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Cover designed by Pattima Singhalaka. This page: a model of the set design for A Christmas Carol by Laura Hopkins.
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Welcome to the Wortham Theater Center and to HGO’s 55th world premiere.

HGO was eager to have an artistic presence in our community during the holidays, so we did what was only natural: we commissioned our own. Thanks to the generosity of our wonderful donors, A Christmas Carol is the first of what will be a series of holiday operas that we will rotate from season to season.

We couldn’t be more excited about what this commission of A Christmas Carol has in store for you.

The creators, Iain Bell and Simon Callow, are extremely well suited to this project. Iain has written an incredibly eerie and haunting score, and Simon, who is a Dickens scholar and is both librettist and director, has given his one-man portrayals of Dickens all over the world and is author of the book Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World.

Jay Hunter Morris, well known for the roles he has created in new works and an engaging storyteller, was a natural choice for The Narrator. We are delighted to have him back at Houston Grand Opera, along with HGO Studio alumnus Kevin Ray, who will sing two performances. We welcome Warren Jones in his HGO conducting debut.

And finally, we love the authenticity of this piece. Simon based the libretto on a little-known one-man stage adaptation approved by Dickens himself not long after A Christmas Carol was published in 1843. Our version is darker than the Victorian settings the work is often given on stage and screen, but is totally faithful to the spirit of the original. Just as in Dickens’s tale, the opera underscores the message of compassion—and ends in great joy.

We hope it adds to your holiday enjoyment, and we thank you for coming.

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On behalf of the Robert and Janice McNair Foundation, we warmly welcome you to Houston Grand Opera’s performance of Iain Bell and Simon Callow’s *A Christmas Carol*.

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We are thrilled to be the Grand Guarantors of HGO’s new Holiday Opera Series in the Wortham Center’s Cullen Theater. Each December, HGO will bring a cherished holiday story to life through words and music, showcasing the unique power of opera to stir the soul.

Inspired by Charles Dickens’s beloved one-man readings of his own work, *A Christmas Carol* features the wonderful talents of Jay Hunter Morris and the HGO Orchestra, who lead us through this classic tale of forgiveness, redemption, and the ultimate generosity of the human spirit. It is our sincere hope that this exciting world premiere opera may inspire you to return to HGO next holiday season with your family and friends.

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Managing Director Perryn Leech continues his season-long profile series on Houston Grand Opera’s unsung heroes—the people behind the scenes whose work makes a huge contribution to HGO’s success. In this issue, he speaks with Properties Design Director Megan Freemantle (who uses only her first name professionally) and Properties Associate Andrew Cloud.

In 1985, Megan made a short (in distance) move from 615 Texas Street, where she worked for the Alley Theatre, to 615 Louisiana Street and the offices of Houston Grand Opera. An uncomplicated change of address, but the environments were very different.

There are many reasons why people pursue a career in the genre of theater before ultimately changing to opera, but Megan is clear about the appeal for her—bigger budgets! At the time, she had been at the Alley for four years working as a painter and props mistress and was used to the intense schedule of never-ending repertoire and deadlines driven by the large number of performances each season.

Perryn Leech: What are your earliest memories of working at HGO?
Megan: I was lucky to work with a truly great artist early on—Jean-Pierre Ponnelle and his production of La bohème. It was a totally overwhelming experience with this genius and the combination of musicians, singers, and chorus all joining forces. I had never seen an opera before, and the scale was amazing. I played French horn in school but only until sixth grade, so
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being that close to a large orchestra was also a completely new experience for me.

PL: Over the years, you have worked with many of the great designers and directors—do you have a favorite?

M: I really don’t—one of the things I love about this job is that I get to work with such creative and talented designers. It is always a learning and sharing experience as designers visit Houston from all over the world and come from many different backgrounds. It is slightly intimidating to work on a new show or work with a new designer for the first time, but once I see the props layout, the nerves disappear and it gets fun.

It really is a very collaborative process. Designers often talk through ways they have used props or building techniques on shows they’ve done, and I get to call on my past experience and make suggestions for potentially doing something in a way they’ve never tried before. The great thing is that there are no right or wrong answers—and the end result may be a combination of techniques that we both have used, or something completely new.

I love doing research and then hunting down props. Andrew and I have built up a great network of traders in Houston and the surrounding areas, so there is a wide collection of people we can call on to help.

PL: Are there any times when you have been caught completely off guard by a show’s style?

M: I wouldn’t say that, but when [set and costume designer] Joan Guillén first came to HGO with La Cenerentola, I was amazed to see how highly stylized the props and costumes were and I knew that we would need to find some very clever and different prop makers to help realize the designs.

AC: You would be surprised. The James Robinson production of The Abduction from the Seraglio, set on the Orient Express, is one of the most beautiful and detailed productions I have worked on. Capturing the opulence and grandeur of the Orient Express requires an incredible level of detail. The detail work is also very important to the performers as it helps them find the authenticity in their performances. They are wearing beautiful costumes that are correct in every detail and then drinking from glasses that are individually etched (by me). They feel like they are in a different place and a different world.

PL: How do you make sure you get these details correct?

AC: Research has really changed even since I started. The Internet makes it possible to get reference photos and drawings more easily and to find reproductions and actual items that would have been more difficult to locate before. It does make life easier, but I also loved the challenge before the Internet of trying to find things and then make replicas.

M: The research part has certainly changed a huge amount and, as you say, Andrew, some of the challenge is gone. The budgets we are working with now are also much tighter and there is less time and fewer resources to experiment with prototypes, which in the past proved a very useful way of developing a prop.

AC: That’s true. Sometimes you find that a real prop—for instance, a real suitcase—is not practical during a performance because it is too difficult for a singer to use. It could be that the clasps need changing or we have to adjust the weight because it’s too heavy or too light. We also
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need to make sure it can stand up properly and is balanced. We call this “tenor proofing”!

PL: It sounds like a wonderful job where you get to create and play with really fun things using someone else’s money.

M: It is, but there are also times when it is infuriating and things go wrong. When we did the new *Tosca* a few years ago, the director, John Caird, decided he wanted to add a dead body hanging from a noose in the ceiling in the prison scene. The concept was that it was there as a warning to the other prisoners. We had to make it look extremely realistic, as it was very visible to the audience...and it is very difficult to make fake human bodies look realistic. Perryn, I remember coming in one morning and you telling me that Security had called you at 3 a.m. Apparently, during their walk-arounds, the guard on duty shone her flashlight on the “body” that had been hung in the wings for storage and had a very bad reaction because it looked so realistic!

PL: Yes—I remember that very well!

As you can see, there are many elements that go into making an opera production look and feel complete onstage. Props provide a very important resource for the director and designers in telling the story the way the composer intended. It is very clear talking to Megan and Andrew that they love the challenge of finding and creating all sorts of amazing items for the stage, and they take great pride in realizing the designs of the world’s great creative teams. One thing is for certain—there is never a dull day in the HGO Props Department!
Stargazing... up close

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Ryan McKinney
Bass-baritone, Houston Grand Opera Studio alum

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Bloody Good Fun on the Bayou is a major fundraiser for the HGO Guild, whose members provide financial support to the opera’s nationally recognized educational and outreach programs, devote thousands of volunteer hours, and show Houston hospitality to guest artists. Join the Guild today and get an inside look at Houston Grand Opera by visiting hgoguild.org.

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HERRING DESIGN
FINDING THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

Illustration adapted by Pattima Singhalaka from a sketch of Charles Dickens © Stolarios. Dreamstime.com
It is December 25. Your alarm clock goes off as usual, and you roll out of bed. You grab a Pop Tart and a glass of milk for breakfast, and your mom takes you to school.

To school? On December 25? What happened to two weeks of Christmas vacation? What happened to Christmas Day?

Would it surprise you to know that the way we celebrate Christmas today has a lot to do with the English author Charles Dickens and his short novel *A Christmas Carol*, published in 1843?

Christmas was in a pretty sad state of affairs when Dickens wrote his book. The holiday has been celebrated for centuries, but the way people celebrated it has changed a great deal. Some observances were religious ones focused on the birth of the Christ child, but others involved extravagant feasts, dancing, card playing, gambling, and games. The Puritans in England and in colonial America didn’t approve of the wilder festivities, and Christmas celebrations were even completely banned in England and in certain American colonies for a time. There were no established traditions that everyone shared, and some people in Dickens’s time feared that the celebration of Christmas would die out altogether.

Although some individuals, including Dickens, celebrated Christmas with festivities such as a special meal and family gathering, most people did not. To them, Christmas Day wasn’t much different from any other day. But certain practices were coming back into favor during Dickens’s time. Prince Albert, Queen Victoria’s husband, set up a Christmas tree—a tradition in his native Germany—in Windsor Castle in 1841. Others quickly adopted the custom. Carol singing was also becoming more popular. Dickens decided to use this increased interest in Christmas to draw attention to a serious problem. At that time in England, very much like elsewhere, great wealth and crushing poverty existed side by side. Poor children had no chance to get a good education, which would lead to honest employment—and they often turned to crime in order to survive. To help persuade wealthy people to open their hearts to the poor, Dickens planned to write a political pamphlet titled “An
FINDING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Appeal to the People of England, on Behalf of the Poor Man’s Child.” People would have paid attention: by then Dickens was already famous, not only in England but in the United States.

After giving it some thought, however, Dickens decided to write a story that would tug at people’s hearts in a way a pamphlet never could. Once he decided what he wanted to do and began writing, it took him only six weeks to finish *A Christmas Carol*.

The short novel was an instant success, and it had the effect Dickens wanted. Thousands of people who read it or saw it performed—it was quickly adapted for the stage—were deeply touched by the stingy old miser who becomes a new man and the plights of Tiny Tim and the two children, Want and Ignorance, hidden in the robe of the Ghost of Christmas Present. Stories abounded about generous gifts to the poor, prompted by *A Christmas Carol*. The tale offered some traditions that all could share, regardless of religion: a holiday feast, the warmth of family, acts of good will toward our fellow human beings. The popularity of Christmas soared.

So, did Charles Dickens and his *Christmas Carol* change the way we celebrate Christmas? Without a doubt.

If there had been no Charles Dickens and no *Christmas Carol*, would someone else have come along to save Christmas? Maybe…but who’s to say?

...but we can change the future by making sure all children in our community have access to books. Because Charles Dickens understood how important education is not only to each individual but to our society, HGO asked the Houston organization *Books Between Kids* to partner with us by holding a book drive at HGO during *A Christmas Carol*. Books Between Kids accepts “gently used” books suitable for children in Pre-K through fifth grade.

If you missed out on HGO’s book drive, you can still help! Books Between Kids has partnered with all kinds of community and school groups to conduct book drives, and individuals can donate at drop-off points listed on the organization’s website. Donations of cash—to defray expenses; there is no paid staff—are also welcome. Or you can volunteer at the Books Between Kids warehouse, sorting and inventorying donated books.

Visit booksbetweenkids.org.

Destitute children in the 19th century. Poor children had to work and were subject to harsh conditions. Many of them died before they reached the age of 25. London Archive.

Felices Fiestas!

DECEMBER 31 Ars Lyrica Houston’s annual New Year’s Eve concert and gala. Cecilia Duarte and Melissa Givens join Grammy nominated guitarist Richard Savino for a festive night of Spanish and Latin American Baroque classics. Tickets to the pre-concert dinner and post-concert gala also available.

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www.HGO.org
## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

**BY MYLES MELLOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACROSS</th>
<th>DOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Writer of <em>A Christmas Carol</em></td>
<td>1 “On the second day of Christmas my true love sent to me, two turtle ___”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Pumpkin ___ dessert</td>
<td>2 Football players who are rivals of the Houston Texans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Solemn promise</td>
<td>3 Have a meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Birds eaten at Christmas dinners</td>
<td>4 A miser who in the end helped others and became a happy man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Winter weather</td>
<td>5 On Christmas Day you can find this under the tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 When Scrooge wakes up on Christmas morning, he has ___ in his heart</td>
<td>6 Where the star was that was seen by the wise men in the Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 It’s burned in an open fire</td>
<td>10 Bass, when talking about musical notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Holiday drink, egg ___</td>
<td>13 Color of many winter clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 The three ___ men in the Bible</td>
<td>14 Santa’s beard color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Left</td>
<td>15 Letters which show a naval rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Do, re, me, fa, sol, ___, scale notes</td>
<td>17 Neither this ___ that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Becomes frozen like a lake, ___ over</td>
<td>18 Game with building blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 His ghost visited Scrooge in <em>A Christmas Carol</em></td>
<td>20 Santa’s helper at the North Pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Board game piece</td>
<td>21 More, in Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Big meal enjoyed by everyone</td>
<td>22 Insect that lives in a colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Name for Mr. Turkey</td>
<td>23 Cellist Yo-Yo ___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See answers on page 33
Orchestral musicians have an important role to play: along with the singers, they are creating a “sound world” for the opera. The orchestra can let you know when something scary is about to happen or when a character on stage is feeling excited or sad.

The conductor leads the whole performance, and that’s why the conductor is often called “maestro”—which means master or teacher. The orchestra and singers get their cues from the conductor, who also determines how quickly or slowly the music is performed, how loud or soft. The conductor also makes sure the players don’t drown out their fellow players—or the singers.

Opera orchestras vary a great deal in the number of musicians and the kinds of instruments, depending upon the sound world the composer has created. A Christmas Carol is written for one singer and 15 musicians. In this opera, no two orchestra musicians are playing the same parts—even the two violinists and the two violists are playing different notes. So listen closely! And come down to the orchestra pit before the opera to say hello.

Adrian King, Dry Season River, acrylic on canvas, 30” x 80”

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Images courtesy of the artists and Booker-Lowe Gallery.
Houston Grand Opera Presents

A Christmas Carol

A Chamber Opera based on A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
Music by IAIN BELL
Libretto by SIMON CALLOW

Commissioned by Houston Grand Opera
World Premiere Production
Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center
Sung in English with Projected Text

CAST (IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE)

Narrator
Jay Hunter Morris
Kevin Ray ‡ (December 17 and 20)

A Christmas Carol Ensemble

VIOLIN
Denise Tarrant **, Concertmaster
The Sarah and Ernest Butler Concertmaster Chair
Erica Robinson **, Principal Second Violin

VIOLA
Eliseo Rene Salazar **, Principal
Lorento Golofeev **, Assistant Principal

CELLO
Barrett Sills **, Principal

DOUBLE BASS
Dennis Whittaker **, Principal

FLUTE/PICCOLO
Seth Allyn Morris **, Principal

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN
Elizabeth Priestly Siffert **, Principal

CLARINET/BASS CLARINET
Sean Krissman **, Principal

BASSOON
Amanda Swain **, Principal

CONTRABASSOON
Nathan Koch

TRUMPET
Jim Vassallo **, Principal

TROMBONE
Thomas Hultén **, Principal

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION
Nancy Nelson **, Principal

PERCUSSION
Richard Brown **

Orchestra Personnel Manager
Richard Brown **

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United Airlines is the official airline of Houston Grand Opera.
The activities of Houston Grand Opera are supported in part by funds provided by the City of Houston and Theater District Improvement, Inc., and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.
### CREATIVE TEAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conductor</td>
<td>Warren Jones *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Simon Callow *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set and Costume Designer</td>
<td>Laura Hopkins *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Designer</td>
<td>Mark McCullough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Preparation</td>
<td>Patrick Harvey ‡</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Mr. and Mrs. James A. Elkins Endowed Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Manager</td>
<td>Kristen E. Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Director</td>
<td>Katrina Bachus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surtitles by</td>
<td>Simon Callow</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Houston Grand Opera debut  
** Houston Grand Opera Orchestra core member  
† Houston Grand Opera Studio artist  
‡ Former Houston Grand Opera Studio artist

### PRODUCTION CREDITS

Scenery constructed by Ravenswood Studios, Illinois, U.S.A.

Furniture constructed by Stages Repertory Theatre, Texas, U.S.A.

Flown scenery constructed by Mark A. Jircik Exhibits Fabricators.

Performing artists, stage directors, and choreographers are represented by the American Guild of Musical Artists, the union for opera professionals in the United States.

Scenic, costume, and lighting designers and assistant designers are represented by United Scenic Artists, I.A.T.S.E., Local USA-829.

Orchestral musicians are represented by The Houston Professional Musicians Association, Local #65-699, American Federation of Musicians.

Stage crew personnel provided by I.A.T.S.E., Local #51.

Wardrobe personnel provided by Theatrical Wardrobe Union, Local #896.

This production is being recorded for archival purposes.
It was with tremendous enthusiasm that I embarked upon composing *A Christmas Carol* in early 2013, relishing the opportunity to set one of my most treasured stories to music: a story scaling our deepest mortal fears and highest hopes, told by the most wonderfully sketched characters, all of whom I have held in the greatest of affection since my childhood. To be doing so in the one-man form as performed by Dickens himself was also a thrilling voyage in the nearly uncharted waters of a one-man opera.

Before starting work on the piece, I knew I had to be clear in my own mind about the story I wanted to tell. Rather than a cheery Christmas fairy tale steeped in mistletoe and holly as it is often portrayed, I was far keener to explore the idea of Scrooge fighting for the redemption of his very soul and the fearful elements of his visitations from all four specters. It would be by plummeting through these chilling depths that his ultimate salvation could truly be appreciated and that the joy of a Merry Christmas could be honestly felt.

As a composer, I adore working closely with singers. This piece has enabled me to take this further than ever before, exploring all the nuances of the tenor voice both in characterization and mood-setting. To be able to work so intensely with Jay Hunter Morris, a singer whose talent I have long admired from afar is an inspiring proposition. I cannot wait to see how he colors each and every character within the piece with his peerless voice and dramatic instinct.

Scoring for single voice also encouraged me to fully explore the coloristic opportunities offered by the chamber orchestra to ensure an atmospheric immediacy and intimacy that a work such as this cries out for, via varied extended avant-garde instrumental techniques, unusual pairings, and other means. The instruments were specifically chosen to enhance the *tinta* I sought to evoke, be it the tarnished silver of antique Victoriana, the sepia melancholy of the childhood that caused Ebenezer to become the bitter man we know, or the iridescent wisps of the Ghost of Christmas Past. Then came the joy of being able to create my own yuletide sound-world, a delight in itself, along with such ravishing moments as the slowly approaching dragging of Marley’s chains and the ominous, all-pervading yet soundless foreboding of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come.

To compose this work under the directorial auspices of a theatrical mastermind such as Simon Callow has been a veritable lesson in stagecraft. Knowing the one-man version of the work as well as he does, he was generous enough to share hugely valuable insights regarding pacing, relevant cuts to be made vs. parts of the text to “marinate in,” etc., and I was delighted that we were united in our ideas about the story we wished to impart.

This is a piece I am so excited to have had the chance to breathe life into and I wish you and yours the merriest of Christmases!

—Iain Bell, composer
Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* in six inspired weeks in the autumn of 1843, while he was just over halfway through *Martin Chuzzlewit*. He was seized with the idea for the story that would become the most popular of all his works after addressing a meeting to raise money for an organization dedicated to working-class self-improvement. He had been brooding for a year over the harrowing Second Parliamentary Report on “The Employment and Condition of Children in Mines and Manufactories,” determined to deliver what he called “a sledge-hammer blow” on behalf of the exploited children and against the monstrous owners who condemned them to 12-hour days underground.

His feelings—as often with him—had an autobiographical basis: unknown to his readers, he too had slaved away, at the age of 11, in a dank, rat-infested shoe-polish warehouse: he knew whereof he spoke. But it is typical of the transformative nature of Dickens’s genius that the story he wrote, though it has his compassionate outrage at the exploited children and against the monstrous owners who condemned them to 12-hour days underground.

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The work was designed to be popular: he published it himself, putting it on sale on Christmas Eve; on Christmas Day alone it sold 6,000 copies. The reaction to the book was almost entirely positive. Even his usual detractors—and they were many—buried the hatchet. “Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this?” asked Dickens’s friend and rival Thackeray. “It is a national benefit and to every man and woman who reads it a personal kindness. The last two people I heard speak of it were women, neither knew the other, or the author, and both said, by way of criticism, ‘God bless him!’ ”

With *A Christmas Carol*, Dickens, already perceived as the champion of the poor, spoke for the whole nation. Ten years after its publication, he read the entire book to a rapt charity audience; increasingly he sought out direct contact with his readers in this way. *A Christmas Carol* was always the favorite of all his readings. It is almost as if he had written it to be read aloud. From the very beginning, the narrator, playful, sardonic, censorious, takes us into his confidence: he is our friend, our confidant: “Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail. Mind! I don’t mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is particularly dead about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the deadest piece of ironmongery in the trade. But the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and my unshallowed hands shall not disturb it, or the Country’s done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that Marley was as dead as a door-nail.”

Dickens introduces us to his central character in language of extreme metaphorical vividness: “External heat and cold had little influence on Scrooge. No warmth could warm, no wintry weather chill him. No wind that blew was bitterer than he, no falling snow was more intent upon its purpose, no pelting rain less open to entreaty. Foul weather didn’t know where to have him.” His spontaneous surrealism gives extraordinary freedom to his storytelling: the “gloomy suite of rooms” in which Scrooge lived were in “a lowering pile of building up a yard, where it had so little business to be, that one could scarcely help fancying it must have run there when it was a young house, playing at hide-and-seek with other houses, and have forgotten the way out again.”

It is this wonderfully fantastical tone that makes it so hard to adapt *A Christmas Carol* to any other medium. The action is phantasmagoric, cinematic, cartoonic, dreamlike. It is highly theatrical, in the manner of his ideal theater, the remembered theater of his youth, but no theater could ever fully realize Dickens’s spectacle; no cinema has the freedom and fluidity of the ribbon of dream that Dickens unfolds; no cartoon has ever managed the density and detail, the texture and tone that belongs to this extraordinary book. It is an almost magical performance in which Dickens conjures up the scenes he requires and then extinguishes them. Paradoxically, perhaps, it seems that the best way to realize the unique qualities of this hugely original work is with a single performer who is, in effect, the narrator, inhabiting each of the characters in turn, commenting on the action, summoning up phantoms, ballrooms, graveyards in a phrase and swiftly moving on to the next mercurial transformation. I am by no means the first actor who has attempted this, but my director-designer Tom Cairns and I evolved a fluidity that enabled us to touch on the tender and sometimes terrible truths that must be at the heart of the story. I was thrilled when Iain Bell had the idea of making an opera following this approach. The new element of music offers all sorts of further possibilities for realizing the stupendous, swift-moving dreamscape of Dickens’s imagining.

© Simon Callow, librettist and director, 2014.
London, England, during the nineteenth century

SCENE 1
The miserly old businessman Ebenezer Scrooge works in his cold counting house along with his clerk, Bob Cratchit. It is Christmas Eve and the seventh anniversary of the death of Scrooge’s business partner, Jacob Marley.

Scrooge’s nephew, Fred, stops by to wish Ebenezer a merry Christmas and invite him to Christmas dinner, but Scrooge rudely refuses. As Fred leaves, a portly gentleman arrives, hoping Scrooge will donate to a fund to buy food for the poor. Scrooge refuses to contribute, saying that he already helps the poor through supporting jails and workhouses.

At closing time, Scrooge tells Cratchit he may have Christmas Day off, warning him to come in “all the earlier” the day after. Cratchit happily runs home to his wife and children, and Scrooge trudges off to his dismal house. As he prepares for bed, he hears a clanking noise that seems to come nearer and nearer. Then Scrooge sees Marley’s ghost wearing a heavy chain. Marley cautions Scrooge that he faces the same fate unless he mends his selfish ways and warns him that he will be visited by three spirits. Scrooge goes straight to sleep.

SCENE 2
Scrooge awakens when the clock strikes one. He sees a strange figure of an old man, very small, with white hair. He is the Ghost of Christmas Past. He leads Scrooge to the window and transports him to a country road near where

Scrooge grew up. Scrooge watches as scenes from his past play out before him: a Christmas visit from his beloved sister, Fan, now dead; a festive holiday celebration with friends; a tearful visit from his intended bride, Belle, telling Ebenezer they must part ways because his love of money has replaced his love for her. In torment, Scrooge demands the spirit return him to the present.

SCENE 3
Back in his own bed, Scrooge is awakened once again. He sees his fireplace ablaze and a feast arrayed before him; in the midst of it all is a towering spirit holding a torch. This is the Ghost of Christmas Present, who transports Scrooge to the small home of Bob Cratchit. Bob’s little son, Tiny Tim, is perched on his father’s shoulder, and Scrooge notices the child is holding a pair of crutches. The family enjoys their Christmas feast, but when Bob proposes a toast to his employer, the very mention of Scrooge’s name casts a shadow over the celebration. Scrooge fastens his eyes on Tiny Tim as long as he can before the scene fades and the spirit whisks him away to see the Christmas dinner Scrooge swore he would not attend. As the old miser sees Fred making merry with friends and family, he softens and wishes he could be part of the happy scene. Then the spirit shows him two starving children—Want and Ignorance—hidden in the folds of his long robe. “Have they no refuge?” Scrooge asks. The spirit reminds him of his refusal to contribute to the needy, and then vanishes. Scrooge sees a silent shape coming toward him.

SCENE 4
Scrooge correctly guesses that this is the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. The spirit takes him through the city to a house where a rich man has recently died—and from the conversations of people around him, Scrooge gathers that no one is sorry for his death. The spirit next takes him to the Crachits’ home, where the family is mourning the loss of Tiny Tim, and finally to the cemetery, where the spirit points to one of the graves. Scrooge asks him if these things would certainly come to pass or if the future could be altered. When the spirit shows him his own name carved into the headstone, Scrooge pleads with him to reverse his fate, promising to be a new man and keep Christmas in his heart.

SCENE 5
Scrooge is suddenly in his own bedroom, not knowing how long he has been with the spirits. He is delighted to find out that it is Christmas Day. Filled with joy and thankfulness, Scrooge sends a huge turkey to the Crachits and heads off for Christmas dinner at Fred’s house, where he is warmly welcomed. The next day, he can hardly wait for Bob Cratchit to arrive so he can surprise him with a raise. Over the succeeding years, he proved true to his word. He became a second father to Tiny Tim and a friend to all—giving generously, laughing freely, and always keeping Christmas in his heart.
Scott Gaille is an attorney and executive whose career has ranged from giving oral argument before the United States Court of Appeals to acquiring petroleum concessions around the world. He has travelled to more than one hundred nations searching for international petroleum on behalf of Occidental Petroleum Corporation and other companies. Scott holds a Doctor of Law with High Honors from the University of Chicago and a Bachelor of Arts with High Honors from the University of Texas at Austin, where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa. He is Founder and Managing Director of The Gaille Group and teaches at Rice University’s Graduate School of Business.

As economic progress marches forward, the natural resources in our backyards are being depleted, forcing companies to search for HQHUJ'LQIDUÁ XQJFRUQHUVRIWKHZRUOG6FRWW Gaille has traversed the nations of Africa, South America and Asia in the quest for global energy. He is now teaching the next generation of energy leaders at Rice University’s Graduate School of Business how to navigate these challenging environs. 

International Energy Development is based on his teachings and seeks to convey a deeper understanding of where our energy future lies and what it takes to succeed around the globe.

Based on Mr. Gaille’s course at Rice University’s Graduate School of Business, “the book on how energy companies grow by acquiring international concessions.”

- BISNOW Magazine
Maggie Smith; Shirley Valentine
The Infernal Machine
Company. A few highlights include
Angeles Theater Center, the Old Vic, and the Royal Shakespeare
Offstage Theatre, the National Theatre, Theatr Clwyd, the Los
He has also directed for the Bush Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith,
Flynn (also on tour),
HRH
Shades,
and
Jus’ Like That
(Broomhill Opera);
Il trittico
(Grange Park Opera);
Le roi malgré lui
(Grange Park Opera);
Così fan tutte
(Lucerne Staat
Teater, Switzerland); and
Die Fledermaus
(Scottish Opera).
In the West End, he has directed Jus’ Like That with Jerome
Flyn (also on tour),
HRH,
and
Shades with Pauline Collins.
He has also directed for the Bush Theatre, Lyric Hammersmith,
Offstage Theatre, the National Theatre, Theatr Clwyd, the Los
Angeles Theater Center, the Old Vic, and the Royal Shakespeare
Company. A few highlights include The Infernal Machine with
Maggie Smith; Shirley Valentine with Pauline Collins, which
after its successful West End run traveled to Broadway and
won a Tony Award for Collins; the film version of Carson
McCullers’s The Ballad of the Sad Café starring Vanessa
Redgrave; and Carmen Jones (Old Vic and tour), for which
Callow won the Olivier Award for Best Director of a Musical
and which won Olivier and London Critics’ Circle Awards
for Best New Musical. Callow’s appearances on stage include
Inside Wagner’s Head (Royal Opera, Covent Garden); Being
Shakespeare (West End, BAM, and Chicago); The Man Jesus
(Lyric Theatre Belfast); Present Laughter (U.K. tour); The Mystery
of Charles Dickens (on tour, in the West End, on Broadway,
and in Australia); Waiting for Godot (West End and U.K. tour);
Twelfth Night (National Theatre); The Alchemist (Birmingham
Rep and Royal National Theatre); and The Importance
of Being Oscar (West End). He created the role of Mozart in the
world premiere of Amadeus at the National Theatre. Film
appearances include A Room with a View, Postcards from
the Edge, Four Weddings and a Funeral, and Shakespeare in
Love. Callow has also published a number of books, including
Charles Dickens and the Great Theatre of the World.

Simon Callow (United Kingdom)
Librettist/Director
Houston Grand Opera Debut
About the Artist: Simon Callow is a
renowned stage and film actor, director,
musician, and author. In opera, he has
directed Il trittico and Il turco in Italia
(Broomhill Opera); La Calisto (Glimmerglass Opera); The
Magic Flute and The Consul (Holland Park Opera); Le roi
malgré lui (Grange Park Opera); Così fan tutte (Lucerne Staat
Teater, Switzerland); and Die Fledermaus (Scottish Opera).
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Angeles Theater Center, the Old Vic, and the Royal Shakespeare
Company. A few highlights include The Infernal Machine with
Maggie Smith; Shirley Valentine with Pauline Collins, which

Iain Bell (United Kingdom)
Composer
Houston Grand Opera Debut
About the Artist: Iain Bell’s love affair with
the voice is evidenced by his prolific
output of vocal works, earning him the
attention of many of the greatest singers
of our generation who have performed his music at venues
including Wigmore Hall, Carnegie Hall, and the Munich Opera
Festival. A Christmas Carol is his second opera. His first opera,
A Harlot’s Progress, received its world premiere in 2013 at
Vienna’s Theater an der Wien. Based on Hogarth’s etchings to a
libretto by British author Peter Ackroyd, it was performed by a
stellar cast headed by German soprano Dana Damrau and U.S.
baritone Nathan Gunn in a production by Jens-Daniel Herzog,
conducted by Mikko Franck. It received tremendous critical
acclaim, with the New York Times praising the strength of Bell’s
orchestral and vocal writing. It was described in Der Standard
as a “soul devouring juggernaut” and labeled as “cinematic,
dramatic and thrilling” in the Austrian newspaper Kurier. In the
conzert hall, Bell has worked with pianists including Helmut
Deutsch, Roger Vignoles, Iain Burnside, and Julius Drake.
Recent highlights include the New York premiere of his song
cycle The Undying Splendour at Carnegie Hall by American tenor
Aleksandr Shradi and the world premiere and BBC broadcast of his
Shakespearean-fool themed cycle These Moteley Fools at Wigmore
Hall by countertenor Lawrence Zazzo and pianist Simon
Lepper. A performance of his orchestral song cycle The Hidden
Place by Damrau and the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Walter Kobera was recorded for broadcast. Future
plans include the summer 2016 premiere of his third opera,
based on David Jones’s World War I epic poem In Parenthesis,
commissioned by Welsh National Opera with further
performances at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden (dir. David
Pountney/cond. Lothar Koenigs); a cantata; and a concerto for
coloratura soprano.

Warren Jones (United States)
Conductor
Houston Grand Opera Debut
About the Artist: Warren Jones has
frequently served as a guest coach for the
HGO Studio and is now making his HGO
conducting debut. He enjoys a multi-
faceted career as conductor, chamber musician, recital partner,
educator, and musical jurist. He has led critically acclaimed
performances of Mascagni’s L’amico Fritz, Rossini’s The Barber
of Seville, and Mozart’s The Magic Flute in recent seasons, as well
as a highly successful series of orchestra concerts in Taiwan and
Japan with the great Italian tenor Salvatore Licitra before Mr.
Licitra’s untimely death in 2011. He was named Collaborative
Pianist of the Year for 2010 by Musical America and continues
to perform regularly with Stephanie Blythe, Christine Brewer,
Anthony Dean Griffey, Bo Skovhus, Eric Owens, John Relyea,
and Richard “Yongjae” O’Neill. In the past he has partnered
such celebrated performers as Marilyn Horne, Håkan Hagegård,
Kathleen Battle, Samuel Ramey, Barbara Bonney, Carol Vaness,
Judith Blegen, Tatiana Troyanos, James Morris, and Martti
Talvela. He is the principal pianist of Camerata Pacífica,
a chamber ensemble that performs throughout southern
California, and has been a guest artist on two series of concerts
with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center in New York
City. He has performed for state dinners at the White House
in honor of the leaders of Canada, Russia, and Italy, and has
also performed for the Justices of the Supreme Court of the
United States. For over 20 years, he has been a faculty member
of Manhattan School of Music and The Music Academy of the
West, and in 2011, he received the highest honor bestowed
by the Music Teachers National Association of America, its
Achievement Award. This coming summer, Jones will return to
San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program to lead Don Pasquale.
Laura Hopkins (United Kingdom)
Set and Costume Designer
Houston Grand Opera Debut
About the Artist: Laura Hopkins trained in interior design and in the Motley Theatre Design Course. She has won Theatrical Management Association Awards (now called Theatre Awards U.K.) for Best Design for her work in Dr. Faustus (Northampton and Headlong Theatre) and in Simon Armitage’s Mr. Heracles (West Yorkshire Playhouse). Current and recent work includes designing costumes for The Death of Klinghoffer (Metropolitan Opera) and Alcina (Aix-en-Provence Festival 2015) and sets and costumes for Twelfth Night, the opening production at the new Everyman Theatre, Liverpool; Pass for the Royal Court Theatre; The Jungle Book for West Yorkshire Playhouse; The Seagull for Headlong Theatre; the first U.K. stage adaptation of Hemingway’s A Farewell to Arms for Imitating the Dog; and a revival of Othello for a new tour for Frantic Assembly. Her work has also been seen in Mayrocker (Cologne); Phoenician Women (Hamburg); Troilus and Cressida (a co-production between the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and the Wooster Group, New York); Soul Sister (U.K. and Dutch tour); A Delicate Balance (Hampstead); Love and Information (Royal Court); Juliet and her Romeo (Bristol Old Vic); You Can’t Take It with You, Look Back in Anger, and Crimes of the Heart (Manchester, Royal Exchange); The House of Bernarda Alba, Peter Pan, Beautiful Burnout, and Blackwatch (National Theatre of Scotland); Le comte Ory (Garsington Opera); Time and the Conways (National Theatre); Hamlet, Faust, Othello, and Rough Crossings (Headlong and Northampton); Peer Gynt (Minneapolis); and The Golden Ass (Globe).

Mark McCullough (United States)
Lighting Designer
HGO Appearances: Show Boat (2013).
About the Artist: Mark McCullough maintains a successful career with opera and theater companies in the United States and abroad. He has lit productions for the Bolshoi Theatre (The Tales of Hoffmann); the Metropolitan Opera (The Marriage of Figaro); the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Beijing (The Tales of Hoffmann); La Scala (Cyrano de Bergerac); Madrid’s Teatro Real (Luisa Miller); Strasbourg’s Opéra National du Rhin (The Beggar’s Opera); the Royal Opera, Covent Garden (The Queen of Spades); Opera North (Eugene Onegin); The Dallas Opera (Tobias Picker’s...
McCullough's work has also been seen Off-Broadway and in American regional theater companies nationwide including the Shakespeare Theatre, Court Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Mark Taper Forum, Long Wharf, Hartford Stage, The Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Theatre, The Guthrie Theatre, Steppenwolf, and Center Stage. His international theater credits include the West End production of Whistle Down the Wind (Aldwych Theatre, London); Der Besuch der alten Dame (Ronacher Theatre, Vienna); Artus (St. Gallen, Switzerland) and Rebecca—the musical (St. Gallen and the Palladium Theatre, Stuttgart); the U.K. tour of Jesus Christ Superstar; numerous productions at the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Gate Theatre. The American designer is an alumnus of the North Carolina School of the Arts and holds a master of fine arts degree from the Yale School of Drama.

Jay Hunter Morris
(United States)
Tenor—The Narrator
(Dec. 5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19, 21)
HGO Appearances: Canio/Pagliaccio in Pagliacci (2000).
About the Artist: Jay Hunter Morris began the 2014–15 season at Boston’s newest performing arts organization, Odyssey Opera, in a concert performance of Paul in Die tote Stadt, a role he debuted at The Dallas Opera last season. Other engagements this season include Tristan in Tristan und Isolde in concert with North Carolina Opera and Erik in The Flying Dutchman at both Hawaii Opera Theatre in Honolulu and at Washington National Opera. Next summer he will create the role of Teague in the world premiere of Jennifer Higdon and Gene Scheer’s Cold Mountain at Santa Fe Opera, directed by Leonard Foglia. Last season’s highlights include his debut as Calaf in Turandot at Hawaii Opera Theatre, concert performances of Cavaradossi in Tosca under the baton of Roberto Minczuk in Calgary, and a return to the title role in Siegfried in Budapest for the Wagner Days Festival at the Palace of Arts under the baton of Adam Fischer. He made his debut as Siegfried (Siegfried) at San Francisco Opera in 2011 under the baton of Donald Runnicles and appeared at the Metropolitan Opera as Siegfried in the complete new Ring cycle by Robert Lepage in 2011, which was broadcast live to cinemas worldwide and is still on the current playlist in the United States on PBS. The production was revived for further performances in 2012 and won the Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording in February 2013. In 2012, he published his first book, Diary of

Laureate Society

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For more information, please contact Richard Buffett at 713.546.0216 or rbuffett@hgo.org. Also visit HGO.org/LaureateSociety.
Kevin Ray (United States)
Tenor—The Narrator (Dec. 17, 20)


About the Artist: This season, Kevin Ray joins his alma mater, the Curtis Institute of Music, as a guest artist in his first performances of Bacchus in Ariadne auf Naxos in association with Opera Philadelphia and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. Recent engagements include his first performances of the title role of Peter Grimes with Chautauqua Opera as well as Don José in Carmen with Wolf Trap Opera and the Lyrique-en-Mer/Festival de Belle-Ile. While a Santa Fe apprentice artist, he created the role of the Second Clubman in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's The Letter. Also with the company, he sang the role of the Poet in Menotti's The Last Savage, covered the Drum Major in Wozzeck, and performed scenes of the title role of Idomeneo. On the concert stage, he has joined the Philadelphia Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and the Sunriver Music Festival for Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. He returns to HGO later this season to perform Priest/Man in Armor in The Magic Flute and Beadle Bamford in Sweeney Todd.

a Red-Neck Opera Zinger, a humorous collection of stories from his life in classical music. He returns to HGO next season to reprise his celebrated portrayal of the title role in Siegfried.
HGO Studio Faculty & Staff

Laura Canning, Director
Bradley Moore, Music Director
Mr. and Mrs. Albert B. Alkek Chair
Amra Catovic, Studio Administrator
Carisle Floyd, Artistic Advisor
Stephen King, Director of Vocal Instruction
The Harold Block and Janet Sims/Jill and Allyn Risley Chair
Patrick Summers, Conducting Instructor and Coach
Margaret Alkek Williams Chair
Patrick Harvey, Resident Coach
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Elkins Endowed Chair
Peter Pasztor, Resident Coach
Tara Faircloth, Drama Coach
Brian Connelly, Piano Instructor
Sponsored by Ursula and Saul Baflaga
Timothy Hester, Piano Instructor
Sponsored by Joan Hacken Bitar, M.D.
Melissa Morse, Piano Instructor
Jordan de Souza, Vocal Coach
Gerardo Felsatti, Vocal Coach
David Hanlon, Vocal Coach
Laurie Rogers, Vocal Coach
Dr. Irene Spiegelman, German Diction Coach
Christa Gaug, German Instructor
Sponsored by Robert L. Turner in honor of John G. Turner and Jerry G. Fischer

Enrica Vagliani Gray, Italian Instructor
Sponsored by Marsha L. Montemayor
Jonathan Ludwig, Russian Instructor
Julie Muller, English Instructor
Catherine Baxter, English Dialect/Dialectue Coach
Nicole Uhlig, French Instructor
Sponsored by Jenny Sickler
John Fisher, Guest Coach
James J. Drach Endowed Chair
Myra Huang, Guest Coach
Laura Lee Blanton Studio Award through the Scullin Foundation
Eric Melear, Guest Coach
Kevin Murphy, Guest Coach
James Robinson, Showcase Director
Pierre Vallet, Guest Coach
Evans Family Endowed Chair

The HGO Studio is grateful for the in-kind support of McGladrey, LLP.
The Young Artists Vocal Academy (YAVA) is generously underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. Robert N. Wakefield and the HGO Guild.
Additional support for YAVA is provided by Mr. Patrick Carfizzi, Dr. David and Mrs. Norine Gill, and Gwyneth Campbell.

Hotel accommodations for YAVA generously provided by the Lancaster Hotel.
United Airlines is the official airline of Houston Grand Opera and Concert of Arias.

Additional support for Houston Grand Opera Studio is provided by the following funds within the Houston Grand Opera Endowment, Inc.:
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Beth Madison Fellow
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Christopher Turbessi, pianist/coach
Ms. Marianne Kah/Joan Hacken Bitar, M.D., Fellow

Recitals at Rienzi
December 6 and 7, 2014
March 13 and 14, 2015
May 7 and 10, 2015
Recitals are held at Rienzi, the decorative arts wing of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, at 1406 Kirby Drive. Single tickets and recital packages available through HGO.org or 713-228-OPERA (6737).
Call 713-639-7800 for information.

Concert of Arias
February 5, 2015
Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center.
The evening begins with a 6 p.m. champagne reception, followed by the competition at 7 p.m.
Celebration Dinner to follow in the Grand Foyer.
For information on the dinner package, contact Scott Ipsen at 713-546-0242 or sipsen@hgo.org.
For single tickets to the performance, visit HGO.org or telephone 713-228-OPERA (6737).
HGOco is HGO’s broad initiative for connecting the company with the community in which we live. Among HGOco’s many projects, the touring group Opera to Go! performs family-friendly works in schools, churches, and community venues. Each year, HGOco also offers student performances (for school groups only) of a popular opera.

**THE PASTRY PRINCE TO PREMIERE**

A new opera by Mark Buller and Charles Anthony Silvestri will make its world premiere in January 2015 at the Heinen Theatre. *The Pastry Prince (An Italian Folk Tale)* tells the story of a down-and-out troupe of commedia dell’arte actors rehearsing to perform for the Duke of Bologna. When they have to take on a last-minute understudy, things do not go according to plan.

The historic Heinen Theatre is located at 3517 Austin St, Houston TX, 77004, on the Houston Community College–Central campus. Two FREE performances will be held daily, at 9:30 and 11:15 a.m., January 29–31, 2015.

**The Pastry Prince**, HGO’s 56th world premiere, was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Petrello. For more information, please call 713-546-0231 or visit HGO.org/operatogo.

**TICKETS GOING FAST!**

Will your child’s school be among those that attend HGO’s student performances of *The Magic Flute* in January? Tickets for student performances are selling quickly! This year’s opera is *The Magic Flute*, an opera of stunningly beautiful music in a production that boasts detailed period costumes, Egyptian influences, an evil queen, and a magic flute plus magic bells.

Student Matinee performances, a two-hour version of the opera for grades 4–8, will be held on Tuesday and Friday, February 10 and 13, 2015. High School Night—a performance of the entire opera for grades 9–12—will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2015. Please visit HGO.org/studentperformances or call 713-546-0230.

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The activities of Houston Grand Opera are supported in part by funds provided by the City of Houston and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts.
The Impresarios Circle is Houston Grand Opera’s premier donor recognition society. These vanguard supporters who provide annual support of at least $100,000 are instrumental to HGO’s success. For information, please contact Greg Robertson, chief advancement officer, at 713-546-0274.

Robin Angly, Chairman

JUDY AND RICHARD AIEEE
HGO subscribers since 2000–01, Judy and Dick are ardent believers in the power of storytelling through words and music. To demonstrate their belief, they partnered with the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Inner-City Catholic Schools on a three-year initiative to bring HGOco programs Opera to Go!, Storybook Opera, and Opera Camp: Create an Opera to students who might not otherwise be exposed to opera. Judy and Dick, the founder and chairman of Wapiti Energy LLC and Bayou Well Holdings Company LLC, are members of HGO’s Founders Council for Artistic Excellence. Beyond their support of general operations and HGOco, the Opera is grateful for the couple’s generous contributions to Concert of Arias (2012–15) and HGO’s main stage, including last season’s Aida and Rigoletto and this season’s Otello and Madame Butterfly—three out of four by Verdi, one of their favorite composers.

ROBIN ANGLY AND MILES SMITH
HGO subscribers since the 2005–06 season, Robin and Miles joined the Founders Council in 2010. The company is honored to have Robin on the HGO Board of Directors, and as a member of HGO’s Laureate Society. The couple is very familiar with the view from the HGO stage as well—both are former singers in the HGO Chorus. Robin and Miles’s great passion for music has led to their engagement with other local organizations: they serve on the board of Ars Lyrica Houston and are benefactors of the Soma International Foundation. Robin is additionally on the boards of Inprint and Da Camera. Robin and Miles have been donors to HGO special events and the Young Artists Vocal Academy, and most recently supported HGO’s main-stage production of Das Rheingold and The Passenger at Lincoln Center Festival. They are chairing the 2015 Opera Ball.

DENISE AND PHILIP BAHR
This season marks Denise and Philip’s twentieth as HGO subscribers. The couple has supported the Opera since 1996, underwriting special events and main-stage productions (most recently Il trovatore in 2012–13). Denise and Philip have a special love for the HGO Studio, where opera’s rising stars have benefited from their support since 2000. Denise, currently an HGO trustee, is a former member of the HGO Board of Directors, and the Opera has been privileged to have Philip’s participation on the board since 1998. Beyond serving as champions of HGO, Denise and Philip have a deep commitment to music that extends to their support of University of Houston Moores School Society, Houston Symphony, and Houston Ballet. The Opera was honored to have the couple chair the 2010 Opera Ball.

JANICE BARRON
Janice’s relationship with HGO extends back to the early 1980s, when she and her late husband, Tom, first became subscribers. Jan is a member of HGO’s Laureate Society and the Founders Council, contributing towards HGO’s main stage and special events. She is also an avid supporter of the HGO Studio, having underwritten several rising opera stars over the past twenty years. Jan’s late husband, Dr. Thomas Barrow, former chairman of the HGO Board of Directors, was instrumental in the concept and construction of the Wortham Center. A lifelong lover of music, Jan is past president of the Houston Symphony, and has a special affinity for Puccini and Wagner.
BBVA COMPASS
HGO is privileged to partner with BBVA Compass, a Sunbelt-based financial institution that operates 684 branches, including 352 in Texas, 89 in Alabama, 78 in Arizona, 62 in California, 45 in Florida, 38 in Colorado, and 20 in New Mexico. BBVA Compass is committed to financial education, diversity and inclusion, and supporting the arts in its communities. The bank is the U.S. subsidiary of BBVA, a Spain-based global financial services group founded in 1857, and is a well-known champion of Spanish art. BBVA Compass was a lead corporate sponsor of HGO’s Ring (created by the Spanish production team La Fura dels Baus) and also supports the NEXUS Initiative, HGO’s affordability program. David Powell, BBVA Compass’s co-head of the U.S. corporate and investment banking business and head of global clients and investment banking, serves on the HGO Board of Directors.

PAT AND DANIEL BREEN
Pat and Dan realize the importance of supporting HGO’s main-stage work, having sponsored many of the company’s most cherished productions over the past two decades. They have generously provided leadership support to HGO’s Inspiring Performance campaign. Pat is one of the most dedicated members of the HGO Board of Directors, having first joined in 1987, and currently serves on the Special Events and Governance Committees. Dan is owner of the investment firm Breeco Investments. They have six sons—Daniel, John, Thomas, Brian, Patrick, and Michael—and many beloved grandchildren.

THE BROWN FOUNDATION, INC.
The Brown Foundation, Inc., established in 1951 by Herman and Margarett Root Brown and George R. and Alice Pratt Brown, has been a treasured partner of HGO since 1984. Based in Houston, the Foundation distributes funds principally for education, community service, and the arts, especially the visual and performing arts. HGO is tremendously grateful for The Brown Foundation’s leadership support throughout Inspiring Performance—The Campaign for Houston Grand Opera, which has been critical to the company’s unprecedented growth and success in recent years.

ANNE AND ALBERT CHAO
Anne and Albert have been subscribers and supporters of HGO for the past two decades. While serving as president and CEO of Westlake Chemical Corporation, Albert finds time for numerous cultural causes. He is a member of the HGO Board of Directors and the co-chair of Inspiring Performance—The Campaign for Houston Grand Opera. Over the years, the Chaos have sponsored HGO special events, the HGO Studio, HGOco’s Song of Houston, and main-stage productions. The couple has also supported the HGO Endowment through their family foundation, the Ting Tsung and Wei Fong Chao Foundation.

CONOCOPHILLIPS
ConocoPhillips is a global, independent energy exploration and production company that operates multinationally but calls Houston home. For over thirty years, ConocoPhillips has supported various programs at HGO, from special events to main-stage productions, including the 2014–15 season-opening production, Verdi’s Otello. In 2009, the company gave a major multiyear grant to establish ConocoPhillips New Initiatives, a far-reaching program that allows HGOco to develop new and innovative education and community collaboration programs. HGO is fortunate to have Janet L. Kelly, ConocoPhillips’s senior vice president, legal, general counsel, and corporate secretary, serve on the HGO Board of Directors and also as chairman of the HGO Endowment Board.
BOBBIE-VEE AND GERALD COONEY
Bobbie-Vee and Jerry have been HGO subscribers since 1979, and have generously supported HGO productions of the most beloved classics of the Italian repertory, including *Aida*, *La bohème*, *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci*, *Tosca*, and *Madame Butterfly*. In the 2010–11 season, the Cooneys helped make possible the CD recording of HGO's innovative commission *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna*, the world's first mariachi opera, and in 2013, they supported *Cruzar*'s return to the Wortham Center. They have been active supporters of all HGO special events for many years, from Opening Night Dinner, which Bobbie-Vee chaired in 2004, to Concert of Arias, which the couple chaired together in 2014. HGO is honored to have Bobbie-Vee serve on the board of directors.

FRANCI NEELY CRANE
Franci is among the opera's strongest friends and advocates, having been a subscriber since the 1983–84 season and one of the first members of the Founders Council for Artistic Excellence. Franci is a member of the HGO Board of Directors, and serves on the Special Events and Governance Committees. She was the inaugural chair of the HGOco Committee and generously supports HGOco initiatives as a guarantor. Franci is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Texas and a graduate with high honors of the University of Texas School of Law. She was a partner of the law firm Susman Godfrey, where she earned a reputation as one of Texas's finest litigators.

THE CULLEN FOUNDATION
For more than three decades, The Cullen Foundation has been a vital member of the HGO family. Established in 1947, the Foundation has over a half-century history of giving generously to education, healthcare, and the arts in Texas, primarily in the Greater Houston area. The Opera is very grateful for the Foundation's longstanding leadership support of HGO's main-stage season.

THE CULLEN TRUST FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
The Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts has been a lead underwriter of HGO’s main-stage season for nearly thirty years. The Trust was established from assets of The Cullen Foundation to specifically benefit Texas performing arts institutions, particularly those within the Greater Houston area. In recent years, The Cullen Trust has provided lead support for memorable productions of *The Barber of Seville* (2011–12), *Tristan and Isolde* (2012–13), and *Carmen* (2013–14).

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA ENDOWMENT, INC.
Established and incorporated in 1982, the Houston Grand Opera Endowment (HGOE) is a vital financial management tool that ensures HGO has a reliable, regular source of income. Today, the Endowment contains fifty-four named funds, both unrestricted and restricted to specific purposes, such as HGOco. HGOE annually distributes 5 percent of the Endowment's average market value to HGO, making it the largest single annual funder of the Opera. HGOE leadership includes Chairman Janet L. Kelly, Senior Chairman Terrylin Neale, and several members of the HGO Board of Directors. This season, HGO is thrilled to have HGOE as the premier guarantor of *A Christmas Carol*.

HOUSTON METHODIST
This year, Houston Grand Opera celebrates nine seasons of partnering with Houston Methodist, the official health care provider for HGO, and the Center for Performing Arts (CPAM). The only center of its kind in the country, CPAM is comprised of a specialized group of more than 100 physicians working collaboratively to address the specific demands placed on performing artists. In addition to the first-rate medical care CPAM provides HGO artists, Houston Methodist also generously supports HGO special events and main-stage productions such as *La traviata* (2011–12), *La bohème* (2012–13), *Aida* (2013–14), and this season’s *The Magic Flute*. HGO is fortunate to have Dr. C. Richard Stasney, founder of CPAM, and Dr. Mauro Ferrari serve as Houston Methodist’s corporate trustees.
Based in Liberty, Texas, the Humphreys Foundation has been a major underwriter of HGO's main-stage season since 1980. Geraldine Davis Humphreys (d. 1961), a member of the pioneer Hardin family of Liberty, Texas, bequeathed her estate to the Humphreys Foundation, which was formally established in 1959. The Foundation provides support for performing arts in Texas and college scholarship funding for students in the arts. Linda Bertman, Louis Paine, and Robert Wall serve as trustees of the Humphreys Foundation. In recent years, the Foundation's generous support has helped make possible unforgettable main-stage productions such as last season's Rigoletto, 2013's Show Boat, and the world's first mariachi opera, Cruzar la Cara de la Luna, in 2010 and 2013.

HGO first welcomed Nancy and Rich to the Opera family when they became subscribers during the 2000–01 season. Rich is co-founder, chairman, and CEO of Kinder Morgan, and Nancy is a focused philanthropist whose work has positively impacted communities throughout Houston and beyond. Rich and Nancy established the Kinder Foundation in 1997 to provide impactful gifts to projects dedicated to urban green space, education, and quality-of-life issues in the Greater Houston area. Rich and Nancy's passion for enhancing Houston life has led to their involvement with numerous nonprofit institutions, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research; DePelchin Children's Center Foundation; Discovery Green Conservancy; and MD Anderson Cancer Center. HGO is indebted to the Kinders for their visionary support in areas including general operations, main-stage productions, special events, and especially HGOco, the Opera's innovative education and community collaboration initiative.

This season marks Beth's twentieth as an HGO subscriber. HGO has had the honor of her support since 2004, first though her company, Madison Benefits Group, and later as an individual donor. Immediate past chair of the HGO Board of Directors, Beth shows no signs of scaling down her involvement—she currently serves on the Executive, Finance, and HGO Studio Committees, and is an active member of HGO's Founders Council, supporting HGO special events and, last season, three operas on HGO's main stage: The Passenger, A Coffin in Egypt, and Das Rheingold. Beth has received several distinctions for her robust community service, including induction into the Greater Houston Women's Hall of Fame and a 2010 President's Medallion from the University of Houston. In 2014, Governor Rick Perry appointed her to the University of Houston System Board of Regents. Beth was named a 2014 Woman of Distinction Ambassador by ABC13.

The M.D. Anderson Foundation has provided general operating support to HGO for more than thirty years. Based in Houston, the M.D. Anderson Foundation was established in 1936 by Tennessee-born, Houston-transplanted cotton mogul Monroe Dunaway Anderson, whose company, Anderson, Clayton and Co., was the world's largest cotton merchant. While the Foundation started the Texas Medical Center and was instrumental in bringing to it one of the premier cancer centers in the world, the Foundation's trustees also looked to improve the wellness of the communities through the arts. HGO is privileged to have such a longstanding and committed partner as the M.D. Anderson Foundation in enhancing the quality of life for all Houstonians.
MEDISTAR
HGO is delighted to count Medistar Corporation among its newest corporate supporters. Medistar is a full-service real estate development company that specializes in the design, development, financing, and construction of hospitals, long-term acute care facilities, cancer centers, integrated medical plazas, medical office buildings, and other medical facilities for the health care industry. The company is led by founder Monzer Hourani, an internationally renowned engineer whose innovations of many building techniques and concepts have had a great impact on the U.S. construction industry. Medistar joined the HGO family as a Grand Guarantor of the company’s production of Wagner’s *Ring* cycle (2014–17).

THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION
HGO is honored to partner with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, based in New York City. The Mellon Foundation’s opera program supports a small number of companies demonstrating a longstanding commitment to artistic innovation by developing and presenting ambitious new works or those rarely heard. This strategy is well aligned with a company like HGO, with a strong record of commissioning and producing innovative original work. Last season’s main-stage productions of Weinberg’s *The Passenger* and the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon and Leonard Foglia’s *A Coffin in Egypt* would not have been possible without the Mellon Foundation’s leadership investment. Upcoming Mellon Foundation–supported projects include the world premieres of this season’s holiday opera, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Prince of Players* (2015–16) by legendary American composer Carlisle Floyd, as well as Our City, the latest series of Houston-based chamber operas from HGOco.

MILLER THEATRE ADVISORY BOARD
The Miller Theatre Advisory Board (MTAB), appointed by Houston’s mayor and confirmed by the City Council, acts as a steward of public and private funds to provide professional-caliber performances free to the public at the Miller Outdoor Theatre for the cultural enrichment of Houston’s diverse communities and visitors to the city. HGO’s partnership with MTAB extends back nearly six decades, making great opera accessible to thousands of Houstonians each year through live main-stage and Opera to Go! performances at Miller Theatre. HGO is tremendously grateful to MTAB for providing the Opera’s second home for so many years, and looks forward to the bright future of this longstanding partnership. June Deadrick (left) is a new HGO trustee representing the Miller Theatre Advisory Board.

BRUCIE AND ANDREW MOORE
Brucie and Andy have been a treasured part of the Opera family for more than twenty years. The couple resides in Goliad, Texas, where they own Rock On M Ranch, LLC. Subscribers since the 1998–99 season, Brucie and Andrew are members of HGO’s Founders Council for Artistic Excellence, supporting special events, general operations, and main-stage productions. HGO has had the honor of Brucie’s service on the HGO Board of Directors since 2013. In addition to her board participation, she is also a lifetime member of the board of governors of Leadership Corpus Christi, a board member of the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, principal underwriter for the Corpus Christi Area Youth Orchestra, and board president of Harbor Playhouse, also in Corpus Christi. Andy, an accomplished performer, was the 2012 winner of HGO’s Singing with the Houston Idols and recently performed in productions of *Les Misérables* and *Shrek the Musical*. Brucie and Andy were recently honored by Harbor Playhouse as Philanthropists of the Year.
SARA AND BILL MORGAN
HGO subscribers for over fifteen years, Sara and Bill have been supporting HGO since 2002. Sara is no stranger to the Houston arts community—she is a co-founder of the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, where she currently serves on the board. Bill is a co-founder of the Kinder Morgan companies and the retired vice chairman and president of Kinder Morgan, Inc., and Kinder Morgan Energy Partners, LP. In addition to their support of HGO special events, the Morgans’ contributions to HGO’s main stage in recent years (Dead Man Walking, 2010–11; The Rape of Lucretia, 2011–12; and The Passenger at the Lincoln Center Festival, 2013–14) have helped the company to reach new heights. The couple will support HGO’s new holiday opera series with It’s a Wonderful Life in the 2016–17 season. HGO is thrilled to have Sara serve on its board of directors, and as a member and past chair of the HGOco Committee.

CYNTHIA AND ANTHONY PETRELLO
Cherished members of the HGO family, Cynthia and Tony are deeply committed to improving the lives of Houstonians through their support of health care and the arts. Tony is the chief executive officer of Nabors Industries, the world’s largest land-based drilling contractor. Cynthia, a community leader and HGO Board member since 2003, currently serves on the Opera’s Special Events and HGOco Committees, the latter of which she is chair. HGO is immeasurably grateful for the Petrellos’ support of HGOco and the main stage, underwriting this season’s A Christmas Carol. The Petrellos also support HGOco programs for children, including the Student Performance Series and Opera to Go!

SCHLUMBERGER
Schlumberger, Ltd., is a leading corporate contributor to HGO, supporting the main stage and a wide range of special projects over nearly twenty years. Schlumberger’s leadership gift was integral to launching HGO’s ongoing affordability program, the NEXUS Initiative, in 2007—since then, NEXUS has made great opera accessible to more than 150,000 people. As the world’s leading supplier of technology, integrated project management, and information solutions to customers working in the oil and gas industry, Schlumberger is a global business, but the company also proactively engages with the local communities where its employees live and work. HGO is honored to count Schlumberger among its most dedicated corporate supporters, and thrilled to have Dan Domeracki, vice president of government and industry relations, serve on the HGO Board of Directors.

DIAN AND HARLAN STAI
In the twenty-six years since they first joined the Houston Grand Opera family, Dian and Harlan have left no part of the company untouched by their warmth and generosity. Harlan, a member of the HGO Board of Directors, and Dian are charter members of HGO’s Founders Council for Artistic Excellence, and their leadership support runs the gamut from main-stage productions to the HGO Studio, the HGO Endowment, and special events. The Stais have also sponsored HGO Studio artists, and they host annual recitals featuring HGO Studio artists at Mansefeldt, their renowned Fredericksburg ranch. Their support of HGO’s main stage includes Tosca (2009–10), Lucia di Lammermoor (2010–11), Madame Butterfly (2010–11), La traviata (2011–12), Cruzar la Cara de la Luna (2012–13), and A Coffin in Egypt (2013–14). HGO was privileged to recognize Dian and Harlan as the honorees of Opening Night 2008 and the 2014 Concert of Arias.
**JOHN G. TURNER & JERRY G. FISCHER**

John and Jerry, based in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, travel around the world to experience the best that opera has to offer. HGO subscribers and donors for over a decade, the couple shares a passion for Wagner that led them to support the Ring cycle (2014–17) with the largest gift ever made to HGO for a single production. John, a shareholder at Turner Industries Group, is a member of the HGO Board of Directors, in addition to serving on the boards of the American Friends of Covent Garden and the Pennington Biomedical Research Foundation. He is also chair of the HGO Studio Committee. Jerry is a board member of Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra. Prior to their instrumental contribution to HGO’s Ring, in recent years John and Jerry have supported HGO main-stage productions and special events. They are members of the Founders Council for Artistic Excellence, and John is a member of HGO’s Laureate Society.

**VINSON & ELKINS LLP**

HGO has been privileged to have the support of international law firm Vinson & Elkins for nearly three decades. Headquartered in Houston with approximately 700 lawyers in fifteen offices worldwide, V&E is deeply committed to empowering the communities in which it serves. It has enriched the cultural vibrancy of Houston by supporting HGO through in-kind legal services and contributions to special events and main-stage productions, including last season’s monumental The Passenger. The Opera is honored to have two V&E partners serve on its board of directors: Mark R. Spradling (general counsel and secretary, vice chair—Audit Committee) and Glen A. Rosenbaum (chairman emeritus).

**MARGARET ALKEK WILLIAMS**

A jewel of the Houston community, Margaret has been a treasured friend of HGO for over thirty years. A longtime singer, she possesses a deep affinity for all music, and especially opera. Currently, Margaret continues her parents’ legacy as chairman of their foundation, where her son Charles A. Williams serves as president. HGO is humbled by Margaret’s incredible generosity and dedication to the company, both as an individual donor and through her family’s foundation. She has endowed the Margaret Alkek Williams Chair, held by HGO Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers, and is a member of HGO’s Laureate Society. Recent main-stage productions Margaret has supported include The Barber of Seville (2011–12), La bohème (2012–13), Show Boat (2012–13), Aida (2013–14), and Carmen (2013–14). A valued member of the HGO Board of Directors, Margaret was the honoree of the 2009 Opera Ball and chairman of the 2014 Ball.

**THE WORTHAM FOUNDATION, INC.**

The Wortham Foundation’s relationship with HGO dates back more than thirty years. In the 1980s, the Foundation contributed $20 million to lead the capital campaign for the Wortham Theater Center, guided by businessman Gus S. Wortham’s early recognition of the vital role of the arts in making Houston an appealing place to live and work. During their lifetimes, Gus and his wife, Lyndall, were dedicated to improving the lives of Houstonians by serving on many civic, cultural, and philanthropic boards. Lyndall’s love for the arts and Gus’s involvement in city beautification and expansion have lived on through the philanthropic giving of the Wortham Foundation. The Foundation continues to support the Opera through the Wortham Foundation Permanent Endowment and generous annual operating support.
Members of Houston Grand Opera’s Patrons Society support the opera at a level of $4,000 or more, thereby making possible the incredible work of HGO. Members of the Society are entitled to many benefits at the opera, including complimentary valet parking, Masterson Green Room privileges during performance intermissions, personalized ticket service, two tickets to all open dress rehearsals, Opera Guild membership, a discount on Opera Guild Boutique purchases, and more. HGO gratefully recognizes our Patrons Society members. For information on joining the Patrons Society, please call Deborah Hirsch at 713-546-0259.

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—Amazon Books, 2014
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**Concert of Arias**

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UPCOMING OPERAS

2015

Puccini

MADAME BUTTERFLY
Jan. 23, 25m, 28, 31, Feb. 6, 8m

Grand Underwriter—Bobbie-Vee and Jerry Cooney

Cio-Cio-San
Ana Maria Martínez ‡
Pinkerton
Alexey Dolgov

Mozart

THE MAGIC FLUTE
Jan. 30, Feb. 1m, 4, 7, 14

Guarantors—Houston Methodist; Vinson & Elkins LLP; The Wortham Foundation, Inc.
Grand Underwriters—Edward and Frances Bing Fund; Halliburton

Tamino
David Portillo *
Pamina
Liétte Oropesa *
Queen of the Night
Kathryn Lewek *
Sarastro
Morris Robinson
Papageno
Michael Sumuel ‡
Speaker
Patrick Carfizzi

Monostatos
Aaron Pegram *
First Lady
D’Ana Lombard †
Second Lady
Megan Samarin †*
Third Lady
Renée Tatum
Papagena
Puréum Jo †*

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus
Conductor
Robert Spano
Original Director
Sir Nicholas Hytner
Revival Director
Ian Rutherford
Set and Costume Designer
Bob Crowley *

Original Lighting Designer
Nick Chelton
Chorus Master
Richard Bado ‡

Wagner

DIE WALKÜRE
Apr. 18, 22, 25, 30, May 3m

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Brünnhilde
Christine Goerke
Wotan
Iain Paterson
Siegmund
Simon O’Neill

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra
Conductor
Christopher Oram

Original Lighting Designer
Neil Austin
Chorus Master
Richard Bado ‡

Stephen Sondheim/Hugh Wheeler

Sweeney Todd
Apr. 24, 26m, 29, May 2, 8, 9

Grand Underwriter—Brucie and Andrew Moore

Sweeney Todd
Nathan Gunn
Mrs. Lovett
Susan Bullock
Johanna
Megan Samarin †
Anthony Hope
Morgan Pearse †

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus
Conductor
James Lowe ‡

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Rick Fisher
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Lorena Randi *

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EL PASADO NUNCA SE TERMINA
THE PAST IS NEVER FINISHED
May 13, 16, 17m

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Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán

Projections/Designer
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Costume Designer
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**DECEMBER**

5, 7m, 9, 11, 14m, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21m
- World premiere performances of Iain Bell and Simon Callow's *A Christmas Carol*. Wortham Theater Center's Cullen Theater. Special intermission reception for members of Opening Night for Young Professionals in the December 5 performance only.

6, 7
- HGO Studio Recital at Rienzi. Hear HGO Studio artists in the intimate and elegant salon at Rienzi, MFAH's decorative arts wing, 1406 Kirby Drive. December 6 at 7:30 p.m., December 7 at 5 p.m. Call 713-639-7800 for information

**JANUARY**

23, 25m, 28, 31, FEB. 6, 8m
- Performances of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. Wortham Theater Center's Brown Theater. Special intermission reception for members of Opening Night for Young Professionals in the January 23 performance only.

25

27
- HGOco presents a professional development workshop for teachers on *The Magic Flute*. Wortham Theater Center, 6 p.m.

29–31
- *Opera to Go!* presents the world premiere of Mark Buller and Charles Anthony Silvestri's *The Pastry Prince (An Italian Folk Tale)* at the Heinen Theatre. Two performances daily at 9:30 and 11:15. *The Pastry Prince* tours from January 26 through May 22. To book, visit HGO.org/OperaToGo or call 713-546-0231.

**FEBRUARY**

1

5
- *Concert of Arias*—27th Annual Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center. The evening begins with a 6 p.m. champagne reception, followed by the competition at 7 p.m. Celebration Dinner to follow in the Grand Foyer. For information, contact Scott Ipsen at 713-546-0242 or sipsen@hgo.org.

10 & 13
- HGOco presents Student Matinee Performances of *The Magic Flute*, 10 a.m. For school groups only.

11
- HGOco presents High School Night performance of *The Magic Flute*, 7 p.m. For school groups only.

**MARCH**

13 & 14
- HGO Studio Recital at Rienzi. Hear HGO Studio artists in the intimate and elegant salon at Rienzi, MFAH's decorative arts wing, 1406 Kirby Drive. May 7 at 7:30 p.m., May 10 at 5 p.m. Call 713-639-7800 for information.

19
- HGO 60th Anniversary Gala, featuring mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato. Wortham Theater Center, 7:30 p.m. For information, contact Scott Ipsen at 713-546-0242 or sipsen@hgo.org.

**APRIL**

11
- *Opera Ball 2014*. Grand Foyer of the Wortham Theater Center, 7 p.m. Followed by the Encore Party. For information, contact Scott Ipsen at 713-546-0242 or sipsen@hgo.org.

15
- HGOco presents a professional development workshop for teachers on *Die Walküre*. Wortham Theater Center, 5:30 p.m. (please note early start).

**MAY**

3

7, 10
- HGO Studio Recital at Rienzi. Hear HGO Studio artists in the intimate and elegant salon at Rienzi, MFAH's decorative arts wing, 1406 Kirby Drive. May 7 at 7:30 p.m., May 10 at 5 p.m. Call 713-639-7800 for information.

**JUNE**

2

8–12
- HGOco's *Opera Experience* camp at Wortham Theater Center. Registration opens February 1, 2015.

15–19
- HGOco's *Create an Opera* camp at Wortham Theater Center. Registration opens February 1, 2015.

15–26
- HGOco's *Art of Opera* camp at Wortham Theater Center. Registration opens February 1, 2015.

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Want to brush up on the opera before you attend? Need directions to the theater? This information and much more is available on our website where you can also purchase tickets and make a donation: www.HGO.org

HGO’s Customer Care Center is another great resource. For performance information, to purchase or exchange tickets, or to make a donation to HGO, contact the Customer Care Center at 713-228-OPERa (6737) or 800-62-OPERa (800-626-7372). You can also e-mail customercare@hgo.org. During HGO’s active repertory periods, the Center will be staffed Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (or until curtain time on performance days). The Center will be open on Saturdays and Sundays only when there is a performance, from noon until curtain. Hours are subject to change.

You can purchase tickets and make exchanges in person at the HGO Box Office, located in the Wortham Theater Center at 550 Prairie. Hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. If there is a performance on Saturday or Sunday, the Box Office will be open from noon until curtain. Hours are subject to change.

**BROWN AND CULLEN ALCOVES**

The Wortham Theater Center’s newly renovated alcoves were designed with your comfort in mind. Step inside one of these golden-hued spaces in the Grand Foyer, and you’ll find a calm place to reflect on the evening’s performance over dinner or drinks.

**EXCHANGING YOUR TICKETS**

Full-season subscribers may exchange their tickets for a different performance of the same opera without fee, subject to availability. Exchanges can be made by phone until 24 hours before the performance begins; for exchanges within 24 hours of curtain time, please visit the Box Office in person. Non-subscription single tickets may be exchanged with a service fee of $10 per ticket. When exchanged for tickets of greater value, the customer will be responsible for the difference; no refunds will be made. No exchanges are permitted after the performance has begun.

**LOST OR MISPLACED TICKETS**

There is no charge for replacing lost tickets. More than 24 hours prior to the performance: call the Customer Care Center at 713-228-OPERa (6737) or 800-62-OPERa (800-626-7372) to request replacement tickets. They will be reprinted and held at the Will Call window for your performance. Within 24 hours of the performance: go to the Box Office Manager’s window. The Box Office Manager will access your account and reprint your tickets free of charge.

**PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Wortham Theater Center features **wheelchair access** to both theaters with a choice of seating locations and ticket prices. An FM assistive listening device, generously provided by the Houston First Corporation, is available for use free of charge at all performances. Please call the Customer Care Center at 713-228-OPERa (6737) or 800-62-OPERa (800-626-7372) for full details.

**Descriptive services** for persons with vision loss are available with 48-hour advance reservations. Please call 713-546-0203 for details.

**FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICES**

To pre-order food and beverages at the Encore Café prior to the performance, call at 713-250-3650. Pre-order beverages for intermission at any of the lobby bars when you arrive at the theater. When you return at intermission, your beverages will be waiting for you. Full-season subscribers in the Founders Boxes, Premium Orchestra, and Loge Boxes may dine in the Founders Salon. Reservations are required, and meals must be ordered in advance. To take advantage of this subscriber-only benefit, Call Elegant Events and Catering by Michael at 713-533-9318.

**PARKING**

Valet parking is a benefit of membership for Patrons Circle and National Patron donors; the valet station is located on Prairie Street. If you would like information about membership at this level, please contact a member of HGO’s Development staff at 713-546-0704, or e-mail us at donorservices@hgo.org.
As the son of a music minister father and a church organist mother, tenor Jay Hunter Morris grew up in Paris, Texas, immersed in music. He’d planned and prepared, in fact, for a career in music ministry himself. But he saw his first opera at age 25—La traviata at the Dallas Opera—and it changed his life forever. Since that day, he describes his career as a series of small but important steps: singing in the Dallas chorus while pursuing a master’s degree at SMU; an apprenticeship in Santa Fe; training at Juilliard; getting a manager (Diane Zola, who is now HGO’s director of artistic administration)—“We were neighbors, and I used to feed her cats,” he says in a charming Texas accent). Some steps were true breakthroughs, such as creating the role of Anthony Candolino in the original production of Terrence McNally’s Master Class on Broadway, in which role he came to the attention of numerous people in the opera world, including HGO’s Patrick Summers. And he scored a triumph and earned international attention when he, the cover, stepped in on only eight days’ notice as Siegfried in Wagner’s Ring cycle at the Met—performances that have been seen worldwide through the Met’s Live in HD cinecasts. (We don’t mind letting it slip that he will be HGO’s Siegfried when we stage the third segment of the Ring cycle in 2015–16) In the midst of his preparation for the role of The Narrator in A Christmas Carol, he spoke by telephone with Opera Cues Editor Laura Chandler.

You have done quite a lot of new opera. Have you ever done anything quite like A Christmas Carol?

I’ve never done a one-man show, no. Let me just be honest—at first look and at first listen, this was terrifying. But—what’s the saying—how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. I just started taking bites, and I love it. This may be really special. A lot of it is going to come down to how good I am, but I’ve got a feeling this is going to be something unique and potentially really special and meaningful to a lot of people. I feel like the luckiest guy.

Tell me about your experience at the Metropolitan Opera in 2011, when you stepped in as Siegfried.

I’m the beneficiary of really great timing. If I hadn’t covered the role in Seattle and had the opportunity to watch really good people do it, I wouldn’t have been ready when my time came. And that really feeds into A Christmas Carol—I feel like I’m ready to do this now, but it might have been overwhelming three or four years ago. A Christmas Carol is very complex musically. This is going to push me as an artist in every way. It’s certainly going to challenge me as a musician. I think I’m ready for this to be a great ride.

Which opera character, whether you have sung the role or not, do you think is most like you?

The greatest thrill for me is to play characters that are the furthest removed from me as a person. My favorite role to date is Ahab in Moby-Dick, because when I stepped into that peg leg I became a different man. I liked Canio in Pagliacci—I liked being raging, murderous. But that’s not who I am as a guy. I need the makeup, the costume, and the orchestra to take me away from my life. That’s why we go to the theater—to escape the noise of our daily lives and be transformed into something else, right?

Earlier, you mentioned great moments on stage. What are some of your most memorable ones?

Once during Master Class, I was singing a performance while I was sick. I went up for a high note, and I ruptured a vocal cord. I made this horrible sound, and I just stood there on stage in front of a live audience on Broadway. Zoe Caldwell walked over to me and with the humanity of a legion of Mother Theresas, she put her hand on my face and she said, “It’s okay. We’re only human.” And she turned to the audience and said, “You should remember that.” That moment was spontaneous, it was real, it was tender, and I will never forget it.

And to step on stage at the Met in a new production, singing a role like Siegfried—that’s a gift. I was aware that this was an opportunity very few human beings are ever afforded. My job was to sit in a place of gratitude and enjoy and do my best. And I banished the fear. It was an incredible moment.

Do you believe in destiny?

Something like that. Destiny has certainly smiled on me quite enough, hasn’t it? If I don’t believe, who does?
2015 Concert of Arias
Thursday, February 5, 2015
Honoring: Mariquita Masterson
Chairmen: Jana and John Scott Arnoldy

6 p.m.—Champagne Reception
7 p.m.—Vocal Competition
Post-performance Celebration Dinner
in the Grand Foyer
Wortham Theater Center

Attire: Black Tie

60th Anniversary Celebration Concert
Thursday, March 19, 2015
Chairman: Terrylin G. Neale

Featuring Joyce DiDonato with Patrick Summers
leading the HGO Orchestra and HGO Studio Artists

6:30 p.m.—VIP Reception
7:30 p.m.—Concert in the Cullen Theater
9:00 p.m.—Celebration Dinner
on the Brown Theater stage
Wortham Theater Center

Attire: Black Tie

2015 Opera Ball
Saturday, April 11, 2015
Chairmen: Ms. Robin Angly and
Mr. Miles Smith

Seven o’clock in the evening
Wortham Theater Center

Attire: White Tie
Metamorphosis, an Hermès story