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Sarasota Youth Opera Announces New Coordinator

Sarasota, FL – Sarasota Opera is proud to announce that Florida native **Cameron Maxwell** has been hired as the new Youth Opera Coordinator. Ms. Maxwell will be the administrator for Sarasota Youth Opera programs and performances and will also be the liaison to the parents and community. Sarasota Youth Opera is currently in its winter semester and is now working towards the Youth Opera Summer Camp to be held this June.

Born and raised in Orlando, Ms. Maxwell has a wide variety of experience with music and theatre both as a performer and stage director. She received her BA in Theater Arts from Flagler College with three minors; Arts Administration, Music, and Education. After college, she worked in the development and marketing department of St. Johns Cultural Council, an arts agency aiding arts and cultural organizations. She was active in creating grant proposals, newsletters and managing their performance venue.

Ms. Maxwell previously discovered her passion for working with children in the arts when she co-founded a summer camp with neighborhood kids. “Being involved in the whole process of developing arts opportunities for children felt natural and like something I could do successfully and joyfully for the rest of my life. The programs and productions at Sarasota Youth Opera provide wonderful opportunities for the children to immerse themselves in the arts, and I am excited to be a part of it.” Maestro Jesse Martins and Director of Education, Martha Collins, are “happy to welcome to our team someone who is as devoted and passionate about children and the arts as we are!”

ABOUT SARASOTA YOUTH OPERA

Since 1984, Sarasota Youth Opera has given thousands of young people ages 8 to 18 an opportunity to experience the joy of opera firsthand through participation in fully-staged Youth Opera productions, Sarasota Opera main stage productions, summer camps, and concerts throughout the community.

Sarasota Youth Opera is the only program in the United States committed to both presenting an annual full-scale opera production for young voices, as well as accepting all who wish to participate regardless of skill level or ability to pay.

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, in special roles written by the composer for children's voices, and as supernumeraries (extras who perform non-singing roles). 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 including Rachel J. Peters' *Rootabaga Country* (2017) and Daron Hagen's *Little Nemo in Slumberland* (2012). Members take part in the making of each opera, complete with professional staging, costumes, lighting, sound, and orchestral accompaniment.

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