



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Elegant evening of live performances, festive fare, and season-opening celebration set for
October 25, 2026*

September 9, 2026 — Sarasota Opera will welcome the community and opera patrons to the return of its traditional [Curtain Raiser Dinner](#) on Sunday, October 25, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Michael's On East in The Dining Room, located at 1212 S. East Avenue in Sarasota. Revived for the 2026–27 season, the evening will celebrate the opening of the Sarasota Opera season with live performances, elevated cuisine, and the first notes of a new year of extraordinary music and artistry.

A cherished Sarasota Opera tradition, the Curtain Raiser Dinner will offer guests a sophisticated season-opening experience at one of Sarasota's premier dining destinations. The event will take place in the newly reimagined Michael's On East Dining Room, whose luxurious decor is inspired by the big city supper clubs of 1930s New York and Paris. The event is sponsored by Gulf Coast Community Foundation.

“The Curtain Raiser has long been a special part of Sarasota Opera's season-opening traditions, and we are delighted to bring it back this year,” said Richard Russell, General and Artistic Director of Sarasota Opera. “After a busy summer, it's an opportunity for old friends to reunite, or to meet new friends while supporting the artistry, education, and community engagement that are central to our mission.”

Proceeds from Sarasota Opera's signature events support the company's internationally recognized productions, artist training programs, community outreach and education initiatives, and Sarasota Youth Opera.

Event Details

Sarasota Opera's 2026–27 Curtain Raiser Dinner

Sunday, October 25, 2026, at 6:00 PM

Michael's On East, The Dining Room, 1212 S. East Avenue, Sarasota, FL

Sponsored by Gulf Coast Community Foundation

Tickets are \$250 per person

For reservations, visit sarasotaopera.org or contact SOAEvents@SarasotaOpera.org.

About Sarasota Opera

Sarasota Opera is in its 68th 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 in 2007, has been called "one of America's finest venues for opera" by Musical America. Richard Russell has served as General Director since 2012 and added the role of Artistic Director in June 2026. 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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