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Melissa Voigt named Senior Development Officer for Sarasota Opera

Seasoned fundraiser held previous positions with the company from 2000-2009

Sarasota, FL – General Director Richard Russell and Artistic Director Victor DeRenzi announced that Melissa Voigt has returned to Sarasota Opera as Senior Development Officer. Ms. Voigt first joined the company in 2000 as Individual Giving Officer and became Director of Development in 2002. During her tenure, she led the completion of the \$20 million capital campaign that funded the renovation of the historic Sarasota Opera House.

Ms. Voigt left the company in 2009 to become the Chief Development Officer for Girl Scouts of Southwest Florida. From 2013 to 2018 she served as Director of Development for Child Protection Center and the Van Wezel Foundation. Most recently, she was Executive Director of the Ear Research Foundation.

In her new position at Sarasota Opera, Ms. Voigt will work closely to develop relationships with high-level donors and some institutional partners. She will also collaborate with fellow development colleagues to supplement the stewardship of high-level corporate partners and to cultivate new and increased gifts.

About her return to Sarasota Opera, Ms. Voigt stated, “It’s like I’ve gone around the world and come back home. I had some great opportunities to hone my fundraising skills in the human services sector, and now it’s nice to be back here behind the scenes and doing important work under the leadership of Director of Development Scott Guinn.”

Sarasota Opera's General Director Richard Russell commented, "I'm thrilled that our colleague Melissa Voigt is returning to Sarasota Opera. Her in-depth knowledge of the company and our community will be an important asset to our future development efforts."

ABOUT SARASOTA OPERA

This is Sarasota Opera's 63rd 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.

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