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HEROD AT THE OPERA!

By Natalie Johnston



Kristen Burke, Micki Hoefelman with students Shelby Brown and Emma Johnston

On December 5, 2017, the Herod Show Choir took a trip downtown to see the Houston Grand Opera (HGO) perform their holiday special, *The House Without a Christmas Tree*. It was a wonderful experience for the students, and the first time for many to see an opera. The crew of the Houston Grand Opera has done a phenomenal job of creating a new temporary venue at the HGO Resilience Theater at the George

R. Brown Convention Center. Their home stage, the Wortham, was damaged due to Hurricane Harvey and is currently under repair and renovation.

It was a special treat for Kristen Burke, Production Stage Manager at HGO and Herod parent, to have her daughter, Shelby, on the field trip. "This performance was extra special for me to have my daughter and her choir in the audience. Though my daughter has been around the opera her entire life, it is different for her to experience a performance without sitting next to me. This was the first time she came to the opera as a part of school which made it extra special for her. One of the perks of having a mom work for the opera is that after the show I was able to take them backstage and onstage so they could see what it was like. These boys and girls are so observant and curious that it reminds me what I take for granted everyday."

Micki Hoefelman, Herod's choir teacher, was thrilled for her students to see the opera. "It was a fantastic experience for our students. Not only did we experience Opera at its finest, but the opportunity to go backstage at their temporary location and see how the magic happens was a special educational experience that our students won't forget. The students really connected with how Hurricane Harvey impacted HGO since many of our students, and even our school, were so greatly impacted. Once we returned to Herod, the students continued asking questions and reflecting on their experience. I am so grateful they are growing with an appreciation for The Arts. Their love and passion makes my teacher heart soar!"

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