

Houston Grand Opera Elects Claire Liu as Chairperson of the HGO Board of Directors
The organization Launches Exciting Era Under New Leadership, Including the Appointment of Liu

Houston – February 16, 2022 — Houston Grand Opera (HGO) is proud to announce that Claire Liu will assume the role of Chairperson of its Board of Directors on August 1, 2022.

Liu's election comes as a new era is launched at HGO under Khori Dastoor, who joined the organization as General Director and CEO in August 2021, bringing with her a fresh, forward-thinking approach to the artform of opera and a new vision for the company.

"Now is the time to be bold, and we are doing just that with Claire as our new board chair," says Dastoor. "Claire has a deep love for opera's past, present, and future, and a rich history serving and supporting this organization. She brings to the table invaluable expertise gained during an impressive career as a corporate finance executive with a staggering track record leading growth and positive transformation. It is a new chapter at HGO, with a dynamic leadership team taking form. I am honored to be leading this great company with Claire by my side."

Concurrent to Liu's election, Dastoor also has announced changes to the organization's leadership structure. The company has established a new seven-member Executive Leadership Team comprised of Dastoor, Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers, Chief Philanthropy Officer Greg Robertson, Chief Operating Officer Molly Dill, Director of Artistic Planning and Chorus Master Richard Bado, Chief Financial Officer Elizabeth Greer, and a new Chief Audience Officer, for whom a search is underway.

Chair-elect Liu has shown impressive dedication to HGO since joining the Board of Directors in December 2015. She currently serves as the Finance Committee Chair and a member of the Executive Committee and Management Development Subcommittee. She previously served as Co-Chair of the General Director Transition Committee and a member of the COVID Working Group. She will serve a two-year term as Chairperson of the HGO Board of Directors beginning on August 1, 2022, succeeding current Board Chairperson Allyn Risley.

"The energy is electric at HGO as the company embraces the excitement of this moment," says Liu. "What an honor to be selected as new board chairperson for such a storied organization, at such a critical time in its history. From the years I've already spent in service to this board, I know that the world-class art on stage is matched by HGO's world-class leadership and staff. I want to thank Allyn Risley for the remarkable job he has done guiding HGO through a difficult and transitional time."

During his two-year tenure as Chairperson, Risley has led the company and its board through the unforeseen challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the creation of HGO's first fully digital season. On top of that achievement, he also guided HGO's interim leadership through the successful search for a new General Director and CEO. Risley states, "HGO's outstanding board and staff have made my duty as chair a true joy, no matter the obstacles thrown in our path. I'm so excited for the future of this company, and I know that when she takes over, Claire Liu will meet the moment brilliantly, continuing HGO's tradition of excellence while bringing her own leadership style to the role."

In addition to her service to HGO, Liu serves on the board of the Houston Zoo, where she is a member of its Finance Committee. She serves on the Community Advisory Board for SEARCH Homeless Services and is a member of its

Finance Committee, and is involved in several committees at United Way of Greater Houston. Liu led the corporate finance team at LyondellBasell until retiring in 2015. She previously worked for more than 20 years at Bank of America, where she structured and underwrote large corporate loans.

For more information about Houston Grand Opera, visit HGO.org.

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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 in the 2019 International Opera Awards, and the only American company to be nominated twice. In fulfilling its mission to advance the operatic art, to serve the Houston community, and to be a global leader in the future of opera, HGO has led the field in commissioning new works (72 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 multiyear 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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