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## 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 Mimì 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 90<sup>th</sup> 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](http://HGO.org).

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## 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.

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## 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 * Weston Hurt *†
Conductor	Patrick Summers 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 Reinhardt #
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 #

	Ben Edquist **†
Snake/Vain Man	John Kapusta *
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*

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### **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 #
Jeřábka, 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	

*Production created by Glyndebourne Festival Opera*

## **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 Complot 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 Sofía, 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

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