

FACT SHEET



PRESS ROOM: www.fgo.org/press-room
 PHOTOS: www.flickr.com/photos/fgopera

Florida Grand Opera (FGO) was formed in June 1994 by the merger of Greater Miami Opera, founded in 1941, and The Opera Guild Inc., of Fort Lauderdale, founded in 1945. Celebrating its 73rd year of continuous performances during the 2013-14 season, FGO stands as one of the oldest performing arts organizations in Florida. In addition to producing standard repertoire, FGO also presents lesser-known operas, as well as commissions and produces new operas. Annually, main stage performances are attended by nearly 60,000 people and education programs serve over 20,000 students. A strong community outreach is also served through the engagement of the company’s internationally-recognized Young Artist Program.

MISSION:

Florida Grand Opera aims to be a driving force of cultural growth in South Florida through the presentation of the most comprehensive art form in the world - grand opera. Miami-Dade and Broward counties are home to international cities that deserve a great opera company presenting exciting productions with world class singers and thought-provoking repertoire that speaks to their many diverse communities. This is the vision for the future of Florida Grand Opera.

The company’s reach stands on four main pillars: artistic integrity, talent development, educational outreach, and technological innovation. Our artistic integrity hinges on offering a mixed operatic selection of classics, as well as contemporary or new works, a monument to the diversity of the community that contributes to the development of the art form as a whole. FGO also aspires to foster young, promising talents through the Young Artist Program, contributing to a solid future for the tradition of opera. Our educational programs focus on opening young audiences to the wonders of classical music through activities that range from in-classroom activities to full-scale performances. Staying at the forefront of technology and social media trends, FGO employs innovative techniques to create a deeper level of engagement with current audiences and to draw new ones.

LEADERSHIP:

Florida Grand Opera’s Board of Directors includes many of South Florida’s philanthropic and business leaders. In the March 2003 issue of *Worth Magazine*, the Opera made the list of America’s 100 Most Prestigious Boards and was ranked #1 in the Miami area.

FGO’s CEO and General Director of 27-years, Robert M. Heuer, retired at the close of the 2011-12 season. Susan T. Danis became the company’s fourth General Director on October 9, 2012.

CEO and General Director	Susan T. Danis
Music Director	Ramon Tebar

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W W W . F G O . O R G

Chairperson	William K. Hill, Esq.
Vice Chairperson	Arlene H. Mendelson
Immediate Past Chairperson	.....	Jane A. Robinson
Chairperson Elect	.....	Charles E. Porter
Immediate Past President	.....	Victor H. Mendelson
Treasurer	.....	Per Loof
Assistant Treasurer	.....	Robert C. Gang, Esq.
Secretary	.....	Eva U. Gordon
Assistant Secretary	.....	Victoria F. Garrigó

Board of Directors: 47 members

Staff and contracted employees:

26 full-time staff

130-170 part-time and contractual staff, including artists, musicians and production staff

PRODUCTION:

Budget in 2013-14 season: \$9,064,000

Contributed income (donations): 56.6%

Earned income (ticket sales): 43.3%

Number of orchestra musicians:

24-60 per production

Average number of choristers per

production: 24-40 per production

Annual attendance in the 2011-12 season

Main stage productions: 52,334

Education & community outreach events:

20,000+

Main stage performances scheduled for 2013-14 season: 26

Levy's *Mourning Becomes Electra*

Verdi's *Nabucco*

Puccini's *Tosca*

Massenet's *Thaïs*

Main stage performances scheduled for 2012-13 season: 27

Puccini's *La bohème*

Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*

Bellini's *La sonnambula*

Verdi's *La traviata*

ARTISTIC HIGHLIGHTS:

Throughout its history, FGO has established itself as one of the nation's leading opera companies by fostering up-and-coming artists, hosting world-renowned artists, housing exceptional productions of classical and contemporary repertoire, as well as contributing to Miami's cultural growth through community education initiatives and performances.

- FGO is the Southeast's first regional opera company;
- FGO is the 7th oldest opera company in the United States, dating from 1941 in Miami and 1945 in Fort Lauderdale;
- Florida Grand Opera takes pride in having featured some of the world's leading singers, including Plácido Domingo, Regina Resnick, Roberta Peters, Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti, Beverly Sills,

Renata Scotto, James Morris, Sherrill Milnes, Nicolai Gedda, Evelyn Lear, Thomas Stewart, Diana Soviero, Elizabeth Futral, Helen Donath, Deborah Voigt, Fernando de la Mora, and David Daniels, while nurturing the rising stars of the opera stage such as Sarah Coburn, Leah Partridge, Kelly Kaduce, and James Valenti;

- FGO's 94-work repertoire represents forty-seven (47) composers and spans nearly four hundred (400) years of the art form. FGO continues to add to its repertory of operas, mounting twenty-five (25) productions over the past twenty (20) years not previously seen by South Florida audiences, including the commissioning and world premiere of *Anna Karenina* in 2007.

GROUPS & ASSOCIATIONS:

Affiliates

Florida Grand Opera has four (4) Affiliate Groups operating in both Broward and Miami-Dade counties, with over 1,000 volunteers and supporters:

- **Crescendo Circle** – This is a group of professionals who support the opera with contributions of time and resources. The members are brought together by a common interest in opera and culture in their community. For more information about Crescendo Circle, please contact Max Kellogg at (305) 854-1643 or at mkellogg@fgo.org;
- **The Guild of Florida Grand Opera** - Founded in 1987, the Guild, a major volunteer support group of FGO, is committed to developing new audiences, promoting community awareness, and raising funds to support the opera's operations. The Guild offers a host of entertaining events throughout the opera season. For more information about The Guild, please contact Max Kellogg at (305) 854-1643 or at mkellogg@fgo.org;
- **Opera Society** - This group fosters community interest in music, especially opera; promotes friendship among music lovers; provides charitable, educational, and cultural projects for the public; and raises funds for Florida Grand Opera in Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach. For more information about the Opera Society, please contact Andrea Gartner at (305) 854-1643 or at agartner@fgo.org;
- **Young Patronesses of the Opera (YPO)** - Celebrating over 50 years of service, this invitation-only women's group from the Miami area volunteers time to offer programs focused primarily on children's education as well as historically providing major support to FGO for both annual and capital programs. For more information, visit the YPO Web site at www.YPO-Miami.org or contact Lucie Spieler at (305) 854-1643 or at lspieler@fgo.org.

Member Groups

- **Lyric Society** - Membership in the Lyric Society begins at \$5,000 and offers special benefits and recognition at the various levels of contribution. These include priority seating and concierge ticket service, invitations to dress rehearsals, membership in the Opera Club, and advance notice of and invitations to special events, among others. At the level of \$15,000 and more, donors also receive a half-page profile with photo and bio in the Program Book. For more information about the Lyric Society, please contact Max Kellogg at (305) 854-1643 or at mkellogg@fgo.org;
- **Co-Producers** - Membership as a Co-Producer begins at the \$25,000 level. It reflects the commitment of major donors to FGO's mission and represents the backbone of support for the opera's annual operations. Donor recognition includes a full-page profile and photograph in the Program Book. For more information, please contact Amy Funk at (305) 854-1643 or at mkellogg@fgo.org.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS:

Florida Grand Opera reaches more than 20,000 members of the community each year through its education and outreach programs in both Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Programs for the 2013-14 season include:

- **Read Along, Sing a Song** – This free literacy program was piloted in collaboration with the Miami-Dade and Broward Public Library Systems during the 2011-12 season, targeting pre-school and elementary-aged youth. The project was such a tremendous success that both library systems invited FGO to return for two consecutive seasons. In 2013-14, the program will be introduced at eleven new locations, including a three-month residency at the West Flagler library branch designed to deepen the learning experience.
- **Family Day** - During the 2013-14 season Family Days will return to four community performing arts venues, offering full day opera activities and concluding with a family production. The program kicks off in November with the first Family Day event scheduled to take place at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center with a full day of opera-related activities that includes: an instrument petting-zoo, interaction with costumed characters, crafts and makeup demos, and a Young Artist production of Menotti's *The Telephone*. The program continues in May with another full day at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County. Additional events to be announced;
- **Conversations** – Targeting adults in the community, FGO will host a series of thought-provoking “Conversations” that connect the opera art form to the humanities, religion, and politics. This new initiative will engage South Florida scholars, artists, and thought leaders to facilitate open, controversial, and enlightening dialogues within the community. Using FGO's 2013-14 season as a catalyst, these hour-long events will allow audience members to reflect, rethink, and find new meaning in issues that affect South Florida today. Scheduled events include:
 - **Fall 2013 – “Mourning Continues to Become Electra”** - This conversation will revolve around Marvin David Levy and FGO's production of *Mourning Becomes Electra*. A South Florida native, Mr. Levy will offer us a rare glimpse into the life cycle of a work through the eyes of a living contemporary composer;
 - **Winter 2013 - “The Diaspora of Many”** - This conversation addresses Verdi's *Nabucco* as a reflection of the Diaspora. *Nabucco* is truly an allegory for Miami and its diverse, yet connected communities. Community leaders will tell their stories of exile and the effect it has had on Miami;
 - **Spring 2013 - “Tosca”** - I am woman, hear me ROAR! The character that Puccini created in *Tosca* was truly ahead of her time: talented, passionate, glamorous, and strong. Her story of self-conflict and her desire to love passionately and independently is a story that has followed the “roles of women” through the years. Ultimately, Tosca would not be bound to the role she was meant to play. This conversation will explore the evolution of women as it relates to love, sex, families, and professions;
 - **Finale 2013 – TBD.**
- **Classroom Connections** – This program provides students with high-quality musical performances that create meaningful interactive experiences as well as the opportunity to cultivate knowledge and a relationship with FGO. It is available to middle and high school classrooms, serving as an additional resource for teachers in their efforts to incorporate grand opera into the curriculum. Partnering with fifteen schools in Miami-Dade and Broward, FGO presents 30 free performances per season. Visits are conducted in an informal setting to promote an interactive experience for students and artists and consist of a recital portion followed by a discussion / Q&A period;
- **OPERA LAB: A Laboratory of Learning through Opera** - Opera Lab provides sessions that supplement and extend learning opportunities through experiential learning for 9-12 grade students at Hialeah High School. Working together with teachers and administration, the sessions are scheduled twice a month from October 2013 through May 2014. Activities include costume design and craft building led by FGO's opera production staff and international masters in the opera and theater industry;

- **Professional Learning Workshops** - These present practical strategies for incorporating opera into a standards-based curriculum. Workshops are designed for opera novices and experts alike. Teachers may choose from a broad range of topics, including: theatrical staging, cross-curriculum development, or Italian opera. For those looking to share ideas with fellow teachers, FGO also offers lesson exchanges and participatory roundtables to encourage learning amongst colleagues. Credits for re-certification are available for all workshops through M-DCPS;
- **Student Dress Rehearsal** - Each season, FGO brings over 5,000 students to experience the power, beauty, and grandeur of live opera at the Adrienne Arsht Performing Arts Center. As a prerequisite, students are briefed on content, context, and behavioral expectations by their teachers using materials provided by FGO along with professional development workshops for teachers. In November 2013, FGO will host its first-ever student dress rehearsal at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, opening the experience to a new group of students;
- **Study Guide** – FGO creates study guides, connecting Common Core State Standards with general opera information and historical context specific to each opera. It is meant to supplement arts with education curriculum. The study guides help teachers figure out the knowledge and skills their students should have to build the best lessons and environments for their classrooms.

FGO'S YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM:

Founded in 1984, Florida Grand Opera's (FGO) Young Artist Program has gained worldwide recognition as one of the leading operatic training programs in the nation. The program provides talented young singers, usually after completion of a Master's Degree, with an opportunity to refine the skills required to have a career as a professional opera singer.

The selected artists receive extensive coaching and instruction during the 6-9 month residency. Under the guidance of a staff of working professionals, Florida Grand Opera's Young Artists study with renowned professional artists and teachers from every aspect of the world of opera, while gaining valuable performance experience. Singers receive regular individual coaching sessions as well as participate in master classes and seminars given by top professional artists. Special classes in audition technique, fight choreography, dance, tax and personal finance, stress management, and public relations have also been offered.

The highly competitive program accepts only 8-12 artists from over 600 applicants each year and has trained more than 150 young artists, who now appear professionally on stages all over the world. During their residency, the Young Artists perform recitals and concerts for the community and outreach programs for area students, inspiring a new generation of artists and audiences while gaining valuable performance experience. The Young Artists also sing principal and supporting roles and serve as understudies, or covers, in the opera company's main stage productions at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County and the Broward Center for the Performing Arts as well as in the company's *Unexpected Opera in Unusual Places*.

Graduates of the program who have gone on to leading roles in major productions include Sarah Coburn, Rachele Gilmore, Leah Partridge, Elizabeth Caballero, Andrew Bidlack, and Tom Corbeil. Young Artists are in residency for 25 to 30 weeks through the fall and spring.

Staff:

Ramon Tebar, Music Director

Dr. Julie Maykowski, Director of Artistic Administration and Head of the Young Artist Program

Michael Sakir, Chorus Master/Assistant Conductor

Zoe Zeniodi, Head of Music/Assistant Conductor

Alexandra Naumenko, Coach

Number of Young Artists per season: 7-12

Notable Graduates: Rene Barbera, Russell Thomas, Troy Cook, Rachele Gilmore, Leah Partridge, Elizabeth Caballero, Andrew Bidlack, and Tom Corbeil.

Master Class Instructors and Guests (2010-11): Carlos Montane, Elizabeth Futral, Sherrill Milnes, Diana Soviero, Bernard Uzan, Jonathan Pell, and David DiChiera.

Master Class Instructors and Guests (2012-13): Bernanda Fink, Arturo Chacón-Cruz, and Ailyn Pérez.

VENUE AND FACILITIES INFORMATION:

Performances of main stage operas are given in Miami at the Ziff Ballet Opera House at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County and at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Fort Lauderdale.

TICKETING INFORMATION:

FGO's Box Office is located at the Doral Center on 8390 NW 25 St., Doral, FL, 33122. It is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Tickets may also be purchased by phone at (800) 741-1010 or online at www.FGO.org.

ABOUT FLORIDA GRAND OPERA:

Florida Grand Opera (FGO), the oldest performing arts organization in Florida, celebrates its 73rd year of continuously producing grand opera during the 2013-14 season. The main stage operas of the season include: Marvin David Levy's *Mourning Becomes Electra*, Nov. 7 – 19, 2013; Verdi's *Nabucco*, Jan. 5 – Feb. 8, 2014; Puccini's *Tosca*, Mar. 29 – Apr. 12, 2014; and Massenet's *Thaïs*, May 3 – 17, 2014.

Founded in 1941 as Greater Miami Opera and later merging with The Opera Guild Inc. in 1994, FGO presents a mixture of standard repertoire and contemporary works as well as commissions new productions – all featuring projected translations in English and Spanish. FGO, recognized for funding by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Funding is also provided, in part, by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners and the Miami-Dade County Tourist Development Council. Program support is provided by the City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council. Florida Grand Opera is a Resident Company of the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County and a member company of OPERA America. American Airlines is the Official Airline, Intercontinental Miami is the Official Hotel and Steinway & Sons is the Official Piano of Florida Grand Opera.

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