



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 8, 2025

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Sarasota Opera to Celebrate Italian Composer Giuseppe Verdi with a Special Screening of VIVA VERDI! Documentary

SARASOTA, FL — Sarasota Opera invites the community to a special celebration honoring the birthday of legendary Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi on Friday, October 10 at 7:00 P.M. at the Sarasota Opera House.

As the only opera company in the world to have performed all of Verdi's written works, Sarasota Opera is proud to commemorate his legacy with a screening of the acclaimed documentary film VIVA VERDI! The film offers an intimate glimpse into the lives of the celebrated opera singers and musicians currently living out their 'third act' while mentoring international music students at Milan's unique retirement home, Casa Verdi, built by Giuseppe Verdi in 1896. These distinguished "guests of Verdi," ranging in age from 77 to 103, prove age hasn't dulled their love of music or their relentless drive to create. They are still actively creating, performing and mentoring the 16 gifted music students from around the world who study and live among them. Verdi once said, "Among my works, the one I like the best is the home that I've built in Milan for accommodating old singers not favored by fortune."

The film is directed by Yvonne Russo, who also serves as producer with producing partner, Christine La Monte, along with Ron Simons. Russo and La Monte are the co-writers on the film, with music composed by Nicholas Pike. It was filmed on location in Milan, Italy, and premiered at the Woodstock Film Festival in 2024. For more information about the film, visit <https://vivaverdithefilm.com>.

The October 10 event at the Opera House will include a pre-show talk with the filmmakers, offering insights into Verdi's life and the making of the film, as well as performances of Verdi's work, a screening of VIVA VERDI! in the theatre, and yes, birthday cake!

Tickets are on sale now online for the event at <https://www.sarasotaopera.org/viva-verdi> or via the Sarasota Opera Box Office at 61 N. Pineapple Ave or 941-328-1300.

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About Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Opera is entering its 67th season of bringing world-class opera to Florida's Gulf Coast and celebrating 100 years of the historic Sarasota Opera House. The company was launched in 1960 in the historic 320-seat Asolo Theater on the grounds of Sarasota's Ringling Museum of Art. In 1984, the company moved into the former A.B. Edwards Theater — now the Sarasota Opera House. Since then, the company has gained an international reputation as one of the leading regional opera companies in the U.S. through initiatives such as the Masterworks Revival Series and the Verdi Cycle. The company's Sarasota Youth Opera is the most comprehensive youth opera program in the U.S. The Sarasota Opera House, which underwent a \$20 million renovation and rehabilitation in 2007, has been called "one of America's finest venues for opera" by Musical America. Since 1983, the company has been under the artistic leadership of Victor DeRenzi and the administrative leadership of General Director Richard Russell since 2012. Sarasota Opera is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts. Programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Sarasota Opera • 61 N. Pineapple Avenue • Sarasota, FL 34236 • (941) 366-8450 • SarasotaOpera.org