



## Calendar Release

### Houston Grand Opera presents *The Flying Dutchman* for season opener; returns to the Wortham Theater Center

**What:** Houston Grand Opera opens its 64<sup>th</sup> season with *The Flying Dutchman*, Wagner's gothic romance about the redeeming and transformative power of a woman's love. This new production by director **Tomer Zvulun** heightens the dramatic elements of the famous legend of a cursed ghost ship. The opera marks the company's return to the Wortham Theater Center after being displaced by Hurricane Harvey for the entire 2017–18 season.

HGO's first Wagner opera since the four-part *Ring* cycle, *The Flying Dutchman* is described as a haunting love story in which every seven years, the Dutchman comes ashore for a chance to break the curse that binds him to the desolate seas. His quest for true love leads him to Senta, a captain's daughter who has been obsessing over a mystifying portrait of him. When the two meet, the Dutchman is hopeful, but Senta must decide between her arranged marriage and her overpowering love for the Dutchman.

The production is part of HGO's *Seeking the Human Spirit*, a six-year multidisciplinary initiative designed to highlight the universal spiritual themes raised in opera; as well as expand and deepen Houstonians' connections to opera and to art. This year's theme is transformation and also includes the mainstage productions of *Florencia en el Amazonas* and *The Phoenix*, a world premiere.

The opera will be sung in German with projected English translation and runs 2 hours and 20 minutes with no intermission.

**Who:** Polish baritone **Andrzej Dobber**, who impressed audiences as Scarpia in HGO's 2015 *Tosca*, sings the title role of the Dutchman, while the demanding role of Senta will be sung by American soprano **Melody Moore**, who will also appear as Donna Elvira in HGO's spring production of *Don Giovanni*. Senta's father, Daland, will be sung by the Icelandic bass **Kristinn Sigmundsson**, who gave a "jolly and

rich-toned performance” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) of the role at San Francisco Opera in 2013 and appeared as Fasolt in HGO’s *Das Rheingold* in 2014. Tenor **Eric Cutler**, who sang the Duke of Mantua in HGO’s 2009 *Rigoletto* and Florestan in the Stuttgart 2016 production of *Fidelio*, will take the role of Erik. Houston Grand Opera Artistic and Music Director **Patrick Summers**, now in his 20<sup>th</sup> season, will conduct. *The Flying Dutchman* is a co-production of Houston Grand Opera with The Atlanta Opera, and Cincinnati Opera.

**When:** Friday, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m.  
Sunday, Oct. 21, at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, Oct. 27, at 7:30 p.m.  
Tuesday, Oct. 30, at 7:30 p.m.  
Friday, Nov. 2, at 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas Ave.

**Tariff:** Tickets range from \$20 to \$270. For more information and to buy tickets, visit [HGO.org](http://HGO.org) or call the box office at 713-228-6737.

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**Link to production photos and headshots [here](#).**

### **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 (65 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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