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Sept. 24, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Classic Movies at the Opera ***See The Greatest Show on Earth in the Theater Where It Premiered***

SARASOTA, FL - Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, step right up to the Sarasota Opera House, at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 18. The film *The Greatest Show on Earth* is returning to where it premiered in 1952. It was produced and directed by Cecil B. DeMille, filmed in Technicolor and released by Paramount Pictures. The film premiered at the Florida Theater, formerly A.B. Edwards Theater, and now known as the Sarasota Opera House.

The film was shot in Sarasota, which was home at that time to the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The movie stars Betty Hutton and Cornel Wilde as trapeze artists competing for the center ring and Charlton Heston as the circus manager. James Stewart also stars as a clown who never removes his makeup, and Dorothy Lamour and Gloria Grahame play supporting roles.

Besides the actors, the 1951 troupe of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey's Circus, 1,400 people, hundreds of animals and 60 railroad cars of equipment and tents, appears in the film. The film features about 85 Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus acts, including famous clowns Emmett Kelly and Lou Jacobs. (Jacobs was the father of aerialist Dolly Jacobs, who currently appears with the Circus Arts Conservatory in Sarasota.) John Ringling North plays himself as the owner of the circus.

The film includes several cameo appearances including Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, Lamour's costars in the *Road to ...* films; William Boyd, star of the television series, *Hopalong Cassidy*; Danny Thomas; and Van Heflin. Cecil B. DeMille, although not credited, is the film's narrator.

The film won two Academy Awards for Best Picture and Best Story. It was nominated for Best Costume Design, Best Director and Best Film Editing. It also won Golden Globe Awards for Best Cinematography, Best Director and Best Motion Picture – Drama.

Tickets to *The Greatest Show on Earth*, at \$12 each, are on sale now at the Sarasota Opera Box Office, by phone at (941) 328-1300, in person at 61 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota, or online at <https://tickets.sarasotaopera.org>.

About Sarasota Opera

This is Sarasota Opera's 66th Season of bringing world-class opera to Florida's Gulf Coast. 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 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 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.