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## **Sarasota Opera Receives \$60,000 Empowering Arts Grant from Gulf Coast Community Foundation**

**Sarasota, FL** — Sarasota Opera has been awarded a \$60,000 [Empowering Arts Grant](#) from Gulf Coast Community Foundation. The grant, made possible through the Zoe Anderson Charitable Fund and the Venice Endowment Fund, will support Sarasota Opera's mission-driven programming and operations during the 2025–2026 season.

The Empowering Arts Grant Program exemplifies Gulf Coast Community Foundation's trust-based philanthropy approach, designed to simplify grant administration while empowering local arts and cultural organizations. The Foundation supports organizations that are recognized as essential contributors to the region's economy and vibrant cultural landscape.

Since 1995, Gulf Coast Community Foundation has powered bold philanthropy and collaborative leadership to drive meaningful change across our region. Guided by values of authenticity, curiosity, collaboration, grit, and a trailblazing spirit, Gulf Coast works side-by-side with donors, partners, and community members to tackle our region's biggest challenges and unlock its greatest opportunities.

The Zoe Anderson Charitable Fund is an endowed fund established in 2012 to honor the legacy of a beloved Sarasota resident known for her deep community ties and volunteer spirit. Together with their donors, Gulf Coast Community Foundation supports community programs and initiatives that enrich our region. These funds help nonprofits like Sarasota Opera in advancing their cultural and educational missions.

"Sarasota Opera is a cornerstone of our region's cultural identity," said Kelly Borgia, Director of Brand Engagement at Gulf Coast Community Foundation. "Through this grant, we're proud to invest in both the excellence of their performances and their commitment to engaging and educating our community."

Sarasota Opera will utilize this grant to strengthen its ability to present world-class opera performances and produce educational and outreach programs that enrich the cultural fabric of Sarasota and the surrounding region.

“Gulf Coast Community Foundation is one of the most committed, collaborative and generous supporters of Sarasota Opera,” said Richard Russell, General Director of Sarasota Opera. “We are grateful for their partnership and support, and value their continued leadership in recognizing the centrality of the arts and cultural sector in Sarasota.”

### **About Sarasota Opera**

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