

2015-16 ARTS/CULTURE SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

CULTURE PRIMER



SRQ

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO
THE OCTOBER 2015 EDITION
OF SRQ MAGAZINE

Asolo Repertory Theatre

The fourth season of the American Character Project captures diverse groups of people, as well as the country itself, in moments of deep, fundamental change. This company is telling stories about forbidden love arising amidst the rivalry of two culturally divided street gangs, monumental social changes driven by firebrand politicians and African-American civil rights leaders, feuding artists whose talents are matched only by their egos, a young man whose coming of age tests his entire family, parents coming to terms with their children's unexpected engagement, two multicultural couples whose dinner party disintegrates into a highly charged confrontation, and a young African-American woman who exiles herself to Paris where she becomes an international celebrity and war hero. asolorep.org.

WEST SIDE STORY

Nov 10-Dec 27. This classic Broadway tale of high drama and romance kicks off the fourth season of Asolo Rep's American Character Project, examining the social, political and historical aspects of the US through its manifestation on the stage of the time. Tony nominee Joey McKneely, a special director for the season opener, also serves as director of choreography. He brings more than 20 years experience with the show, including working with the legendary Jerome Robbins, original *West Side Story* choreographer.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

March 9-April 17. Director Frank Galati brings this classic tale into the modern age with a script by Todd Kriedler, who reinvented the iconic film for the stage in 2013. A daring comedy, the stage is set as a young woman in the 1960s brings her African-American fiancé home to her professionally liberal parents, in a move that challenges the characters' preconceptions about themselves and those around them. Insightful and funny, the real strength lies in the show's heart, still beating 47 years later.

ALL THE WAY

Jan 7-April 9. Keeping with the 1960s theme as the American Character Project continues, this 2014 Tony Award-winner for Best Play takes a closer look at the character of Lyndon Baines Johnson as he gained a reputation for political expediency and efficacy in his efforts to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, bringing him into contact with towering and opposing figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and J. Edgar Hoover.

JOSEPHINE

April 27-May 29. A world premiere, Joey McKneely returns to close the season as director and choreographer of this debut production destined for Broadway. A musical, the story follows the young and beautiful Josephine Baker, a black musician rising from poverty in the early 20th century to become a dominant figure of the Jazz Age and international sex symbol, with a focus on Baker's time in Paris, where she became embroiled in scandal and the French Resistance. Grammy-nominated Deborah Cox stars as Baker.

UNPLUGGED NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

April 3, 10, 17. An annual event at Asolo Rep, Unplugged allows audiences the unusual opportunity to hear the latest work from upcoming playwrights in its raw form. Asolo Rep company members and guests will perform the readings, script in hand, giving sole focus to the words on the page, allowing attendees insight into the process and letting the playwright take notes based on both the performance and reaction. Following the performances will be allotted time for intimate conversation between audiences and artists to allow for feedback and constructive critiquing.

Florida Studio Theatre

Florida Studio Theatre is Sarasota's contemporary theater, located in the heart of downtown. It has been in operation in Sarasota since 1973. The Florida Studio Theatre campus is a village of theaters – the historic Keating and Gompertz Theatres, the Parisian-style Goldstein and John C. Court Cabarets and Bowne's Lab Theatre. Near the Sarasota bayfront, FST brings

an energy and vitality to the downtown area. Each theater is small in size and large in impact – providing an intimate and engaging setting for high-quality, professional performances. Hip and historical, entertaining and challenging, their theater is where the street meets the elite. Visit floridastudiotheatre.org

RUMPLESTILTSKIN

Through Nov 20. This classic fable of love, deceit and vanity is given a modern twist. A father, eager for his daughter Millie to win the King's heart, claims that she can spin straw into gold. When Millie and her sister Tillie are forced to complete the task or face dire circumstances, they take an offer made by a mysterious man. Will they all live happily ever after, or will the consequences of their decision threaten their happiness forever?

ONE MAN, TWO GUVNORS

Nov 18-Jan 3. Florida Studio Theatre brings this comedy of errors and confused identities to the stage, seeing the hopelessly befuddled Francis Henshall juggle clashing loyalties among his criminal employers, who may not be who they appear to be. Adapted from the Italian comedy *Servant of Two Masters*, this English adaptation from Richard Bean premiered in London before moving on to Broadway and an international tour.

BUTLER

Dec 9-Feb 20. An absurdist comedy set amidst the backdrop of the American Civil War and based on real life people and incidents, playwright Richard Strand weaves a tale high unbelievable, following the profiteering exploits of Union Army Major General Benjamin Franklin Butler, as he amasses his fortune under the very nose of General Ulysses S. Grant.

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR

Feb 3-Mar 26. From the acclaimed writer of the Tony Award-winning *Doubt*, John Patrick Shanley's tale of romance in the Irish countryside created a stir at its debut on Broadway last year, where it received a Tony nomination for Best Play. Neighboring farmers in the sparsely populated Midlands, Rosemary pines for Anthony, but Anthony is unaware.



LEFT AND COVER: Josephine at the Asolo Repertory. **RIGHT:** Sarasota Chalk Festival.



producing artistic director Rick Kerby at the helm, The Manatee Players showcases the area's extensive talent pool through comedies, dramas and musicals, sometimes wrangling it all together for one big community event. Visit manateeperformingartscenter.com

THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

Nov 15. When six middle schoolers in Putnam County, New York vie for the title of Spelling Bee Champ, the audience wins. That's the lesson audiences are taking from this comedic romp through the high-stress, all-precision world of competitive spelling that invites attendee participation and asks all involved if maybe there's more to all this than winning.

DISNEY'S THE LITTLE MERMAID

Dec 3. Based on the Disney classic in turn based on the Hans Christian Anderson tale, this musical love story takes the audience "Under the Sea," where the young mermaid Ariel longs for a different world and a love that's true. With music from eight-time Academy Award winner Alan Menken, it's a timely addition to the incoming holiday spirit.

VALENTINE'S DAY MASCARA MURDER MYSTERY BRUNCH

Feb 13. Details are scarce, but the game is afoot and it's a murder most foul. The community is invited to come out and celebrate Valentine's Day Eve with friends, family and maybe someone close, all the while donning your deerstalker and catching a cold-blooded killer.

La Musica

Specializing in chamber music presentation and production, La Musica has carved a place in its decades-long tenure as a musical meeting of the minds, bringing esteemed performers from Europe and the US together for collaborative performances. Under the direction of artistic director Bruno Giuranna and president Sally Faron, La Musica continues to explore this season. They produce an annual La Musica International Chamber Festival every April. Visit lamusicafestival.org

SONATA A DUE

Dec 7. La Musica opens its season at Michael's On East Ballroom with an intimate recital performance. Enjoy cocktails and a

fine dinner with fellow chamber music enthusiasts while violinist Federico Agostini and pianist Derek Han perform a recital.

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

April 4-13. Enjoy award-winning international musicians and the world premiere of a commissioned work by renowned Hollywood and Disney on Ice composer Jerry Bilik. Enjoy the various festival events from Simply Sonatas to Sonata a Due, Meet the Musicians and Musical Chefs, where La Musica musicians are featured at a lively, interactive dinner at Michael's On East.

The Manatee Players

Housed in the Manatee Performing Arts Center, the Manatee Players reign as Bradenton's most prominent theater and performing arts troupe. With



LEFT: The Perlman Sarasota Winter Residency.

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

April 15. With Harper Lee's *Go Set A Watchman* bringing the Finch family back into the cultural zeitgeist, there's no better time to revisit this classic tale of racism and moral certitude in 1930s Alabama. Produced in collaboration with the NAACP, audiences are invited to experience a timeless story in a new way.

Perlman Music Program

The Perlman Music Program (PMP) has held a winter residency in Sarasota since 2004. This intensive 17-day program was founded by Toby Perlman, wife of internationally acclaimed concert violinist and conductor Itzhak Perlman. PMP offers unparalleled musical training for international students, ages 12 to 20+, who play the violin, viola, cello and bass. With a faculty led by Toby and Itzhak Perlman and comprising some of the most gifted musical talents of our time, the PMP Sarasota Winter Residency offers an artistic and personal experience that changes students' lives forever. The winter residency's free public events include orchestra and chorus rehearsals, master classes and works-in-progress student recitals, which attract more than 13,000 audience members each year. Question and answer sessions with the Perlmans and PMP students and faculty follow many of these events. These events take place in a heated, outdoor performance tent on the grounds of the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus. Each year, the winter

residency culminates with the Celebration Concert with Itzhak Perlman conducting the PMP String Orchestra and Patrick Romano leading the PMP Chorus at the Sarasota Opera House. Visit perlmanmusicprogramsuncoast.org

PMP ALUMNI IN CONCERT

Oct 10. Featuring Molly Carr, viola and Yannick Rofalimanana, piano. **Nov 22.** Featuring Sean Lee, violin and Peter Dugan, piano. **April 17.** Featuring the Ariel Quartet.

The Players Theatre

Sarasota's longest running community theater, The Players has carved a considerable niche in the cultural landscape putting the community on stage, season after season. With the annual Broadway series bringing some of the biggest musicals to town and S.N.A.P. shows offering a taste of "Something New" each season, artistic director Jeffery Kin keeps the audience guessing. Visit theplayers.org

THE PLAYERS FOLLIES' PLAY READING FESTIVAL

Oct 24-25. The Players Follies Group brings a host of brand new 10-minute plays to the stage with a series of actor readings, selecting the ten best submissions among the many sent from playwrights around the country. Gathered under the theme "Plays on a Front Porch," many come from Florida, such as "The Selfie," from Sarasota's own Betty Robinson, while others, such as "Yellow Submarine" and "The Golden Years," come from as far away as California and New York respectively.

SHE LOVES ME

Dec 2-20. Part of The Players' Broadway Season, director Bob Trisolini takes the helm for this production of the romantic musical that garnered five Tony Award nominations, an Olivier Award and a Critics Circle Award for Best Musical. The tale of two employees outwardly at odds while falling in love via anonymous letters, audiences may recognize this play as the inspiration for the Tom Hanks/Meg Ryan film *You've Got Mail*.

THE DROWSY CHAPERONE

Jan 13-31. This winner of five Tony Awards, including Best Book and Best Original Score, celebrates the history of American musical theater in the Jazz Age while having a little fun at everyone's expense, as an agoraphobic Broadway fanatic leads the audience through a haphazard and reality-bending listening session of the rare and mysterious *The Drowsy Chaperone*, with characters and places springing to life.

HANDS ON A HARDBODY

Feb 17-March 3. An area premiere on The Players' stage, this hilarious take on the various manifestations of The American Dream follows 10 determined Texans as they engage in a hilarious battle of wit and grit in an attempt to win a brand new truck. Michael Newton-Brown directs, while the cast tries to keep one hand on the body of the truck and be the last Texan standing.

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES

March 23-April 10. When the owner of a famous drag club finds his only son marrying the daughter of a hardline conservative politician, he and his neurotic partner juggle their identities and their son's expectations as they welcome their future in-laws to dinner. Perhaps most popularized in the US by the film adaptation starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane (*The Birdcage*), Players artistic director Jeffery Kin directs this much-loved comedy of errors and heartfelt take on family, identity and politics.

Pops Orchestra

With conductor Robyn Bell wielding the baton, the Pops Orchestra gears up for its 40th anniversary season as Sarasota-Bradenton's community orchestra, showcasing local musical talent and giving the town's hidden gems a chance to shine. Visit thepopsorchestra.org

A CHRISTMAS CAROL – THE CONCERT

Dec 12-13 The Pops Orchestra joins forces with the State College of Florida and the SCF Musical Theater class to bring this holiday classic to the stage just in time for gathered family and friends. Featuring new music and songs in genres ranging from



SARASOTA OPERA

Verdi's American Home

Victor DeRenzi, Artistic Director
Richard Russell, Executive Director

2015 Fall Opera Season

OCTOBER 30–NOVEMBER 17, 2015

La bohème

Puccini's

Get your tickets now for Puccini's most popular masterpiece.



The Verdi Cycle *Grand Finale Season*

2016 Winter Opera Festival

JANUARY 30–MARCH 20, 2016

In 1989, Sarasota Opera set out to be the first opera company to play every note Verdi wrote.

The **2016 Winter Opera Festival** will mark the grand finale of this extraordinary 28-year journey.



Verdi's

Aida

JANUARY 30–
MARCH 19, 2016



Beethoven's

Fidelio

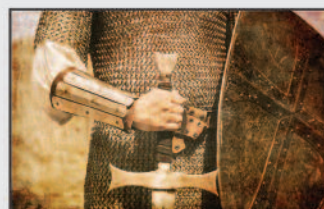
FEBRUARY 13–
MARCH 11, 2016



Mozart's

Così fan tutte

FEBRUARY 6–
MARCH 12, 2016



Verdi's

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of Legnano**

FEBRUARY 27–
MARCH 18, 2016

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OPERA SEASON SPONSOR



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LEFT: The Players Theatre's *39 Steps*

classical to Broadway to gospel, Melodie Dickerson directs and Jim Sorenson stars as Ebenezer Scrooge.

LET'S BE FRANK

Feb 21-22. It's been a hundred years since the birth of "Ol' Blue Eyes," and Frank Sinatra fans can celebrate with the Pops at this concert dedicated to the life and work of this American Icon. Join singer and jazz stylist Cole Rumbough as he arrives from New York City to lead a series of selections and favorites from Sinatra's illustrious career.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

April 10-11. The Pops Orchestra puts the youth on stage with this show featuring local musical scholarship winners. Under the direction of concert master Felicia Brunelle, audiences will be treated to renditions from *Sleeping Beauty*, *Billy the Kid* and Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and Disney's *Frozen*.

Realize Bradenton

A nonprofit organization dedicated to invigorating Bradenton's cultural scene, this community-focused organization seeks to create a more active and culturally connected downtown for Bradenton, regularly organizing large-scale events in conjunction with private businesses, public resources and local artists, celebrating the city's heritage and place within the cultural fabric of the Suncoast. Visit realizebradenton.com

SPIRIT VOICES FROM OLD MANATEE

Oct 1-4, 8-11, 15-18. Now in its fifth season, Spirit Voices takes advantage of the Halloween spirit to revive the pioneers of the history Village of Manatee, with artists assuming the roles of various notables buried within the Old 1850 Manatee Burying Grounds, walking the cemetery grounds and telling tales from a time long past. The final performance on October 18 will be stationary, taking place within the 1887 Church for those who prefer a seated experience.

MANA-CON COMICS CONVENTION

Oct 24. Booked as Manatee County Library's "biggest and most exciting event of the year," this free event assembles the community's comic counters, game geeks, manga mavens and sci-fi cinephiles for a one-day, all-out celebration, complete with booths, presentations and the requisite parade of hand-crafted and exacting cosplay. With a *Doctor Who* theme this year, expect to see a few Sonic Screwdrivers.

BRADENTON BLUES FESTIVAL

Dec 5. With a line-up this year including award-winning vocalist Janiva Magness, harmonicist and songwriter Rick Estrin and the Nightcats and Gulf Coast blues rockers Mike Zito and the Wheel, the Bradenton Blues Festival continues to grow. Whether it be the bayou blues of Larry Garner or the Chicago stylings of Joanna Connor, the festival promises to give everyone the blues they want, and maybe even the blues they need. Girls with Guitars returns with three new aspiring blues musicians, including singer/guitarist Eliana Cargnelutti from Italy, bassist Heather Crosse from Mississippi and Sadie Jones.

ARTSLAM 2016

March 5. A celebration of the city's youth as a wellspring of creativity, ArtSlam invites the young artists of Bradenton out onto the streets for a series of installations, performances and interactive showcases right in the heart of downtown Bradenton. With food and drink vendors peppering the street alongside live music, this free and open event on Old Main Street remains an annual favorite.

The Ringling

Situated along 66 acres on the bay, The Ringling boasts an impressive array of classics and works from the Old Masters, with a Rubens collection of note, as well as regularly hosting travelling exhibitions on the forefront of contemporary art in the United States and abroad. The on-site Circus Conservatory houses the area's local circus history in addition to exploring the form's greater reach. The historic Ca d'Zan mansion stands freshly renovated by the water, with tours available. Rich in history, the museum's roots date all the way back to 1924, and the establishment serves as a legacy of the original owners, John and Mable Ringling. Visit ringling.org

PAUL RUDOLPH

Through Dec 6. A small focus exhibition on the guest houses Paul Rudolph designed and built in Sarasota will be on display. These architectural gems in particular are early examples of the innovative design and daring for which Rudolph would be known. A variety of vintage photographic and architectural material will be exhibited.

ROYAL TASTE: THE ART OF PRINCELY COURTS IN FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHINA,

Oct 9-Jan 10. Royal Taste offers a unique glimpse into the luxurious lifestyles and religious practices of princely courts in early- and mid-Ming China (1368-1644). Organized by The Ringling, this exhibition of more than 140 works of pictorial, sculptural and decorative arts reveals some lesser-known aspects of palatial lives, religious patronage and afterlife beliefs of Ming princes, whose world has long been a mystery. The majority of the objects on view were selected from recent archaeological finds now in the collections of four museums in the Hubei province in China, and from imperially-commissioned statues housed at Daoist temples on Mount Wudang, the birthplace of Tai Chi. Through these important loans—all of which are traveling to the US for the first time—

The Perlman Music Program

SUNCOAST

2015-2016 SEASON EVENTS

PMP Alumni: In Concert

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2015 at 3 p.m.

**Molly Carr, viola and
Yannick Rafalimanana, piano**
Sarasota Opera House • Tickets: \$35

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2015 at 3 p.m.

Sean Lee, violin and Peter Dugan, piano
Sarasota Opera House • Tickets: \$35

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 2016 at 3 p.m.

Ariel Quartet
Venice Performing Arts Center • Tickets: \$35

Series Subscription: ONLY \$75

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*Buy 1 ticket for \$35 & get 1 youth ticket for \$5
(ages 18 & under)*

Celebration Concert

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 2016 at 5 p.m.

**The PMP String Orchestra
The PMP Chorus**

The culmination of the 2015-2016
PMP Sarasota Winter Residency

Sarasota Opera House
Tickets: \$40, \$60, \$80

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Molly Carr

Yannick Rafalimanana



Peter Dugan

Sean Lee



Ariel Quartet



Celebration Concert

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LEFT: Sarasota Opera's *La Bohème*.

the exhibition provides a more complete understanding of the visual and religious worlds of Ming princes and demonstrates the vital role of their courts in shaping Ming material culture.

SAMURAI: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR

Jan 15-April 17. This evocative exhibition features 70 exquisite objects related to the legendary Samurai warriors—full suits of armor, helmets, swords, sword-hilts and saddles, as well as exquisite objects intended for personal use such as lacquered writing boxes, incense trays and foldable chairs.

INK, SILK AND GOLD: ISLAMIC ART FROM THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

Feb 5-May 1. This exhibition features approximately 100 great works of Islamic art never before presented in a dedicated exhibition; this collection covers virtually all aspects of Islamic art in almost all media, ranging from the 8th to the 21st century and from Spain to Indonesia. Through silver inlaid metalwork, Qur'an pages inscribed with gold, brocaded velvets, luster-painted ceramics and more, it offers a window into many different facets of the dynamic and complex artistic traditions of the Islamic world. More than 130 years after the MFA began collecting Islamic art, the objects presented in *Ink, Silk and Gold* are being comprehensively studied, restored and presented to the public for the first time.

NATIONAL THEATER LIVE

Oct 23: *The Audience* / Nov 13: *Hamlet* / Dec 11: *Everyman* / Jan 8: *Beaux' Stratagem* / Jan 22: *Coriolanus*. Bringing world-class theater to the silver screen, The Ringling showcases a handful of recent and notable stage productions captured on film to be screened at

the Historic Asolo Theater throughout the year. Featuring Shakespearean classics as well as modern milestones, Hollywood stars such as Helen Mirren, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Benedict Cumberbatch grace the stage in this year's selections.

Sarasota Ballet

Under the guidance of director Iain Webb, The Sarasota Ballet has grown by leaps and bounds, continually adding to a repertoire that includes both iconic and uncommon ballets from renowned choreographers such as Sir Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, Antony Tudor and more, in addition to commissioning new works from up-and-coming choreographers and established greats. Garnering an international reputation, The Sarasota Ballet regularly compounds its performances with guest performances from travelling companies, bringing ballet from around the world. Visit sarasotaballet.org

MACMILLAN, WRIGHT AND ASHTON: KNIGHTS OF THE BRITISH BALLET

Nov 20-21. The Company premieres three new pieces in this show, one from each of these Knights of the British Ballet. *Concerto*, by Sir Kenneth MacMillan, sets its movement to Dimitri Shostakovich's *2nd Piano Concerto*, while Sir Peter Wright's *Summertime*, an "abstract expression" of Felix Mendelssohn's *Piano Concerto No. 2*, sees its American premiere. *Marguerite and Armand*, written by Sir Frederick Ashton and inspired by Alexandre Dumas' *La Dame aux Camélias*, rounds out the performance.

JOHN RINGLING'S CIRCUS NUTCRACKER

Dec 18-19. A Sarasota staple, this annual production brings audiences to the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall for a completely Sarasota interpretation of the traditional yuletide tale, interweaving the history of John and Mable Ringling and Sarasota's proud circus heritage into one of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's most famous works. Choreographed by Matthew Hart, the Ballet joins forces with the Sarasota Orchestra for the trio of performances.

THE SARASOTA BALLET PRESENTS SMUIN BALLET

Feb 26-28. Hailing from the San Francisco Bay Area, Smuin Ballet takes the Sarasota stage for three days, bringing its undeniable American style and exuberance, the legacy of late founder Michael Smuin, who founded the company in 1994. Representing classical ballet traditions alongside contemporary demands for higher physicality and newness of expression, Smuin Ballet represents a welcome addition for area fans of the form.

ASHTON AND BALANCHINE

April 8-9. Opening with Sir Frederick Ashton's *Enigma Variations*, an exploration of composer Edward Elgar through the lens of a social gathering at the turn of the 19th century, the Ballet will be the first American company to add the production to its repertoire. Paired with George Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*, a patriotic ode set to the music of John Philip Sousa, Balanchine will provide the choreography while the Sarasota Orchestra supplies the musical accompaniment.

Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company

The Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company (previously Fuzion Artists), entering its 10th season, is now recognized for its collaborative performances and eclectic choreography which fuses various dance styles – traditional, modern dance, Middle Eastern, aerial dance, Afro-modern and technologically-infused work. In addition to a variety of community collaborations and performances at local venues, the Sarasota Contemporary Dance Company has also been presented at the Alabama Ballet Center for Dance, John F. Kennedy Center, Merce Cunningham Studio Theatre and the Ailey Citygroup Theatre. Visit fuziondance.org.

CLOSE UP

Oct 14-18. An intimate view of Artistic Director Leymis Bolaños Wilmott's choreography, this performance puts audience members in the midst of dancing bodies—they hear the dancers breathe,



Join us for a season
of passionate music!

MASTERWORKS

TICKETS FROM \$30 ON SALE NOW

*Clockwise from top left: **Anu Tali**, Music Director; **Guy Braunstein**, guest artist violin; **Perry So**, guest conductor; **Sergey Dogadin**, guest artist violin; **Renée Fleming**, soprano; **Neeme Järvi**, guest conductor*

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SarasotaOrchestra.org

SPECIAL EVENT:

GALA DINNER AND CONCERT - JAN 27

Conducted by **Anu Tali** features renowned soprano **Renée Fleming** making her Sarasota debut. Gala includes premium seating at the concert. Call 941-487-2737 or go online. \$500 pp





LEFT: Sarasota Ballet's Christine Peixoto & Ricki Bertoni in Jamie Carters *A Deux Mains*, photo Frank Atura.

see their strength, feel the energy of their collaborative power. This exhilarating event features favorites from the 2006 Cuban Art Exhibit collaboration at the Ringling Museum and Wilmott's acclaimed "Aftermath," as performed at Kennedy Center.

VOICES OF FUZIÓN

Dec 2-6. Performances break new ground and audiences are eager for its works by emerging choreographers that expand the boundaries of art. Original and adventurous, the pieces presented in this annual spectacle are hallmarks of the company's approach to dance – full of movements of pure physical enjoyment, as well as moments of delight and absolute hilarity.

RETROSPECT

March 17-20. This 10th Annual Concert is a look back at the passion, artistry and eclectic contemporary dances created and produced by Artistic Director Leymis Bolaños Wilmott. Exciting examples of critics top picks, as well as dancers' favorite pieces, feature former company members: Angela Rauter, Jennifer Maecker, Rolando Cabrera, Sarah Caldabaugh, Carolina Garcia Serpa, physically integrated dancer Dwayne Scheuneman and co-founder Rachel Inman. Join us to honor dancers with the company in the past and who continue to be present in innovative, thought-provoking work.

Sarasota Cuban Ballet

Founded by Wilmian Hernandez and Ariel Serrano, the Sarasota Cuban Ballet School teaches the curriculum of the Cuban Ballet School of National Ballet of Cuba. Husband-wife team Ariel Serrano and Wilmian Hernandez were

influenced by the great master teachers in Cuba - Fernando Alonso, Estele Garcia, Aurora Bosch and Ramona De Saa, among others. In the Cuban tradition, they were selected at a young age to learn the art and through their diligence, intense training and natural talent emerged to become principal dancers with various companies throughout the world. Visit sarasotacubanballetschool.com

Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Opera is in its 57th season of bringing premiere opera shows to the local Sarasota area. The group has been in operation since 1960 and has been under the artistic leadership of Victor DeRenzi since his welcoming in 1983. It has been recognized internationally for multiple performances including its current series that is wrapping up, The Verdi Cycle, which is the production of Giuseppe Verdi's complete works. Additionally, the company remains dedicated to youth opera education through their Sarasota Youth Opera program, which is currently the most comprehensive youth program of its kind in the nation.

Visit sarasotaopera.org

VERDI'S AIDA

Oct 30-Nov 17. One of Verdi's most beloved operas, Sarasota Opera saved the grand tale of romance and revenge for this final season of the long-running Verdi Cycle. Conducted by Maestro Victor DeRenzi and directed by Stephanie Sundine, soprano Michelle Johnson stars in the title role, alongside mezzo-soprano Leann Sandel-Pantaleo and tenor Jonathan Burton. Prior to the premiere, attendees will have the opportunity to meet the artists. *Aida* is performed in Italian with English subtitles.

VERDI'S THE BATTLE OF LEGNANO

Feb 27-March 18. This production will be the final opera of The Verdi Cycle and will be performed in Italian with English subtitles. Led by the company's Artistic Director Victor DeRenzi, this tale of two warriors and old

friends vying for the love of the same woman is set amidst a nation at war striving to break free from the grip of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. Additionally, there will be an opportunity to meet all those involved in the production before the opening performance.

THE VERDI FESTIVAL WEEK

The Verdi Cycle Grand Finale Season concludes with a pair of concerts showcasing the composer's vast musical prowess-The Young Verdi Concert, composed completely of Verdi's works prior to the creation of his first opera, and The Verdi Concert, a performance of one of Verdi's final works, the *Te Deum*, and newly discovered work unperformed for more than 100 years, as well as arias, ensembles and choruses from his most famous operas.

Sarasota Orchestra

An 80-member orchestra performing more than 100 concerts in a given year, the Sarasota Orchestra has made a name for itself in the area as both entertainer and educator, offering concerts and experiences to the community through a variety of performances designed to engage and enthuse. A celebrator of the classics as well as contemporary gems, Sarasota Orchestra holds the distinguished title of being the oldest continuing orchestra in the state. Visit sarasotaorchestra.org

GREAT ESCAPES – MOVIE NIGHT 1

Oct 14-17. Part of the Great Escapes series, this performance conducted by Andrew Lane brings the film score front and center, showcasing the musical might that makes movie magic. Flautist Betsy Traba and Cheryl Losey, harp, will perform the works of Mozart from the Oscar-winning *Amadeus*, while attendees snack away on complimentary popcorn. A screening of Charlie Chaplin's short film *The Lion's Cage* tops off the night.

PERCUSSION PERFECT

Oct 29. The third installment in the Chamber Soiree series, Percussion Perfect brings George Nickson to the stage as principal percussionist for a string of four



La Musica 30 years

Artistic Director
Bruno Giuranna

Associate Artistic Director
Derek Han

2016 Artists

Violin

Federico Agostini
Claudio Cruz
Cecilia Ziano

Cello

Antonio Meneses
JeongHyoun Christine Lee

Bass

Scott Faulkner

Viola

Daniel Avshalomov
Bruno Giuranna
Hsin-Yun Huang

Flute

Carol Wincenc

Piano

Derek Han

Concert Series Sarasota Opera House

APRIL 4 | 7 | 10 | 13 2016

Festival highlight featuring award-winning international musicians and the world premiere of a commissioned work by renowned Hollywood and Disney On Ice composer Jerry Bilik.

Simply Sonatas Sailer Pavilion at New College

MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2016 5:30 p.m.

An intimate "come as you are" performance after work to relax and enjoy beautiful sonatas.

Sonata a Due Michael's On East Ballroom

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2015 6:00 p.m.

An elegant evening to open the season; reception, recital and dinner. Recital featuring Derek Han, piano, and Federico Agostini, violin.

Meet the Musicians Gateway Bank

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016 5:30 p.m.

Mingle with the musicians and enjoy a brief recital and light refreshments; sponsored by Gateway Bank.

Musical Chefs Michael's On East Ballroom

FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2016 6:00 p.m.

A lively, interactive dinner event featuring La Musica artists leading the crowd in cooking demonstrations for the evening's meal.



LEFT: Forks and Corks Grand Tasting at the Ringling Museum Courtyard.

performances, including the all-percussion *Rain Tree* by Toru Takemitsu, with Bruce Lehman joining Nickson onstage, and Mario Davidovsky's considerably more crowded *Flashbacks*, bringing flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano into the mix. The performance closes with the string-heavy *LigNeouS 1*, by Andy Akiho.

ALL ABOUT MOZART

Feb 4-7. Join conductor Anu Tali, also music director for Sarasota Orchestra, violinist Sergey Dogadin and violist Andrei Dogadin for this entry of the celebrated Masterworks Series, featuring accomplished musicians showcasing their talents through the works of the masters. Two pieces by Mozart, Sinfonia concertante and Symphony No. 41, close out the show opening with *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* by Johannes Brahms.

UNFORGETTABLE

March 2-5. The fifth and penultimate of the Great Escapes performances, this collection showcases the work of greats such as Nat King Cole, who put a stamp on their time with distinctive style. Conductor Christopher Confessore will lead the orchestra through curated favorites from Broadway as well as a salute to Irving Berlin and the characters and melodies of his creation.

OUTDOOR POPS

May 14. Hitting the end of the season in style, the Sarasota Orchestra hits Ed Smith Stadium, part-time home of the Baltimore Orioles, for Orchestra in the Outfield, playing selected favorites from the repertoire and featuring a guest vocalist and fireworks display. Conductor Andrew Lane leads this family-friendly affair in the open night air.

Urbanite Theatre

The newest addition to the Suncoast's theatrical scene, founders Summer Dawn Wallace and Brendan Ragan made a statement with an opening summer season featuring sold-out, cutting-edge shows performed in the black box style, shifting effortlessly from heavy drama to heady comedy. In addition to full productions, the Urbanite regularly schedules spur of the moment readings and one-off performances from area artists and performers, so keep an ear to the ground. Visit vanwezel.org

FREAK

Oct 23-Nov 15. The Urbanite opens its second season with a play from British playwright Anna Jordan, who penned the theater's debut, *Chicken Shop*. As before Jordan worked with Wallace and Ragan to 'Americanize' the script for it's US premiere, making it an individualized experience and another world premiere of sorts. Centering on the twin tales of 15-year-old Leah on the verge of sexual awakening and middle-aged Georgie rediscovering that side of herself, *Freak* asks frank questions about society and female sexuality in a poignant mix of insight and humor.

LUNGS

Dec 4-Jan 3. From playwright Duncan Macmillan, Lungs sees a Millennial couple facing a world seemingly plagued by increasing disaster and questioning the merits of having a child in such a time. Stripped down and highly theatrical, the minimalist use of set and props places primacy on the words and performances.

THE DROWNING GIRLS

Apr 22-May 22. Based on the true crimes of 20th century serial killer George Joseph Smith, who made a habit of drowning his wives, these interlocking stories from playwrights Beth Graham, Daniela Vaskalic and Charlie Tomlinson raise Smith's victims from their watery graves to tell their side, in an eerie and engaging performance with contemporary relevance in its similarity to modern-day struggles.

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Playfully dubbed "The Purple Cow" by locals, this distinctive Frank Lloyd Wright creation abuts the Sarasota Bayfront, where it serves as Sarasota's primary connection to the world of national and international touring performance, bringing storied performers and productions to the local stage as a regular stop on the regional, national and international touring circuits. Visit vanwezel.org

JOHN CLEESE AND ERIC IDLE

Oct 1-2. These two founding members of the iconic and absurdist Monty Python comedy group stop by the Van Wezel with their new show "John Cleese & Eric Idle: Together Again At Last... For The Very First Time," treating audiences to a delightful mix of improvisation, storytelling, music and an extended Q&A with the audience.

STRAIGHT NO CHASER

Nov 19. Straight No Chaser is the real deal, the captivating sound of 10 unadulterated human voices coming together to make extraordinary music that is moving people in a fundamental sense... and with a sense of humor. On the road, Straight No Chaser has built a reputation as an unforgettable live act.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Feb 9-14. This nine-time Tony Award-winning musical comedy from Trey Parker and Matt Stone continues the creators' penchant for biting satire with the tale of two naïve Mormon missionaries sent to a village in northern Uganda, where they try to spread their faith to a population more concerned with warlords, famine and disease. With songs from Parker, Stone and *Frozen* co-composer and co-lyricist Robert Lopez, explicit language abounds.

BLACK VIOLIN

Jan 12. Classically-trained viola and violin players Wil B and Kev Marcus started Black Violin more than a decade ago and have since performed an average of 200 shows a year in 49 states and 36 countries. Their music is a blend of classical, hip-hop, rock, R&B and even bluegrass.

THE PLAYERS

Your Community Your Theatre

Celebrating What Makes Us...

Intrigue!

86th Season Broadway Series

Celebrating...

...Intrigue!

THE 39 STEPS

Sep. 30 - Oct. 11, 2015

1 Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python and you have this fast-paced whodunit for anyone who loves the magic of theatre! This 2-time Tony and Drama Desk award-winning treat is packed with nonstop laughs. The New York Post called it, "The most entertaining show on Broadway!"

...Flight!

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

Oct. 28 - Nov. 15, 2015

2 Everyone's favorite flying car comes to life in the musical adaptation of the beloved family film. Take a fantastic musical adventure as this out-of-this-world car flies through the air and sails the seas. Featuring an unforgettable score by the Sherman Brothers (Mary Poppins), this is a family-friendly blockbuster that audiences will find "Truly Scrumptious".

...Romance!

SHE LOVES ME

Dec. 2 - 20, 2015

3 Considered by many to be the most charming musical ever written, this scented case of mistaken identity and letter writing follows two feuding perfume clerks that have no idea that they are in love. This intimate and touching show was nominated for five Tony Awards, The Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival and the 1994 Critics Circle Award for Best Musical.

...The Stage!

THE DROWSY Chaperone

Jan. 13 - 31, 2016

4 When a die-hard theatre fan plays his favorite cast album, the characters come to life in this hilarious musical farce. Winner of 5 Tony Awards (including Best Book and Best Original Score) this loving send-up of the Jazz Age musical features one show-stopping song and dance number after another. New York Magazine called it, "The Perfect Broadway Musical."

...Tenacity!

HANDS ON A HARDBODY

Feb. 17 - Mar. 6, 2016

5 For 10 hard-luck Texans, a new lease on life is so close they can touch it. Under a scorching sun for days on end, armed with nothing but hope, humor and ambition, they'll fight to keep at least one hand on a brand new truck in order to win it. Inspired by true events, and infused with a "fresh roots-rock vibe," this is the hilarious hard-fought contest where only one winner can drive away with the American Dream. 10 contestants. 4 days. 1 truck.

...Being Yourself!

La Cage AUX FOLLES

March 23 - Apr. 10, 2016

6 Georges is the suave owner of a glitzy drag club on the French Riviera. Partnered romantically with his high-strung star performer, Albin (who goes by the stage name Zaza), the pair live a charmed life—until Georges' son, Jean-Michel, turns up engaged to the daughter of a conservative politician who's coming to dinner. Winner of numerous awards, this much-revived musical adds a new dimension to the boulevard comedy.

...The Senses!

THE SMELL OF THE KILL

Apr. 27 - May 8, 2016

7 Take three delicious, malicious wives, add three miserable, unloving husbands and chill. That's the recipe of Michele Lowe's tantalizing new comedy that had Broadway audiences cheering. This black comedy is a guilty pleasure that according to Variety Magazine "boasts lines and scenes that has everyone laughing as uproariously as *The Producers*."

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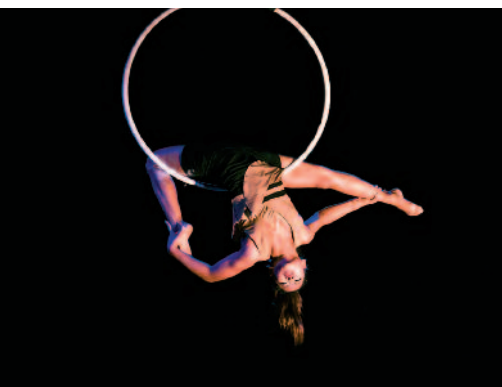
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ThePlayers.org

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Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts & Culture





LEFT: Ringling International Arts Festival / Phare: The Cambodian Circus.

Venice Theatre

HAIR

Nov 10-Dec 12. Tony Award-winner and Hollywood actor Ben Vereen directs this production of the Tony Award-winning rock musical born from the hippie counterculture and sexual revolution of the 1960s. As one of the original cast members in this story of a “tribe” of long-haired political activists fighting conscription in the Vietnam war, Vereen in the director’s chair promises something special.

SWEENEY TODD

Jan 21-Feb 14. Join the Demon Barber of Fleet Street for a night of barbarism and barbering in this eight-time Tony Award-winning dark musical from Stephen Sondheim chronicling an unjustly imprisoned man’s bloody quest for revenge in the streets of Victorian London. Together with his partner-in-crime, the delightfully twisted and cannibalistic Mrs. Lovett, Todd sings and slices his way to the top.

Annual Festivals

CINEWORLD FILM FESTIVAL

Nov 6-15. While Toronto prepares for the 40th anniversary of the International Film Festival (TIFF), the Sarasota Film Society has begun their own preparations. It is planning on having extensive coverage of the 11-day event running September 9 through September 20. Historically, the festival has been a non-stop marathon of films dedicated to various film genre. The Sarasota Film Society anticipates this year will be no different, resulting in a collection of must see films to satisfy each individual’s palate. Ridley Scott’s much touted *The Martian* starring Matt Damon and Jessica Chastain will have

its world premiere at Toronto, with a schedule release date of Oct. 2. From the French director Jean-Paul Rafeneau *Belles Familles*, a comedy about a French businessman who returns home to straighten out a family mess. Other premiers include Stephen Frears’ film *The Program* about Lance Armstrong, Jay Roaches *Trumbo* and Peter Sollett’s *Freehold*. Naturally these are but a few of the many films that will be reviewed during the event and eventually narrowed down to approximately 40-50 that will be screened. Visit filmsociety.org

OCTOBER ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN MONTH

Oct 1-31. Join the Center for Architecture Sarasota and the AIA FL Gulf Coast Chapter for their month-long celebration of architecture and design. Engage in Kids at the Center Architecture: 101 on October 3; Toshiko Mori FAIA of Toshiko Mori Architect will be the featured lecturer on October 16; join her for a tour of the Burkhardt/Cohen House on Casey Key on October 17; and, sample 130 years of architecture and history with local historian John McCarthy on October 10. Visit cfasrq.org

FORKS AND CORKS FESTIVAL GRAND TASTING

Jan 30. Hosted in the courtyard of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art by the Sarasota-Manatee Originals, The Grand Tasting offers a broad look at the area culinary scene, with flavorful injections from across the globe. With more than 50 area restaurants participating, wine from 80 top international wineries and a selection of microbrews and craft beers available, it’s a must for the sophisticated foodie. Visit dineoriginal.com/forksandcorks

RINGLING INTERNATIONAL ART FESTIVAL

Oct 14-18. Showcasing the latest happenings in the world of contemporary performance art, once a year The Ringling invites a select group of performers to bring their shows to Sarasota for four jam-packed days of music, theater and dance. With a focus on contemporary Asian art this year, performers include Phare: The Cambodian Circus, Tao Dance Theatre from China and the Indonesian musical genre-benders Orkes Sinten Remen, among others. Visit ringling.org

SARASOTA CHALK FESTIVAL

Nov 9-Nov 16. Founded by local Denise Kowal, the award-winning and record-breaking Sarasota Chalk Festival returns for another installment of street art spectacles, bringing professionals from around the world and amateurs from around the country together in a celebration of the ephemeral art form and its community potential. After last year’s Guinness World Record for Largest Anamorphic Pavement Art, this year’s theme is “Eat, Drink and Be Merry,” inviting artists to create a veritable feast right on the pavement. Visit chalkfestival.org

SARASOTA CRAFT SHOW

Dec 4-6. The event, now in its seventh year, will feature exceptional works in ceramics, decorative fiber, glass, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed-media, paper, wearable art, wood, painting, photography and sculpture by more than 100 of the nation’s top artists. Hailed by artists nationwide as one of the more innovative promoters empowering artisans working in the fine arts and crafts industry, Richard Rothbard and his wife Joanna are the owners of An American Craftsman Galleries NYC since 1982. Visit sarasotacraftshow.com

SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL

April 1-10. Showcasing the latest and greatest of cutting edge and independent film, the Sarasota Film Festival takes over the town for 10 days out of the year, bringing filmmakers from around the world and more than a couple stars, such as recent years’ Rachel Weisz, Jane Seymour and Richard Jenkins, to present their latest projects and talk film with the gathered community. With over 200 films showing and signature social events including Opening Night, SFF has grown to be a truly international event. Visit sarasotafilmfestival.com

SARASOTA MUSIC HALF MARATHON

Feb 7. The Sarasota Music Half Marathon is produced by SHM LLC. Its mission is to create a signature event for Sarasota by providing a cool experience for the athletes and spectators, involve the community and raise money for local non-profits. You’ll love the race— have fun, fun, fun, ‘til daddy takes your t-bird away. Visit sarasotahalf.com

Between our MainStage, Stage II, Cabaret, Generations & Concert Series, we've got the best in live entertainment for everyone!



Exit Laughing

MainStage Comedy: Sept. 29 - Oct. 18

Church Basement Ladies

Cabaret: Oct. 2 - 25

The Beauty Queen of Leenane

Stage II Dark Comedy: Nov. 5 - 22

Hair, Directed by Ben Vereen!

MainStage Musical: Nov. 9 - Dec. 13

The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical

Cabaret: Dec. 3 - 20

A Christmas Carol

Generations Musical: Dec. 17 - 21

Noises Off

MainStage Comedy: Jan. 12 - 31

Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Stage II Musical Thriller: Jan. 21 - Feb. 14

Ragtime

MainStage Musical: Feb. 16 - Mar. 13

The Rocky Horror Show

Cabaret: Feb. 26 - March 19

Venus in Fur

Stage II Drama: March 31 - April 17

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

MainStage Musical: April 5 - 24

Metamorphoses

Stage II Drama: April 28 - May 15

James and the Giant Peach

Generations MainStage Musical: May 17 - 22



Plus, this season's concerts include
The Capitol Steps, The Kingston Trio, tributes to The
Eagles, John Denver, The Carpenters & more!

TICKETS & more info: 941.488.1115 | VeniceStage.com | 140 W. Tampa Ave.

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