

FLORIDA GRAND
Opera

NEWS RELEASE

8390 NW 25th Street ♦ Miami, FL 33122 ♦ T: 305-854-1643 ♦ F: 305-856-1042 ♦ www.fgo.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Justin Moss, jmoss@fgo.org , 305-854-1643 ext. 1600

**Victor H. Mendelson Elected New Board President
Jane A. Robinson Elected Chairman of the Board
Four new Board Members Elected**

Miami, Florida – June 4, 2009 – At the May 19 2009 meeting of the Florida Grand Opera Board of Directors, **Victor H. Mendelson** was elected President of the Board of Directors, succeeding **Jane A. Robinson**, who was elected Chairman of the Board of Directors following her five years as President.

Victor H. Mendelson represents his family's fourth generation to support Florida Grand Opera, which began with his great-grandmother, Lillian Brown, and continued with his grandmother Muriel Hattenbach, and his mother, Arlene H. Mendelson. Mr. Mendelson is the President and Chief Executive Officer of HEICO Electronic Technologies Corp., a subsidiary of NYSE-traded HEICO Corporation, of which he serves as a member of the Board of Directors and as an executive officer. He is a member of the Board of Visitors of Columbia College in New York City, a Trustee of St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens, and held the FGO Board of Directors office of Treasurer from 2007 until May of 2009.

Robert M. Heuer, FGO's General Director and C.E.O., stated, "All of us at the Opera are extremely grateful for Victor's leadership at this crucial time for Florida Grand Opera and the entire arts community. He brings a wealth of business experience, common sense, and analytical skills that will be invaluable in helping the Opera go forward during the coming seasons. We are also grateful to Jane A. Robinson for her years of commitment to the Company during a critical period that included our move from Miami-Dade County Auditorium to the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. In her new role as Chairman of the Board, she will continue to play an active role in our fundraising efforts."

Florence Hecht and **Leonard Robbins** were elected Directors Emeriti in recognition of their many years of service and support of the Opera, and **James M. Herron** was re-elected as the Opera's Representative to the Arsht Center Trust.

Continued on following page . . .

Newly elected to the Florida Grand Opera Board of Directors are **Leatrice Taylor Damus, Morton J. Robinson, M.D., Gale Goldstein Tucker, Esq., and Ana Moran Varela.**

Leatrice (Lee) Taylor Damus

Lee has been a stalwart member of the Young Patronesses of the Opera for nearly two decades. She is a devotee of Opera and works hard in its behalf. She represented the YPO through Opera Volunteers International at the Opera America Conference in her native Detroit four years ago. As a member of LINKS Greater Miami Chapter, she serves as a leader within the black community in both social service and cultural arts projects. She has a wealth of knowledge on the history of Miami, one of her many hobbies. Lee travels extensively, as one of her perks for having retired from Delta Airlines after 30 years in 2001.

Morton J. Robinson, M.D.

Philadelphia born and educated, Morton J. Robinson, M.D. is Chairman Emeritus of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at Mt. Sinai medical Center, Miami Beach. He currently serves as an advisor and teacher to the Pathology Residency Program. He is a Professor of Pathology at the University of Miami Medical School and the author of numerous papers and medical texts. Dr. Robinson is a member of the hospital's Board of Trustees and serves on the board of Non-Invasive Monitoring Systems, a Miami-based public company.

Gale Goldstein Tucker, Esq.

An attorney associated with the firm of Wachtell, Lipton in New York, Gale Goldstein Tucker has practiced law for 37 years in the area of securities litigation. A native of Philadelphia, she is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia Law School. She maintains an office in Aventura and divides her time between New York and Florida. She is currently on the Board of Directors of the Symphony of the Americas in Ft. Lauderdale.

Ana Moran Varela

Ana Moran Varela is a past President of the Young Patronesses of the Opera. During her tenure, she and her constituency raised a record –breaking \$500,000. Other philanthropic activities and organizations include the board of the Vizcayans, committees of Voices for Children, the Red Cross, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, and Florida Grand Opera. She has co-chaired the Vizcaya Gala for the past five years and was appointed a Trustee of the museum in 2006. After graduating with a degree in marketing from FIU, Ana pursued a career in retailing with Allied Department Stores and later, as General Manager for Federated Department Stores. She joined her husband Alvaro's family business in 1998. The Miami-based Company, Agriflora Corporation is one of the leading growers, importers and national distributors of fresh cut flowers in the U.S. Ana currently works in marketing in the Emerald Boutique division of the company.

Continued on following page . . .

The Officers of the Florida Grand Opera Board of Directors who were elected are:

Chairman	Jane A. Robinson
Vice Chairman	Dr. Horacio Aguirre
Vice Chairman	Dr. Linda Balent
Vice Chairman	Dr. James Doan
Vice Chairman	Arlene H. Mendelson

President	Victor H. Mendelson
VP/Special Events	Nancy Herstand
VP/Planned Giving	Sara Gutiérrez
VP/Business Development	Diane Ashley
VP/Production Sponsorship	William Hill
Treasurer	Charles Porter
Assistant Treasurer	Diane Ashley
Secretary	Eva Gordon
Assistant Secretary	Barbara Copanos

About Florida Grand Opera

Florida Grand Opera 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 69th season of continuous performances, Florida Grand Opera stands as one of the oldest performing arts organizations in Florida. In addition to producing standard repertoire, Florida Grand Opera also presents lesser known operas, as well as commissions and produces new operas. Annually, performances are attended by nearly 100,000 people, and education and outreach programs serve over 50,000 students. FGO offers several highly successful outreach and educational programs, including its internationally-recognized Young Artist Studio. Founded in 1984, the program attracts young singers who train and enhance their professional skills during a 35-week Miami residency.

Florida Grand Opera is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Funding for this organization is provided, in part, by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. Additional support is provided by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, the Cultural Affairs Council, the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. 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.

#