HOUSTON GRAND OPERA’S 2023-24 SEASON

WITH OPERA AS OUR GUIDE,
LET THE...

BE TOLD

TRUTH
Over the season ahead, the truth will be revealed through words and transcendent music. For the first time in HGO history, we will open our season with a world premiere: Intelligence, the thrilling story of a women-run spy ring during the Civil War. We will present cherished classics from the repertoire: the effervescent Falstaff, the epic Parsifal, the tragic Madame Butterfly, and the sublime Don Giovanni. And we'll close the season with history's most adored musical, The Sound of Music.

Truth is a precious and powerful thing. Whether we embrace it or hide from it, the truth endures, revealing who we are and who we could be. This season, Houston Grand Opera is taking audiences on challenging journeys that culminate in defining choices and immutable truths, brought to life by the finest artists, musicians, creatives, and artisans in the world.

United by the complexity of their musical languages, the maturity of their themes, and the sense that their creators have been through it all, these are fully realized masterpieces, created by composers at the very top of their game. No matter what choices we see our characters make, their truth will sing out, and our collective perception of what opera can be will change forever.

This is just the start of the extraordinary experiences we’re planning for our subscriber community over the next season. Join us.

Khori Dastoor
General Director and CEO
Margaret Alkek Williams Chair
AS POWERFUL PERCEPTIONS UNRAVEL BEFORE YOUR EYES, HOLD THE TRUTH PRECIOUS AND BEAR THE EMOTIONS THAT RISE.

NOW PRESENTING

HEDGE & SCHEER
INTELLIGENCE
OCT 20 - NOV 3

PUCCINI
MADAME BUTTERFLY
JAN 26 - FEB 11

VERDI
FALSTAFF
OCT 27 - NOV 10

MOZART
DON GIOVANNI
APR 19 - MAY 3

WAGNER
PARSIFAL
JAN 19 - FEB 4

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN
THE SOUND OF MUSIC
APR 26 - MAY 12

2023-2024
MORE OPERA, MORE VALUE
- Subscribers receive savings of up to 40% over single-ticket buyers
- A 25% discount on up to 10 additional single tickets per production, pending availability
- A 10% off discount code to use at the new HGO Online Boutique

FRONT-LINE ACCESS TO ALL PERFORMANCES
- Mainstage productions
- Concert of Arias
- Butler Studio artist recitals
- Giving Voice
- Miller Outdoor Theatre performances (ticketed seating)
- And so much more

PERKS BEYOND THE STAGE
- Exclusive deals to nearby restaurants, including Georgia James Tavern, Guard and Grace, and the Lyric Food Hall
- Two complimentary tickets to HGO’s annual Butler Studio Showcase performance
- A monthly Subscriber Newsletter with the latest information about subscriber benefits, HGO happenings, and opportunities to get limited-edition memorabilia and VIP experiences

Learn more at HGO.org/Perks

FLEXIBILITY
- Exchange tickets for a tax receipt or for another performance date with no fees
- Take advantage of an interest-free payment plan
- Participate in HGO’s auto-renewal program and receive two complimentary tickets to Concert of Arias

RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BY MAY 22, 2023, AND GET GUARANTEED ACCESS TO YOUR CURRENT SEATING LOCATION, PLUS A CHANCE TO WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO THE SANTA FE OPERA, INCLUDING HOTEL, AIRFARE, AND TICKETS TO SEE THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, TOSCA, AND ORFEO.

RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION AT:
HGO.org/Subscribe
OCTOBER 20 - NOVEMBER 3

An Opera in Two Acts

The Civil War is raging, and the country is burning. Men are slaughtering each other on the battlefield, but it is two women who possess the deadliest weapon of all: intelligence, made more powerful by its invisibility.

Who would guess that Elizabeth Van Lew, from a prominent Confederate family, is running a secret pro-Union spy ring? That Mary Jane Bowser, born into slavery in the Van Lew household, not only has been taught to read and write, but is also possessed of a photographic memory? The HGO-commissioned world-premiere opera *Intelligence*, inspired by the little-known true story of these two unlikely spies, unfolds as Elizabeth sends Mary Jane to live in the Confederate White House. As Mary Jane uncovers the secrets of the Confederacy to share with Union military commanders, she also uncovers the secrets of her own history and identity.

Shared through a fusion of music, words, and dance, this new American epic is the creation of a powerhouse trio: composer Jake Heggie, librettist Gene Scheer, and director/choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar. The sensational cast is led by mezzo-soprano Jamie Barton as Elizabeth, with soprano Janai Brugger making her anticipated company debut as the brilliant Mary Jane. Acclaimed conductor Kwamé Ryan takes the podium for his HGO debut.
Falstaff, Verdi’s enduringly popular final masterpiece, recounts the misdeeds of drunken, absurdly vain, formerly thin knight Sir John Falstaff, plucked straight from Shakespeare’s plays.

He’s fallen on hard times and, while drinking at an inn, announces his plans to pay off his debts by wooing not one, but two wealthy, married women: Alice Ford and Meg Page. But after he dashes off identical letters to each, they quickly discover his scheme and vow revenge. And as Falstaff—along with the rest of the men in this joyously life-affirming comedy—soon learns, he’s deeply outmatched by the women. With quick scene changes and a large wooden set, this iconic production perfectly captures the feel of an Elizabethan play.

The stellar cast features four beloved favorites: baritone Reginald Smith Jr. as Falstaff, soprano Nicole Heaston as Alice, baritone Blake Denson as her husband, Ford, and soprano Andrea Carroll as the young Nannetta. Paula Suozzi directs, with Maestro Patrick Summers as conductor.

Music by Giuseppe Verdi.
Libretto by Arrigo Boito, based on William Shakespeare’s Merry Wives of Windsor and King Henry IV—Part 1

Sung in Italian with projected English translation
A Production of Los Angeles Opera

BROWN THEATER
Wagnerites from around the world will descend upon Houston when HGO presents Parsifal, the composer’s final opera, full of shimmeringly beautiful music and spiritual and philosophical exploration.

The revered masterpiece takes audiences on a mystical journey through a realm where time has no meaning and a group of knights are trying to protect the Holy Grail and their wounded king, Amfortas. He can only be healed by an innocent fool—the titular protagonist—but first Parsifal must undertake a quest to reclaim the Holy Spear, enduring tests including an attempted seduction by a bevy of gorgeous women.

The opera will be presented in a stunning, sensual, colorful production from Tony Award-winning director John Caird. HGO Principal Guest Conductor Eun Sun Kim leads a cast of extraordinary Wagnerians including tenor Russell Thomas as Parsifal, soprano Christine Goerke as Kundry, bass Kwangchul Youn as Gurnemanz, and bass-baritone Ryan McKinney as Amfortas.

Music and libretto by Richard Wagner
Sung in German with projected English translation

A Production of Lyric Opera of Chicago

Photo Credit: Robert Kusel

PARSIFAL
JANUARY 19 - FEBRUARY 4

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Music and libretto by Richard Wagner
Sung in German with projected English translation

A Production of Lyric Opera of Chicago

Photo Credit: Robert Kusel

BROWN THEATER
SILENCED BY LOVE

Puccini’s beloved Madame Butterfly, with its soaring score and unforgettable tragic story, returns to HGO in a revival of Tony Award-winning director Michael Grandage’s acclaimed production.

The opera’s diverse cast will be led by internationally sought-after soprano Ailyn Pérez, who returns to Houston as Cio-Cio-San, the young Japanese girl who marries American naval lieutenant Pinkerton, performed by tenor Yongzhao Yu in his role debut. As the tale unfolds, Cio-Cio-San, abandoned by her husband, raises their son while faithfully waiting for him to return to Japan. When Pinkerton finally reappears, bringing with him a new wife and seeking to take his child back to America, heartbreaking tragedy ensues.

640 girls in Italy, 231 in Germany, 100 in France, 91 in Turkey, 1,003 in Spain. As the servant Leporello famously sings in his "Catalogue aria," the eponymous fiend in Mozart’s sublime tragicomedy Don Giovanni has already been very busy when he beds the engaged Anna and then kills her father in a duel. Even as he’s pursued by aggrieved parties on all sides, Don Giovanni sets about seducing the lovely Zerlina—on her wedding day.

But the arrogant Spanish antihero everyone loves to hate meets his comeuppance, and in director Kasper Holten’s brilliant production, his descent into hell is not literal but mental, as depicted by Luke Halls’s incredible projections onto Es Devlin’s magically minimalist set. Conducted by acclaimed Mozartian Dame Jane Glover, the opera’s stellar cast will be headlined by charismatic Italian bass-baritone Luca Pisaroni, an international superstar, in the title role.

The opera’s world-renowned cast also features bass-baritone Ryan McKinney as Leporello, tenor Kang Wang in his company debut as Don Ottavio, and mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke as Donna Elvira. The opera’s world-renowned cast also features bass-baritone Ryan McKinney as Leporello, tenor Kang Wang in his company debut as Don Ottavio, and mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke as Donna Elvira.

Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte
Sung in Italian with projected English translation
A Co-Production of Houston Grand Opera; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Gran Teatre del Liceu; and The Israeli Opera
A FAMILY-FRIENDLY CLASSIC

A tale of resistance, courage, and joy: The Sound of Music, whose story begins in the hills of Austria on the eve of the Nazis’ annexation, resonates as much today as during the musical’s 1959 premiere.

Acclaimed director Francesca Zambello incorporates songs from both the theatrical version and its famous cinematic adaptation into her new production, a vibrant staging of the beloved story of the von Trapp children, their stern father, and the novice-turned-governess Maria who changes their lives.

The Brown Theater is the perfect place to experience Rodgers and Hammerstein’s original vision for their timeless musical, propelled by the full power of the world-class HGO Orchestra and Chorus and a peerless cast including world-famous mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard as Maria and baritone Alexander Elliott as the Captain. HGO’s Richard Bado takes the podium to conduct this classic family-friendly production.

Music by Richard Rodgers
Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II
Book by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse

Suggested by “The Trapp Family Singers” by Maria Augusta Trapp
Sung in English with projected English text

A Co-Production of Houston Grand Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival

Photo Credit: Karli Cadel
YOUR SEAT TO GRAND OPERA AWAITS.

Subscribing to HGO is the best way to immerse yourself in the power of opera. A season subscription guarantees you the best seats in the house—and the best exclusive perks throughout the season.

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Choose which dates you’d like to attend from the series options below.

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2 SELECT YOUR SEATS
Choose a section of the theater and its associated pricing.

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3 CALL OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO SUBSCRIBE
Call 713-228-6737 or visit HGO.org/Subscribe to subscribe today.

Renew your subscription by May 22, 2023, and get guaranteed access to your current seating location, plus a chance to win a trip for two to The Santa Fe Opera, including hotel, airfare, and tickets to see The Flying Dutchman, Tosca, and Orfeo.
THE BUTLER STUDIO SHOWCASE
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023
at The Wortham’s Cullen Theater

Get a first look at the 2023-24 Butler Studio class during this intimate performance, during which these gifted emerging artists will perform staged, costumed excerpts from a variety of operatic works. Subscribers will receive two free tickets to this showcase, with additional tickets available for purchase at HGO.org.

CONCERT OF ARIAS
FEBRUARY 2, 2024
at The Wortham’s Cullen Theater

The competition is steep, y’all. Each year nearly 1,000 applicants compete for a coveted spot in the Butler Studio, and it all culminates at the Concert of Arias, the live final round of the competition. Subscribers receive first access to tickets.

THE BIG SWIM
FEBRUARY 16-18, 2024
at the Asia Society Texas Center

Currently in development by HGO in partnership with the Asia Society Texas Center, this new chamber opera from composer Mellina Tsui and librettist Melisa Tien—our 76th world premiere!—shares the story of the Jade Emperor and the Great Race between the 12 animals that became the symbols of the Lunar New Year calendar. The work will be presented as part of ASTC’s Lunar New Year festivities. Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

GIVING VOICE
DETAILS TO COME

In February 2023, Wheeler Baptist Church, Texas Southern University, Prairie View A&M University, and the Ebony Opera Guild joined us for this popular, ever-evolving annual event. A record 2,000 audience members came out to celebrate Black artists in the community, with more than 11,000 viewers streaming the concert online. We look forward to another year of embracing Black joy and excellence, with subscribers getting premier access to register for this event.
Join us for more opera events that invite the entire Houston community to experience opera in parks and shared spaces.

**OPERA TO GO!**

**PRESENTS**

**KATIE: THE STRONGEST OF THE STRONG**

**OCTOBER 10-12, 2023**

at Miller Outdoor Theatre

This season’s touring opera (an HGO commission!) tells the true story of Katie Sandwina—a circus强strongwoman who defied expectations and went on to help lead the U.S. suffrage movement in the early 1900s. Appropriate for ages 7 and up.

**OPERA AT MILLER OUTDOOR THEATRE**

**MAY 17-18, 2024**

at the Miller Outdoor Theatre

Opera under the stars—is there anything better? Grab a spot on the lawn and enjoy Puccini’s masterpiece, *Madame Butterfly*, with friends and family.

**CAROLS ON THE GREEN**

**DECEMBER 9, 2023**

at Discovery Green

This audience favorite and new Houston tradition celebrates its fifth year of kicking off the holiday season with our partners at Discovery Green. Carols on the Green is an evening of opera, holiday hits, and more for all ages—all for free!
Houston Grand Opera believes that access to the arts is a right, not a privilege—and ALL Houstonians deserve an opportunity to experience the arts. We are committed to serving our community, at our home base inside of the Wortham Theater and beyond its walls by supporting arts educators, bringing students into the Wortham, and expanding access to the arts for all.

**WHERE OPERA MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

- **65,000** Youth and Families experience HGO Community and Learning Programs each year.
- **6,000** Guests attended educational lectures before mainstage performances during the 2022-23 season.
- **4,000** Students visit annually for our Student Matinee and High School Night performances.
- **200+** Audience members of all ages joined HGO for its first Sensory-Friendly Opera.
HGO has established itself as a world-class company that brings the most revered artists from across the globe to Houston. See how your city benefits from having a true authority in the arts in its backyard.

TALENT INCUBATOR

For 45 years, the Sarah and Ernest Butler HGO Studio has trained the next generation of singers, pianists, and coaches preparing their operatic careers.

Our artists work alongside the best in the business, with residencies that last up to three years. Alumni of the program go on to perform in the world’s great opera houses, all while HGO audiences get to watch them grow—and say they knew them when!

The highly competitive audition process culminates in the annual Eleanor McCallum Competition for Young Singers Concert of Arias, taking place next season on February 2, 2024.

INDUSTRY LEADER

HGO leads the field in commissioning new operas, with 74 world premieres to date! This season we will present:

**INTELLIGENCE**
World Premieres
October 20–November 3, 2023

**THE BIG SWIM**
World Premieres
February 16–18, 2024

THE AWARDS TO PROVE IT

Not to brag, but we are the only opera company to have won a Tony, Grammy (two, to be exact), and an Emmy (well, three).
THE OPERA HOLDS A MIRROR TO WHO WE ARE, AND WHO WE CAN BE.

BECOME A PART OF THE OPERA.

Whether or not singing is your forte, there are a plethora of ways to be a part of the opera. From volunteer opportunities to networking events, and of course a good party or two, find your place here and see all that opera can inspire within you.

ONYP (OPENING NIGHT FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS)
Young arts lovers join HGO at the Wortham for each mainstage opera’s Opening Night, enjoying intermission mixers and other networking events. Learn more at HGO.org/ONYP

OVERTURE
A social group for members of the LGBTQIA+ community to revel in awe-inspiring opera while sparking important conversations, all over complimentary cocktails. Learn more at HGO.org/Overture

HGO GUILD
Since HGO’s inception, the Guild has been behind the scenes creating harmony among the HGO community. Volunteer with this exceptional group of people and join the opera community as an advocate of the arts, education docent, or even an event host. Learn more at HGOGuild.org

OPERA CLUB
Opera Club, a community for teens to experience the world of opera along with their peers. This free program invites young people to HGO dress rehearsals, exclusive interactions with opera artists, designers, and professionals, and other special behind-the-scenes events. Learn more at HGO.org/OperaClub
TOI TOI TOI
A CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS

Each year, we present Houston’s most incredible galas and events, full of electric excitement and over-the-top elegance. Join your fellow arts lovers and party goers for a fabulous night on the town!

SPECIAL EVENTS

OPENING NIGHT DINNER INTELLIGENCE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2023

CONCERT OF ARIAS DINNER
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2024

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Email: SpecialEvents@HGO.org
Brooke Rogers. 713-546-0271

MAKE YOUR MARK
Ticket sales cover less than 20% of the total costs each opera season, with your donations being what brings the curtain up every season. Make your gift today and help HGO continue presenting world-class opera and enriching experiences in our community.
Donate now at HGO.org/Donate or 713-546-0226.

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TO OUR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORTERS!

CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

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Anonymous

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City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance

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Houston Grand Opera
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