

---

## Houston Grand Opera Presents Wagner's *Siegfried* (April 16–May 1) and Rodgers & Hammerstein classic musical *Carousel* (April 22–May 7)

*Tenor Jay Hunter Morris leads stellar Wagnerian cast; mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe makes long-awaited HGO debut in Carousel, directed by Rob Ashford*

Houston, March 28, 2016—Houston Grand Opera (HGO) opens its spring repertory with *Siegfried*, the much-anticipated third installment of Wagner's epic *Ring* cycle, on April 16. The ground-breaking *Ring* by Carlus Padrissa of Catalan theater company La Fura dels Baus, with its cutting-edge visuals and acrobats in tableaux of human scenery, has thrilled Houston audiences and played to sold-out houses.

American tenor and Texas native Jay Hunter Morris will sing the notoriously difficult title role in *Siegfried*, on the heels of creating the role of Teague in Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain* at Santa Fe Opera and Opera Philadelphia. Morris gave a tour-de-force appearance as The Narrator in HGO's 2014 world premiere of Iain Bell's *A Christmas Carol*. He leads an acclaimed cast of new Wagnerians that includes Scottish bass-baritone Iain Paterson in his first staged performances as Wotan/The Wanderer—a role he will reprise at the Bayreuth Festival later this year—and soprano Christine Goerke, continuing her first staged U.S. appearances as Brünnhilde. Goerke's portrayal of the title role in *Elektra* in concert with the Boston Symphony earlier this season was described by the *New York Times* as "electric" and "unforgettable." Filipino tenor Rodell Rosel returns as Mime and American baritone and HGO Studio alumnus Richard Paul Fink will appear as Alberich. HGO Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers will conduct.

Lead support of HGO's *Ring* cycle has been generously provided by Mr. John G. Turner and Mr. Jerry G. Fischer; Houston Grand Opera Endowment, Inc; Medistar Corporation; Robin Angly and Miles Smith; Mrs. Janice Barrow; BBVA Compass; Carol Franc Buck Foundation; The Brown Foundation, Inc.; Chevron; Richard A. Lydecker Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. J. Landis Martin; Will L. McLendon; Mathilda Cochran; Houston First Corporation; Houston Saengerbund; Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hussein; Beth Madison; Dr. and Mrs. John Mendelsohn; Elizabeth Phillips; Donald and Rhonda Sweeney; John and Sheila Tweed; Birgitt van Wijk; and The Vaughn Foundation.

On April 22, HGO continues celebrating the great American musical with a production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's beloved classic *Carousel*. Broadway sensation Rob Ashford, who seduced HGO audiences in 2014 with his theatrical, dance-rich *Carmen*, will direct and choreograph this HGO co-production with Lyric Opera of Chicago. The *Chicago Tribune* enthused about the premiere there last spring, calling it "profoundly moving...Ashford's production appears directed with Broadway in mind and, well, New York should be so lucky." The production features evocative sets by Italian artist Paolo Ventura, in his first venture into opera.

In 1999, *Time* magazine named *Carousel* "the best musical of the 20<sup>th</sup> century." Writes HGO's artistic and music director, Patrick Summers, "In 1945, each member of *Carousel*'s first audiences personally knew a young life taken too soon, and the longing for the completion they witnessed onstage continues to fuel the emotional impact of the work to this day."

Singing Julie Jordan is Andrea Carroll, a 2014 alumna of the HGO Studio who gave a "lovely" portrayal (*Washington Post*) of Julie at Glimmerglass Opera in 2014. The carousel barker Billy Bigelow will be sung by Australian baritone Duncan Rock, an alumnus of English National Opera's young artist program who will be making his HGO debut. The magazine *Opera Now* recently identified him as one of opera's ten most exciting young baritones, citing his "athletic physique, powerful delivery...and intelligent characterization."

Making her long-awaited HGO debut as Nettie Fowler is Stephanie Blythe, one of opera's most beloved mezzo-sopranos. Also acclaimed for her tribute to Kate Smith's interpretations of the Great American Songbook, Miss Blythe was seen in *Live from Lincoln Center's* presentation of *Carousel* on PBS in 2013.

Soprano and HGO Studio alumna Lauren Snouffer appears as Carrie Pipperidge, after her enthusiastically received Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* earlier this season. Australian tenor Alexander Lewis will sing Enoch Snow, and HGO Studio artist Ben Edquist, whose title role portrayal in the HGO world premiere of Carlisle Floyd's *Prince of Players* earned strong praise, will appear as Jigger Craigin.

*Carousel* will be conducted by Richard Bado, who holds The Sarah and Ernest Butler Chorus Master Chair at HGO.

Through its community collaboration program HGOco, the company will present in May the world premiere of *After the Storm*, a chamber opera by composer **David Hanlon** and librettist **Stephanie Fleischmann** about the impact of hurricanes on the Texas Gulf coast.

The full list of events for the remainder of the HGO season is provided below. More information is available at [HGO.org](http://HGO.org)

\* \* \* \* \*

## About Houston Grand Opera

Since its inception in 1955, Houston Grand Opera has grown from a small regional organization into an internationally renowned opera company. HGO enjoys a reputation for commissioning and producing new works, including 59 world premieres and seven American premieres since 1973. In addition to producing and performing world-class opera, HGO contributes to the cultural enrichment of Houston and the nation through a diverse and innovative program of performances, community events, and education projects that reaches the

widest possible public. HGO has toured extensively, including trips to Europe and Asia, and has won a Tony, two Grammy awards, and two Emmy awards—the only opera company to have won all three honors.

Through HGOco, Houston Grand Opera creates opportunities for Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to observe, participate in, and create art. The NEXUS Initiative is HGO's multi-year ticket underwriting program that allows Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy world-class opera without the barrier of price. Since 2007 NEXUS has enabled more than 200,000 Houstonians to experience first-quality opera through discounted single tickets and subscriptions, subsidized student performances, and free productions.

---

## Houston Grand Opera: 2015–16 Season

\* *Company debut*  
\*\* *HGO Studio artist*  
# *Former HGO Studio artist*

### Wagner: Siegfried

Sung in German with projected English translation

**April 16, 20, 23, 28; May 1m, 2016**

Siegfried	Jay Hunter Morris
Wanderer (Wotan)	Iain Paterson
Brünnhilde	Christine Goerke
Mime	Rodell Rosel
Alberich	Richard Paul Fink #
Erda	Meredith Arwady
Fafner	Andrea Silvestrelli
Conductor	Patrick Summers
Production	La Fura dels Baus
Director	Carlus Padrissa
Set Designer	Roland Olbeter
Costume Designer	Chu Uroz
Lighting Designer	Peter van Praet
Projection Designer	Franc Aleu
Movement/Associate Director	Esteban Muñoz

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra

*A co-production of Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia, Valencia, and Maggio Musicale, Florence*

### Rodgers & Hammerstein: Carousel

**April 22, 24m, 27, 29, 30; May 6, 7, 2016**

Billy Bigelow	Duncan Rock *
Julie Jordan	Andrea Carroll #
Carrie Pipperidge	Lauren Snouffer #
Nettie Fowler	Stephanie Blythe *
Mrs. Mullen	Helen Anker*
Enoch Snow	Alexander Lewis *
Jigger Craigin	Ben Edquist **
Conductor/Chorus Master	Richard Bado #
Director/Choreographer	Rob Ashford
Set Designer	Paolo Ventura *
Costume Designer	Catherine Zuber
Original Lighting Designer	Neil Austin
Sound Designer	Andrew Harper

Houston Grand Opera Orchestra and Chorus

*A co-production of Houston Grand Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago*

**World Premiere**

**David Hanlon and Stephanie Fleischmann: *After the Storm***

Sung in English with projected text

**May 13 at 7 p.m. at Wortham Theater Center's Cullen Theater**

**May 15 at 7 p.m. at The Grand 1894 Opera House in Galveston**

Eliza Goodman	Sofia Selowsky *
Lucy Goodman	Mane Galoyan *
Bettie/Bea	Lindsay Russell
Harriet/First Responder	Cecilia Duarte
Isaiah/Pastor's Son	Mark Thomas
Cyclone Goodman/Wilbur	Mark Diamond **
Conductor	David Hanlon**
Stage Director	Matthew Ozawa

**Media Contact:** Christine Cantrell, [Christine@elmorepr.com](mailto:Christine@elmorepr.com) 713-524-0661

**Director of Communications:** Judith Kurnick, [jkurnick@hgo.org](mailto:jkurnick@hgo.org) 713-546-0240

[HGO.org](http://HGO.org)

[facebook.com/houstongrandopera](https://facebook.com/houstongrandopera)

[twitter.com/hougrandopera](https://twitter.com/hougrandopera)

# # #

HOUSTON  
**Methodist**<sup>SM</sup>  
LEADING MEDICINE

Official Health Care Provider  
for Houston Grand Opera

**UNITED** 

Official Airline of Houston Grand Opera

**TENENBAUM**  
CLASSIC JEWELERS

Preferred Jeweler of Houston Grand Opera