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**Images :** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ls41a4hp5xqpbtu/AADhiOfMtWqtFMtZP1tHbSNaa?dl=0>

## **The curtain rises on Sarasota Opera's 2022 Winter Festival**

*63<sup>rd</sup> consecutive season also marks*

*Artistic Director Victor DeRenzi's 40-year anniversary*

**Sarasota, FL** – Sarasota Opera opened its 2022 Winter Opera Festival to a sold-out audience with Puccini's *Tosca* on Saturday, February 12. The performance signified Maestro Victor DeRenzi's 57<sup>th</sup> time at the podium conducting the beloved work. "Opening night always comes with a sense of excitement for everyone—the performers as well as the audience. The opening of *Tosca* on Saturday night was especially meaningful, because we had the largest company involved in putting on a performance and the largest audience in our theater since the pandemic began in 2020. It speaks to the commitment by everyone and the care they took to keep themselves and each other safe. We all have a lot to be proud of," said Maestro DeRenzi. Meticulous planning and procedures have enabled the company—with more than 250 artists currently in residence—to keep the COVID-19 virus at bay. Last year, Sarasota Opera was the first company in the United States to hold a season of fully staged opera indoors since the performing arts were forced to shut down in March 2020. General Director Richard Russell has vigilantly overseen operations that center around lengthy protocols designed for the health and safety of the artists, crew, staff, and audience. "It's thrilling to bring full scale opera—complete with orchestra and chorus—back to the historic Sarasota Opera House. However, our work has just begun. Our festival runs through March 22, so we are not letting our guard down."

Sarasota Opera's 2022 Winter Opera Festival continues with Donizetti's *The Daughter of the Regiment* opening February 19, Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers* opening March 5, and Verdi's *Attila*, opening March 12. For more information, visit [SarasotaOpera.org](http://SarasotaOpera.org), or call the Box Office at 941-328-1300. Sarasota Opera is located at 61 N. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236.

## **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.

Sarasota Opera • 61 N. Pineapple Avenue • Sarasota, FL 34236 • (941) 366-8450 • [SarasotaOpera.org](http://SarasotaOpera.org)