

Austin Opera receives gift for digital programming

Austin Opera today announces a new joint leadership gift with Houston Grand Opera (HGO) of \$1 million from Austin philanthropists and longtime patrons Sarah and Ernest Butler. Their gift will be used to form an unprecedented partnership with HGO to co-produce and present a diverse slate of new digital opera performances beginning this fall, which will be known as the Sarah and Ernest Butler Performance Series. The gift allows Austin Opera to incorporate these new co-productions into its programming online and at the Blue Starlite Drive-In movie theaters in Austin and Round Rock.

“We are grateful for the enduring generosity and vision of Sarah and Ernest Butler, whose philanthropy allows us to continue to adapt and provide our audiences with unique and innovative ways to experience opera,” says Annie Burrige, Austin Opera CEO & General Director. “We are fortunate to have Houston Grand Opera as our neighbor and ally. Our work together is a giant step forward for the entire opera industry.”

Sarah and Ernest Butler add: “We believe it is important to support the arts, especially organizations like Austin Opera and Houston Grand Opera, that are using creativity and collaboration to ensure the future of this wonderful artform. We’re impressed that the two companies came together on this project to ensure a significantly broader reach for these exciting projects.”

The Sarah and Ernest Butler Performance Series begins in the fall and continues into 2021. Houston Grand Opera has announced several productions and recitals which can be accessed [here](#). Austin Opera’s productions at the [Blue Starlite Drive-Ins](#) will also be part of the series.

In addition to the Sarah and Ernest Butler Performance Series, Austin Opera will present three productions on its Long Center mainstage in 2021: *An All-Star Concert* in January, Puccini’s *Tosca* starring Leah Crocetto in April and May, and Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* starring Will Liverman in November. For the latest information, go to [AustinOpera.org](https://www.austinopera.org) or follow @AustinOpera on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.