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Houston Grand Opera's HGOco presents *Harmony of Trees* participatory performance at Discovery Green on Feb. 16

Artists and visitors connect through unique Hello, Trees! art installation

Houston, January 30, 2018—Houston Grand Opera's HGOco presents *Harmony of Trees*, a free participatory performance at Discovery Green downtown on Feb. 16 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The program is part of the *Hello, Trees! A Walking Serenade* interactive sculpture installation, created by the Montreal art collective Daily tous les jours specifically for Discovery Green's live oak allée. Technology transforms visitors' voices into beautiful light patterns and musical melodies that travel down the arches stretching the length of the Brown Foundation Promenade and are inspired by the inaudible connections and processes that exist in nature.

For the *Harmony of Trees* experience on the Brown Foundation Promenade, composer **Austin Brake**, a graduate student in composition at the University of Houston, has selected text representing the 10 most-spoken languages in Houston. Audience members are invited to choose a phrase from the menus located at each input station. Then one of two HGOco soloists will sing the phrase and guests can walk along the promenade to see and hear the message's light and sound progression through the installation. The experience can remind us that, like the trees, we are stronger together when we support one another. HGOco soloists are mezzo-soprano Tahanee Aluwihare and baritone Wesley Landry.

"We are excited to partner with our temporary neighbor Discovery Green and to explore ways we can interact with public art in this unique project," says **Carleen Graham**, director of HGOco. "Community engagement is foundational to HGOco and commissioning *Harmony of Trees* allows us to connect to those in the community who may not be familiar with opera."

HGOco connects HGO’s creative resources with the diverse and vibrant Houston community. The “co” in HGOco stands for company, community, and collaboration. HGOco’s innovative and engaging programs take place throughout the Houston area—in schools, parks, community landmarks, alternative performance spaces, and at the Wortham Theater Center, providing a range of opportunities for Houstonians of all ages to seek, engage, and learn through the inspiring art of opera.

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About Houston Grand Opera

Houston Grand Opera (HGO) is one of the largest, most innovative, and most highly acclaimed opera companies in the United States. HGO was the only American finalist for Opera Company of the Year at the 2017 International Opera Awards. In fulfilling its mission to advance the operatic art to serve an ever-evolving audience, HGO has led the field in commissioning new works (64 world premieres to date) and in training and nurturing promising young artists and administrators. The company 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’s pioneering community engagement initiative, HGOco, has served as a model for other arts organizations.

The NEXUS Initiative is HGO’s multi-year ticket underwriting program that allows Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy opera without the barrier of price. Since 2007, NEXUS has enabled more than 250,000 Houstonians to experience superlative opera through discounted single tickets and subscriptions, subsidized student performances, and free productions.

HGO has toured extensively and has won a Tony, two Grammy awards, and three Emmy awards. It is the only opera company to win all three honors.

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