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PRESS RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

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FORT WORTH OPERA LOOKS TOWARDS THE FUTURE: COMPANY ANNOUNCES TWO-YEAR MATCHING DONATION CHALLENGE, THANKS-A-MILLION!

FORT WORTH, TX – Fort Worth Opera (FWOpera) announced today that the company is launching a Board of Trustees-driven campaign, *Thanks-a-Million!* This two-year matching donation challenge by Trustee Mr. Ed Schollmaier, offers individuals the chance to double their contribution, while ensuring the future of FWOpera's mission to educate, entertain, and expand the horizons of current and future audiences and artists through variety and artistic integrity. As the company looks towards the 2019 season and the world premiere of *The Last Dream of Frida and Diego* in 2020, this significant campaign will create a solid foundation for FWOpera to strengthen its financial health, establish sustainable partnerships, augment its growing educational outreach programs, and continue to engage and serve the North Texas community for years to come.

"Thanks to the strong leadership of the Board, Fort Worth Opera is steadfast and resolute in building a sustainable and fiscally responsible future. This campaign is about investing in the cultural life of our diverse hometown. Opera is vital for our city's economy, businesses, wellbeing and Fort Worth's ability to attract and retain the best talent. Together, we are making a visible difference in our community," said General Director Tuomas Hiltunen.

The 2018 Festival features Piazzolla's intoxicating Spanish-language tango opera, *María de Buenos Aires*; Donizetti's romantic comedy, *Don Pasquale*, set in 1950s Hollywood; a riveting trio of 15-minute operas in English about love and marriage, *Brief Encounters*; and the sixth season of our critically acclaimed new works showcase, *Frontiers*. FWOpera has long highlighted the talents of rising, young opera singers, but this spring features an international cast of celebrated stars, from Grammy Award-winning soprano Audrey Luna and renowned bass-baritone Burak Bilgili of Metropolitan Opera fame to three-time Emmy-winning SuperLatina TV host Gaby Natale, and Broadway sensation Zachary James. As the Festival approaches, FWOpera's *Thanks-a-Million* campaign plays an integral part in the 72-year-old company's desire to broaden its base of support and continue promoting artistic excellence here in Fort Worth.

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 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; and WFAA Channel 8.