



NEWS RELEASE

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**FORT WORTH OPERA AND TEEN OPERA CLUB OF TEXAS ANNOUNCE FREE VIRTUAL EVENT
ON JANUARY 21, 2021: "STORYTELLING, STAGE PRESENCE, AND STANDING OVATIONS"**

*THE COMPANY'S ACCLAIMED EDUCATION DEPARTMENT WILL HOST THE FOURTH EVENT
OF THE NEWLY FORMED CLUB FOR TEENS ACROSS THE STATE OF TEXAS*

FORT WORTH, TX — Fort Worth Opera (FWO) is proud to announce that the company will host the fourth Teen Opera Club of Texas event, "Storytelling, Stage Presence, and Standing Ovations," on Thursday, January 21, 2021, at 6:30 PM CT. This inspiring educational initiative, part of the recently launched Texas Opera Alliance (TOA) with Austin Opera (AO), The Dallas Opera (TDO), Houston Grand Opera (HGO), OPERA San Antonio (OSA), and FWO, offers Texas students 13-19 years of age unparalleled access to artists and administrative staff from each organization and exclusive insight into the world of opera. In this time of social distancing, Fort Worth Opera and our fellow TOA companies are excited to find innovative ways to continue delivering arts education and connect Texas's youth during the pandemic and beyond.

Beginning in October with HGO's world premiere presentation of *Katie: The Strongest of the Strong*, and OSA's discussion with the cast and creative team of *The Cunning Little Vixen*, The Dallas Opera presented "Careers in Opera" on December 14, 2020. Following this insightful presentation, FWO is kicking off the New Year, as **Sheran Goodspeed Keyton**, the company's **Manager of Education and Community Engagement**, teaches budding young artists that there are many more facets to a successful performance on the stage, than simply delivering beautiful sounds.

"For many people, singing comes naturally," says Ms. Keyton. "They open their mouth, and innately there is an outpouring of amazement! Audiences worldwide love hearing the sound of the naturally talented, as well as the professionally trained. But what resonates with an audience even more, is the ability to tell a story. I'm excited to share my 30+ years as a professional storyteller with the young students who will participate in this session!"

Fort Worth Opera's 60-minute live and pre-recorded workshop with Ms. Keyton will feature video presentations by acclaimed stage directors **Octavio Cardenas**, **David Gately**, and **Steven D. Morris**. They will discuss the art of operatic storytelling, the importance of authenticity in emotional expression, character motivation, developing a stage presence, and learning how to balance vocal virtuosity with honest human emotions and behavior in the context of an opera. Octavio Cardenas, who directed the company's 2014 production of *Silent Night* and 2019 world premiere, *Frida Kahlo and the Bravest Girl in the World*, will address how to act with puppets. Longtime Fort Worth Opera favorite and industry legend David Gately will talk about the process a performer goes through to embody a character that is an animal. Lastly, Steven D. Morris, Executive Producer of Theatre Arlington and director of Fort Worth Opera's recent world premiere, *Stone Soup*, will examine how an adult can realistically portray a child on stage.

For more information, contact Sheran Goodspeed Keyton at sheran@fwopera.org. To join the club for free and to learn more about the Teen Opera Club of Texas or the Texas Opera Alliance, visit: <http://texasoperaalliance.org>.

ABOUT AUSTIN OPERA

Serving Central Texas since 1986, Austin Opera inspires audiences with its trademark blend of innovation and artistic excellence. With the leadership of General Director & CEO Annie Burrige and the Sarah and Ernest Butler Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor Timothy Myers, Austin Opera presents a curated season of grand opera productions at the Long Center, the crown jewel of Austin performing arts venues. Combining the finest American and international stars with the outstanding local talent of our Orchestra and Chorus, Austin Opera's productions include accessible takes on classic operas as well as challenging new works that reinforce the continuing relevance of opera.

Opera ATX, powered by Austin Opera, brings groundbreaking new works, emerging artists, exciting composers, and dynamic directors to Austin. By tapping into our city's live music DNA, Opera ATX reflects the spirit of the city and the pioneering image it's known for. We create the conditions for operatic experiences completely new to Austin, and perhaps completely new to the art form, by exploring alternative venues and unique local partnerships. Driven by Austin Opera's love of opera, love of audiences, and love of Austin, Opera ATX shows how Austin is shaping its opera company and inspiring innovative experiences.

Austin Opera is also a force in hundreds of classrooms across Central Texas, nurturing the next generation of opera audiences through its award-winning education programs. We work directly with educators, community leaders, students, and parents to make opera relevant, educational, and entertaining for students of all ages.

ABOUT THE DALLAS OPERA

One of the leading opera companies in the country, The Dallas Opera has an extraordinary legacy of world-class productions and thrilling premieres featuring the greatest operatic artists of our time. Inaugurated in 1957 with a concert featuring the incomparable Maria Callas, TDO is known for the notable U.S. debuts of a host of legendary artists. The company has long been an industry leader and innovator through groundbreaking initiatives including the Hart Institute for Women Conductors, TDO Network, free public simulcasts, acclaimed art song recitals, the national vocal competition, special concerts, and outstanding family and award-winning education programs. TDO's home is the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House, a jewel in the Dallas Arts District. As one of the largest performing arts employers in North Texas, TDO is proudly committed to diversity, both onstage and off, and is a major contributor to the economic vitality and international cultural reputation of this region.

ABOUT FORT WORTH OPERA

Founded in 1946, Fort Worth Opera is poised to celebrate its 75th anniversary in 2021. For the last fifteen years, FWO has become one of the leading American companies dedicated to nurturing and performing new opera, in addition to producing traditional repertoire with rising American stars. Our acclaimed *Frontiers* program was held digitally this fall with our first digital Libretto Workshop. The company's Children's Opera Theatre typically reaches about 60,000 students across North Texas each season with live, interactive performances. During the COVID-19 pandemic, FWO has created online educational curriculum for local music students to supplement their in-school studies, and COT can also now serve entire families and communities beyond the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Fort Worth Opera is committed to celebrating all North Texans, and through our ongoing *Noches de Ópera* program, the company offers exciting community-driven events and powerful operas that represent the diverse cultures of all of the Americas.

ABOUT HOUSTON GRAND OPERA

Houston Grand Opera (HGO) is one of the largest, most innovative, and most highly acclaimed opera companies in the United States. HGO was the only American finalist for Opera Company of the Year in the 2019 International Opera Awards. In fulfilling its mission to advance the operatic art to serve an ever-evolving audience, HGO has led the field in commissioning new works (69 world premieres to date) and in training and nurturing promising young artists and administrators. The company contributes to the cultural enrichment of Houston and the nation through a diverse and innovative program of performances, community events, and education projects that reaches the widest possible public. HGO's pioneering community engagement initiative, HGOco, has served as a model for other arts organizations.

The NEXUS Initiative is HGO's multi-year ticket underwriting program that allows Houstonians of all ages and backgrounds to enjoy opera without the barrier of price. Since 2007, NEXUS has enabled more than 250,000 Houstonians to experience superlative opera through discounted single tickets and subscriptions, subsidized student performances, and free productions. HGO has toured extensively and has won a Tony, two Grammy awards, and three Emmy awards. It is the only opera company to win all three honors.

ABOUT OPERA SAN ANTONIO

OPERA San Antonio's mission is to produce opera of uncompromising artistic quality and to enrich our community through educational outreach and social engagement. The company is committed to preserving and sharing opera as an art form that is relevant, inspirational, and accessible to residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The civic premise of OPERA San Antonio is that the community needs, and the citizens deserve, access to the major performing arts.

COMPANY MEDIA CONTACTS:

- **Houston Grand Opera:** Natalie Barron, 713-546-0240, nbarron@hgo.org
- **Austin Opera:** Melysa Rogen, 512-610-7680, mrogen@austinopera.org
- **The Dallas Opera:** Suzanne Calvin, 214-443-1014 (o) and 817-995-1687 (m), Suzanne.Calvin@dallasopera.org
- **Fort Worth Opera:** Ryan Lathan, 817-288-1218, rlathan@fwopera.org
- **OPERA San Antonio:** Madeline Elizondo, madeline@operasa.org