



SARASOTA OPERA

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Images: Attached.

Sarasota Opera Presents Verdi's *Il trovatore*, March 7 – 29, 2026

February 17, 2026—Sarasota Opera continues its proud tradition of presenting operas by Giuseppe Verdi with *Il trovatore*, opening Saturday, March 7 with seven performances through March 29, 2026. The company presented *Il trovatore* two times, first in 1993 and again in 2014, as part of its 28-year Verdi Cycle, the company's monumental undertaking to perform all written works by the beloved opera composer.

Il trovatore was the most popular of Verdi's works during his lifetime, and it remains one of his most performed. The epic tale takes place in 15th century Spain, where a fiery execution from Count de Luna's childhood sparks a lifetime of vengeance—driving him to hunt the mysterious Azucena and battle for the love of the noblewoman Leonora. Caught up in long buried family secrets, Leonora and her beloved troubadour Manrico are swept into a storm of passion and fate.

Sarasota Opera General Director Richard Russell writes, "It is *Il trovatore's* music that has captured the opera lover's imagination. The score is rich with moments that challenge even the best operatic voices, making the achievement of surmounting these obstacles even more exciting to audiences."

Artists and Creative Team

Sarasota Opera's cast is led by Canadian-Italian soprano Aviva Fortunata, who has twice been named among the *CBC's* "Top 30 Canadian Classical Artists under 30," in the role of Leonora. The "bold and commanding" (*Broadway World*) mezzo soprano Lisa Chavez returns to play Azucena, with tenor Victor Starsky in the role of Manrico, baritone Ricardo José Rivera as Conte di Luna, and bass Young Bok Kim as Ferrando. At the podium will be Artistic Director and Principal Conductor Victor DeRenzi. The production will be directed by Marco Nisticò, with costume design by Howard Tsvi Kaplan, lighting design by Ken Yunker, and scenic design by Michael Schweikardt.

Why You Should See It

Il trovatore is a fiery, passionate, and musically thrilling opera that's perfect for someone who wants big drama and big voices. Verdi wrote some of his most stirring and emotionally intense

music for *Il trovatore*, including the famous “Anvil Chorus,” which has been used in everything from TV commercials to the Marx Brothers to Looney Tunes.

Performance Dates

Saturday, March 7, 2026 at 7:30 p.m. (Opening night)

Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 15, 2026 at 1:30 p.m. (Matinee)

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 21, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 29, 2026 at 1:30 p.m. (Matinee)

Explore and Engage

For a deeper understanding of *Il trovatore*, guests are invited to enjoy a specially curated [Il trovatore Spotify playlist](#) and the Behind the Blue Curtain podcast, including the episode [Il Trovatore: Serenades, sieges, and family secrets](#) with host Martha Collins, mezzo soprano Lisa Chavez, and stage director Marco Nisticò.

Tickets are available at the Sarasota Opera Box Office, by phone at (941) 328-1300, in person at 61 N. Pineapple Ave., Sarasota, or online at tickets.sarasotaopera.org.

About Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Opera is in 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.

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