

PATRONS CIRCLE: A POWERFUL VISION

BY MICHELLE MARIANO



Collaborative by nature, opera—with its unique blend of music, theater, and storytelling—requires large-scale efforts to produce. As you experience today's performance at the Wortham, you will be witnessing the fruits of that collaboration at its best, because the artistic team of Houston Grand Opera is among the finest in the world. But, as with all endeavors of this scope, there are equally vital forces at work that never appear onstage. These forces, including the company's administrative staff and donors of all stripes, are vital in both senses of the word—they are lively, engaged, brimming with energy, and they are absolutely essential to HGO's ability to present top quality opera in Houston.

The Patrons Circle is one such offstage presence that is indispensable to maintaining HGO's position as a premier cultural institution. The impact of Patrons—often as subscribers and single-ticket buyers of our most premium seats, as funders through annual gifts and special events contributions, and as ambassadors who attract new audiences and community supporters—cannot be overstated. Their generosity is the fuel for everything we do, both here at the Wortham and in the larger Houston landscape. Patrons arrive at HGO from different paths, but they are drawn together by a shared love of opera and a passion for ensuring that succeeding generations of Houstonians continue to have access to the best the art form has to offer.

The **Young Patrons Circle** was established to present HGO enthusiasts under forty with the opportunity to experience full Patrons Circle benefits at a donation level commensurate with their means and lifestyle. Young Patrons engage meaningfully with the art form through access to exclusive Patrons Circle educational and artistic events—with additional events to promote camaraderie among opera lovers in the younger demographic. Trustee Gabriel Loperena describes the community aspect of his and his wife, Sara's, service: "Involvement as Patrons blurs the lines between our social, professional, and philanthropic networks in a satisfying way. The opera is truly integrated into the fabric of our lives."