

Rodgers & Hammerstein: Carousel
April 22, 24m, 27, 29, 30; May 6, 7, 2016
Billy Bigelow  Duncan Rock *
Julie Jordan  Andrea Carroll #
Carrie Pipperidge  Lauren Snouffer #
Enoch Snow  Alexander Lewis *
Nettie Fowler  Stephanie Blythe *
Jigger Craigin  Ben Edquist **
Conductor/Chorus Master  Richard Bado #
Director/Choreographer  Rob Ashford
Set Designer  Paolo Ventura *
Costume Designer  Catherine Zuber
Original Lighting Designer  Neil Austin
Sound Designer  Andrew Harper
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus

A co-production of Houston Grand Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago

World Premiere
David Hanlon and Stephanie Fleischmann: The Root of the Wind Is Water
May 2016 (dates TBA)
Eliza Goodman  Sofia Selowsky **
Lucy Goodman  Mane Galoyan **
Additional casting TBA

Media Contact:  Christine Cantrell, Christine@elmorepr.com, (713) 524-0661
Director of Communications:  Judith Kurnick, jkurnick@hgo.org (713) 546-0240

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