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## FORT WORTH OPERA FOREWORD:

**A Pivotal, Summer-Long Campaign Designed to Set the Stage for the Next Great Chapter in the Company's History, while Celebrating the Importance of Legacy and the Impact of the Arts on Cowtown.**

*FWOpera launches FOREWORD, a \$1,000,000 fundraising campaign to ensure the future of one of the city's oldest and most acclaimed arts organizations.*

**Fort Worth, TX** - Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) announced today the launch of **FWOpera FOREWORD**, a million dollar, summer-long campaign designed to invite the community-at-large and artists from across the United States to share their inspirational stories, experiences, and passion for the arts, especially their fondest memories of the opera company itself – an institution that has enriched the city of Fort Worth for over 70 years. These stories will be shared on FWOpera's social media platforms and official website as a celebration of the impact and importance of arts and culture on those who call Fort Worth home.

The campaign's title was purposefully chosen, as each great story begins with a preface, or foreword, that sets the stage for the narrative ahead. As one chapter is closed, another begins anew, starting life as a blank canvas of limitless possibility. FWOpera, energized by the positive community-wide response to its 2017 Festival and the smash-hit mariachi opera **Cruzar la Cara de la Luna**, now pays homage to its rich, 71-year legacy and the incredible city from which it arose, charting a course towards a brighter and more sustainable tomorrow.

FWOpera Foreword is initiated by a combined \$250,000 lead gift from two long-time FWOpera supporters, in honor of the company's 11th Festival season and its steadfast commitment to pioneering the new frontiers of artistic expression. This pivotal campaign, which kicks off in June and lasts until the end of August, will offer everyone an opportunity to share their stories with the community, as we honor the history and heritage of Cowtown, and relive the legends that brought it to international prominence.

From hosting the farewell operatic performance of the legendary Lily Pons and fostering the burgeoning career of a young Plácido Domingo, to igniting the career of soprano Beverly Sills and presenting the globally acclaimed premiere of **JFK** at the world-class Bass Performance Hall, the company stepped in tandem with the rise of the great city in which it was conceived. While Fort Worth began as a rugged outpost nestled along the banks of the Trinity River, it has since developed into a thriving metropolitan city, one that embraces technological, economic, and cultural trends while staying true to its cowboy roots. Like the city it is proud to call home, Fort Worth Opera continues to evolve.

"Great art in Fort Worth has always been a major contributor to our rich heritage. Embraced and celebrated by our citizens, the Fort Worth Opera is one of its crown jewels and a part of that heritage. Valued partners like the Fort Worth Opera are helping to shape our cultural future for generations to come," said Karen Wiley, President and CEO of the Arts Council of Fort Worth.

Building upon the success of our critically acclaimed 2017 Festival, FWOpera looks to write the next chapter as it embarks upon an epic 2018 Festival. Not only will the organization present the first performance of an opera from Wagner's heroic Ring cycle in company history, but next season will also highlight the second year of **Noches de Ópera**, featuring community outreach programming and the red-hot tango opera, **María de Buenos Aires**.

FWOpera calls upon opera lovers and valued citizens of this cultural community to consider a gift that will secure the legacy of the oldest opera company in the state of Texas. Everyone who participates will pen a part of FWOpera's own libretto, to ensure a successful 2018 season and beyond. To make your mark on Fort Worth Opera's new story and join in writing the next great chapter of the company's future, donate today by calling 817.288.1212 or go online at [www.fwforeword.org](http://www.fwforeword.org).

# FORT WORTH OPERA

**ABOUT FORT WORTH OPERA:** Founded in 1946, Fort Worth Opera is the oldest continually performing opera company in Texas, and one of the 14 oldest opera companies in the United States. The organization has received national attention from critics and audiences alike for its artistic excellence, pioneering spirit, and willingness to take risks. From its first world premiere, *Frau Margot* in 2007, to 2016's critically-acclaimed new work *JFK* -- a co-commission with American Lyric Theater and Opéra de Montréal by creative duo of David T. Little and Royce Vavrek -- FWOpera continues to augment its worldwide reputation as a trailblazing, civically minded arts institution.

Known throughout the operatic world as a champion of new and rarely-performed works, FWOpera has taken a leadership role in engaging audiences beyond the operatic stage, while producing cutting-edge, contemporary operas. Beginning in 2017, FWOpera launched the second phase of its landmark, 10-year Opera of the Americas initiative with *Noches de Ópera* (*Nights of Opera*), a groundbreaking campaign which introduces powerful operas, each reflecting the diverse cultures of new American audiences.

The 2018 FWOpera Festival will include a mind-blowing fantasy epic, Wagner's legendary *Das Rheingold*; Astor Piazzolla's tango opera, *María de Buenos Aires*, a surreal, immersive theatrical experience unlike anything in FWOpera's history, and Donizetti's hysterical bel canto comedy *Don Pasquale*, set in the golden age of Hollywood. The Festival will also usher in the sixth year of Fort Worth Opera's critically-acclaimed new works showcase, *Frontiers*.

Fort Worth Opera is sponsored in part by awards from The Arts Council of Fort Worth & Tarrant County, The City of Fort Worth, and the Texas Commission on the Arts. Additional Fort Worth Opera sponsors include: the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Amon G. Carter Foundation; American Airlines; Art & Seek; Crystelle Waggoner Charitable Trust, Bank of America, Trustee; The Pangburn Foundation, J.P. Morgan Chase, Trustee; the Sid W. Richardson Foundation; *Star-Telegram*; and WFAA Channel 8.