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PRESS RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

November 15, 2017

**FORT WORTH OPERA ANNOUNCES CAST FOR TANGO OPERA
MARÍA DE BUENOS AIRES, FEATURING ARGENTINIAN MEZZO-SOPRANO
SOLANGE MERDINIAN, BARITONE LUIS ALEJANDRO OROZCO, & 3-TIME EMMY WINNER AND
BEST-SELLING AUTHOR GABY NATALE**

FORT WORTH, TX – Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) announced today the thrilling cast and artistic team behind the company's production of Astor Piazzolla's tango opera, *María de Buenos Aires*, which opens the 2018 Fort Worth Opera Festival on April 27, 2018. Praised for her "smouldering stage presence" (*New York Times*), and richly-hued voice" (*BBC Music Magazine*), Argentinean mezzo-soprano **Solange Merdinian** stars as the ill-fated María, a young woman living in the slums of Buenos Aires, who finds herself seduced by the sounds of tango. Commanding Mexican American baritone **Luis Alejandro Orozco**, reprises his acclaimed role of El Payador, the traveling, romantic balladeer. Rounding out this talented cast is three-time Emmy-winning journalist, SuperLatina TV host, and best-selling author **Gaby Natale**, who plays the mischievous El Duende.

Stage director, choreographer, and librettist **John de los Santos** (*Frontiers*, *Carmen*, *Salome*) returns to Fort Worth to bring his singular interpretation of Piazzolla's magnum opus to life, exploring the passion, seduction, torment, and redemption of librettist Horacio Ferrer's fallen heroine. Maestro **Scott Terrell**, international guest conductor and Music Director of the Lexington Philharmonic, leads a chamber ensemble of musicians from the **Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra**, alongside Argentinean bandoneon player **Juan Pablo Jofre**, and a group of tango dancers. In this intoxicating, genre-bending production, renowned set designer **Liliana Duque Piñeiro** will transport audiences to the brutal barrios of Buenos Aires and into a disturbingly beautiful vision of the underworld.

María de Buenos Aires

Music by Astor Piazzolla; libretto by Horacio Ferrer

April 27, May 5, 2018

Bass Performance Hall, downtown Fort Worth

In Spanish with supertitles in English and Spanish

CAST:

Solange Merdinian* (María)

Luis Alejandro Orozco* (El Payador)

Gaby Natale* (El Duende)

ARTISTIC TEAM:

Scott Terrell,* conductor

John de los Santos, director, choreographer

Chad Jung, lighting designer

Liliana Duque Piñeiro,* set designer

* denotes Fort Worth Opera debut season

TICKETS:

All seating for **María de Buenos Aires** is general admission. Tickets are \$75 and on sale now. For more information, please call 817.731.0726 or toll-free at 1.877.396.7372. To purchase tickets online, go to www.fwopera.org.

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. 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.

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**.