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CALENDAR LISTINGS

Houston Grand Opera Presents World Premiere of *It's a Wonderful Life*

Catch a new take on the ultimate holiday classic, December 2–17

Updated November 9, 2016

WHAT: Houston Grand Opera (HGO) continues its cycle of holiday operas with the world premiere presentation of *It's a Wonderful Life* by composer Jake Heggie and librettist Gene Scheer, from December 2–17. This timeless tale follows a troubled banker whose guardian angel shows him the lasting impact our lives can have on those around us.

The 1946 Frank Capra film *It's a Wonderful Life* has become synonymous with the American holiday spirit. The opera takes its story from the film—an angel is assigned to help a human being, George Bailey, who is so despondent that he plans to take his own life on Christmas Eve. But in a departure from the film, the action in the opera takes place from the perspective of the angel, named Clara, who will finally earn her wings if she helps George. Complete with a quartet of flying angels who assist Clara, four big dance numbers, a feathered turbo booster hat that stops time, and a sing-along at the end of the opera, *It's a Wonderful Life* is perfect for children and families.

It's a Wonderful Life will be the Heggie/Scheer team's third commission from HGO and Heggie's sixth world premiere conducted by HGO Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers. In this production, tenor William Burden takes the lead as George Bailey, with soprano Talise Trevigne making her HGO debut as Clara. HGO Studio alumna Andrea Carroll will sing Mary Hatch Bailey and fellow HGO Studio alumnus Joshua Hopkins will sing Harry Bailey. Mr. Potter/Mr. Gower will be sung by American tenor Rod Gilfry, in his HGO debut. Leonard Foglia will direct. Sung in English with projected text.

WHEN: December 2, 7:30 p.m. (PLEASE NOTE NEW START TIME)
December 4, 2:30 p.m.
December 6, 7 p.m.
December 8, 7 p.m.
December 9, 7 p.m.
December 11, 2:30 p.m.
December 13, 7 p.m.
December 15, 7 p.m.
December 17, 7 p.m.

TICKETS: \$28-\$117. Tickets are available to purchase online at HGO.org or call 713-228-OPERA (6737).

WHERE: Wortham Theater Center's Cullen Theater, 501 Texas Ave, Houston 77002

Jake Heggie/Gene Scheer: It's a Wonderful Life

Based in part on the film It's a Wonderful Life™ by permission of Paramount Licensing, Inc. and on The Greatest Gift, a story by Philip Van Doren Stern

George Bailey	William Burden
Clara	Talise Trevigne *
Mr. Potter/Mr. Gower	Rod Gilfry *
Mary Hatch Bailey	Andrea Carroll #
Harry Bailey	Joshua Hopkins #
Uncle Billy Bailey	Anthony Dean Griffey
Conductor	Patrick Summers
Director	Leonard Foglia
Set Designer	Robert Brill *
Costume Designer	David C. Woolard *
Lighting Designer	Brian Nason
Projection/Video Designer	Elaine J. McCarthy
Sound Designer	Andrew Harper
Choreographer	Keturah Stickann
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus	

A co-commission and co-production of Houston Grand Opera, San Francisco Opera, and The Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

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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 61 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 225,000 Houstonians to experience first-quality opera through discounted single tickets and subscriptions, subsidized student performances, and free productions.

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