



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sarasota Opera Food & Wine Festival Welcomes New Partners and Returning Favorites

Sarasota, FL - Sarasota Opera's Annual Food & Wine Festival returns on **September 23, 2023, from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.** and will take place at Sarasota Opera House. Local restaurants will gather to serve tasty bites, wine, and other treats as a benefit for Sarasota Youth Opera. This year's festival will feature many returning classics, such as Michael's on East, Tsunami Sushi and Hibachi Grill, Mattison's, and Selva Grill, and will also include new partners such as Molly's Pub, and Shore. There will be performances throughout the event by the Youth Opera chorus, as well as raffles of gift cards from local favorites and tickets to Sarasota Opera and Sarasota Youth Opera performances, and other activities.

Tickets are now available for \$75 per person and can be purchased online at www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest, at the Box Office located at 61 N. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236, or by calling the Box Office at (941) 328-1300. All proceeds go to support the Youth Opera & Education programming. This season, Sarasota Opera's events are produced by **Mary Kenealy Events**. Restaurants interested in participating in this event can find registration information at www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest-registration. Restaurant registration is open until September 8.

Participating restaurants are:

99 Bottles	EVOQ Sarasota/Westin Hotel
Jack Dusty Restaurant/Ritz-Carlton	Selva Grill
Happy Soul	Michael's on East
Pier 22	Tsunami Sushi and Hibachi Grill
Five-O-Donut Co.	Molly's Pub
Tzeva/Art Ovation Hotel	Mattison's
Storii Coffee	Bahi Hut
Bridges/Embassy Suites	Food & Beer

Shore
Nothing Bundt Cakes

Rise & Nye's
Nautical Gin

What: Sarasota Opera Food & Wine Festival

When: Saturday, September 23, 2023

Where: Sarasota Opera House, 61 N. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236

Tickets: \$75 purchased in advance, \$85 purchased on the day of the event.

<https://www.sarasotaopera.org/foodandwinefest>

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ABOUT SARASOTA YOUTH OPERA & EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Since 1984, Sarasota Youth Opera has given thousands of young people an opportunity to experience opera first-hand through participation in after-school choruses, Sarasota Opera mainstage productions, summer workshops, and fully staged Youth Opera productions. As the only program in the United States committed to presenting annual full-scale opera productions for young voices, accepting all who wish to participate regardless of skill level or ability to pay, Sarasota Youth Opera is a national model for opera education.

Youth Opera Choruses: Beginning at age 8, singers are placed in one of two chorus levels. Each chorus provides a setting for everyone to participate and progress at their own level as they gain greater skills and experience. Selections performed are made up of classical music, which includes opera and choral pieces in different languages. The choruses perform throughout the community in formal concerts and outreach events.

Opera Mainstage Season: Members of the Youth Opera are selected to join Sarasota Opera's Winter Festival season, appearing in the mainstage children's chorus, as supernumeraries (extras who perform non-singing roles) and for special roles written by the composer for children's voices. In recent seasons these have included roles in *La bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Carmen*. Singers are involved in the complete production process – from early music and dramatic rehearsals to performing alongside opera professionals.

Youth Opera Productions: Part of Sarasota Opera's commitment to young people includes the commissioning of new operatic works written for children and young adults. Six new works have been presented as part of this mission: *Deadline* (1989), *Polly Pen's Her Lightness* (1993), *Tom Suta's Eye of Ra* (1998), *John Kennedy's The Language of Birds* (2004), *Daron Hagen's Little Nemo in Slumberland* (2012) and *Rachel J. Peters' Rootabaga Country* (2017). Members take part in the making of each opera, complete with professional staging, costumes, lighting, sound, and orchestral accompaniment.

Sarasota Opera's broader education programming works to introduce a life-long love of opera to students in the greater Sarasota/Manatee region. Taking performances to schools and inviting students to the Opera House for dress rehearsals and tours, Sarasota Opera Artists and education staff expand the mission of Sarasota Opera into the community.

Sarasota Opera • 61 N. Pineapple Avenue • Sarasota, FL 34236 www.SarasotaOpera.org
(941) 366-8450 (Administration) (941) 328-1300 (Box Office)

