

# BEL CANTO

Newsletter of the Manatee Opera Guild

October 2024

<https://manateeoperaguild.org>

## OCTOBER 16 GENERAL MEETING PALM AIRE CC, 10:30 A.M.

Please send your luncheon reservations with a check  
(made out to MOG) to:

Cathy Knobel, 787 Benjamin Franklin Drive  
Sarasota, FL 34236  
Telephone: 941-666-3253 Cell

### MENU

Pasta Primavera with Shrimp  
or  
Vegetarian Pasta Primavera

Dessert: Caramel Macchiato Cheesecake

Reservation for the Luncheon  
October 16, 2024

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of reservations at \$35. \_\_\_\_\_

Menu choice \_\_\_\_\_

Checks made out to MOG, please.

**Please make your reservation before October 11.**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It was wonderful to see everyone at our September meeting, and to hear the enthusiastic talk about the Sarasota Youth Opera given by Maestro Jesse Martins, Martha Collins and Cameron Maxwell. They showed videos of some past productions, and went into detail about the Youth Opera with emphasis on their summer camp, putting together their professionally presented Fall Youth Opera, and working with



Jesse Martins, Angela Korsmo, Martha Collins, Maryanne Hazan and Cameron Maxwell. MOG presented Sarasota Youth Opera with a check for \$6,000.

children's voices and abilities, and with composers who are commissioned by Sarasota Opera to write operas for children's vocal range.

Our October 16 meeting will feature artists from Sarasota Opera singing some of our favorite and some less well known pieces. We hope that you all will join us then.

In order to continue with our meetings at Palm Aire, we need to guarantee a luncheon attendance of at least twenty-five diners, so please make every effort to join us at lunch, and bring your friends.

Thank You to **Syble DiGirolamo** whose fund-raising skills netted the Guild \$22,500 in Gold and Silver Sponsor donations to the October 22 On-Stage Concert, *Una Noche Cubana*. Thank you to all MOG members who signed on as Gold and Silver Sponsors. Your generosity helps us to reach our annual fundraising goal. Now, whether you have donated or not, be sure to sign up to attend the concert, because as Syble says, "It's not a concert without an audience." Tickets are now available through the Sarasota Opera website <https://tickets.sarasotaopera.org/6044/6045>. This link will take you directly to the correct web page for your purchase. Or you can call the Opera box-office at 941-328-1300.

## GRANDCHILDREN AT THE OPERA

Elizabeth Aversa

According to professor, author, and podcaster Carol Reynolds, “Children have a natural love for opera. I make that statement confidently because I’ve never seen it fail. When exposed to staged music dramas of appropriate lengths (two to three hours) with costumes, a modest amount of action, and an actual band or orchestra, children are easily won over...”

In this age of electronic devices and instant entertainment, grandparents may be casting about, trying to interest our grandchildren in our favorite performing art. This month’s column offers some ideas about what to do.

### 1. Bring the grandchildren to a Sarasota Youth Opera production.

The website of the Sarasota Opera reminds us that “Sarasota Youth Opera is a national model for opera education.” This premier program is directed by the company’s Director of Education Martha Collins and Music Director Jesse Martins. *Little Nemo in Slumberland*, *Rootabaga Country*, *The Little Sweep*, and *Brundibár* are among the works have been performed by our Youth Opera. This season will not disappoint: November 9 and 10 are the dates for Dean Burry’s *The Hobbit*. If your grandchildren are local or within a reasonable drive, invite them for the weekend and get tickets for a real opera adventure.

Here is a link to excerpts from Benjamin Britten’s *The Little Sweep* [SYO Little Sweep](#) performed here by the Youth Opera. (The Little Sweep tells an engaging story of some privileged children who design the escape plan for a disadvantaged boy who is forced to work for a mean chimney sweep.)

### 2. Find opera where the grandchildren live.

While we are excited about the upcoming production, many of us simply can’t fly distant grandchildren here for opera. But we may travel to see “the kids” and find opera where they live. Watch, in your travels, for operas that delight children. A good one to consider is a holiday favorite that is performed in December in many communities. *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by Gian Carlo Menotti is based on the story of the three wise men who are looking for the child born in Bethlehem. Here is “This is My Box,” [Amahl and the Night Visitors](#)

If the grandchildren reside in a “college town” check out the University opera offerings. Music school productions are often less expensive and easier to

access than performances in renowned urban opera houses.

### 3. Watch a recorded opera with the grandchildren.

Englebert Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* is an opera based on the fairy tale of the same title. The 1997 Juilliard production of the full opera, featuring broadcaster Hugh Downs, sets by Maurice Sendak, and Lincoln Center as the venue, is at [Hansel and Gretel](#). This opera calls for discussion with the children since it is a grim story that could frighten unprepared viewers. What a wonderful opportunity for both seniors and the children!

*Cendrillon*, composed by Jules Massenet, is another familiar story for children of all ages. In this clip from the 2019 Met production Joyce DiDonato and Alice Coote sing the Cinderella-Prince Charming duet from Act 3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aFq4mf20Bw>

For the full opera, see the Valdosta State University production at [Valdosta Cendrillon](#)

### 4. Remind the children that many familiar tunes come from opera.

Here, for example, is “My uncle roasted a kangaroo,” based on the Soldiers’ Chorus from Gounod’s *Faust*. Play this [Kangaroo song](#) and then this [Soldiers Chorus](#)

Teens, especially boys, may be familiar with “Ride of the Valkyries” from the movie *Apocalypse Now*. Listen at [Apocalypse Now -- Ride of the Valkyries](#)

This link <https://www.eno.org/discover-opera/10-famous-opera-songs-in-movies/>

gives additional movie examples for listeners of all ages, from *Pretty Woman* to *The Despicable*.

### 5. Finally, once you have them interested, bring the grandchildren to Sarasota Youth Opera Camp.

Invite the grandchildren to visit you here in Florida and then give the gift of three weeks of opera. All children are welcome since there’s something in opera for everyone! A typical day might include sessions in singing, acting, physical comedy, sets, props, wigs, make-up, and costumes. What could be more fun?!

Finally, if you aren’t convinced of the joy that opera can bring to young people, check out this video, featuring Angel Blue and several curious children.

“Kids meet an opera singer” at [Listen to Angel Blue](#)

Regardless of how you choose to do it, do invite young people to the opera!

See you at *The Hobbit* in November!

## TRIBUTES

- In memory of **Mary Zabin**, who passed away this Summer. She was a past president and a guiding light of the Guild for decades.
- Happy Birthday to **Kristi Greenslade**
- In memory of **Juanita Connell**, a gentle soul.

**From Jean Roberts**

In fondest memory of **Mary Zabin** and **Juanita Connell** from the MOG Board of Directors

If you would like to honor or memorialize someone, please fill out this form and give it or send it to Linda Buchart. Thank you.

My gift of \$ _____ is given:
____ In memory of _____
____ In honor of _____
____ On the occasion of _____
Please send an acknowledgement card to:
_____
_____
From: _____
_____
Checks made out to MOG please. Mail to:
Linda Buchart
6350 29 <sup>th</sup> Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34209



### **Mary Zabin**

Mary Zabin served MOG in many capacities, including Chair of the original MOG Gala, Vice President for Fund Raising and President. She and her husband, Jim were avid world travelers visiting over 60 countries, usually for a month or more at a time. She turned her travel and photography passions into many delightful fund-raising luncheons for MOG.

She was passionate about the arts, supporting them with her time, talents and treasure. Those nearest and dearest to her heart were the Manatee (formerly Bradenton) Opera Guild and Sarasota Opera, Manatee Performing Arts Center (Manatee Players), Florida Studio Theater, West Coast Black Theater and the Manatee Symphony Association.



Music was **Juanita Connell's** passion. She sang in choral groups, learned to play the pipe organ and taught children's choirs. She loved Opera and would travel far and wide to see the finest productions.

Making Sarasota their permanent residence in retirement, Juanita loved the culture that the city offered, becoming president of the Sarasota Opera Guild and being a patron of the many diverse performing arts in the city. Her last few years were in Bradenton where she made many new friends at the Manatee Opera Guild and at Westminster.

At left, Juanita modeling at the 2024 MOG Fashion Show

## VERY SPECIAL PRELUDE!

**Please plan to attend our October 18 Prelude** where Sarasota Opera's renowned Artistic Director, Maestro Victor DeRenzi will be sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of Giuseppe Verdi and his music with us.

Maestro DeRenzi has an encyclopedic knowledge of opera. *He is the only conductor in the world who has conducted every note of Verdi's published music!* When he accomplished this feat in 2016, the street in front of the Sarasota Opera House was renamed "Verdi Place," and he was knighted by the Italian government with the title of Cavaliere dell'ordine della Stella d'Italia for his contributions toward spreading Italian culture.



This prelude will be in the form of an unrehearsed interview between Maestro DeRenzi and our own Elizabeth Aversa. There will be time at the end for you to pose your own Verdi questions to Maestro.

This prelude will take place at **Westminster Shores Card Room**. Note: **This is a new location!** Westminster Shores is located at 1700 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West\*, Bradenton,, 34205. There is a parking lot across from the building. Carpooling is a good way to ensure that parking spaces do not run out.

\*Some GPS apps will take you to 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Do not be fooled. Stay on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to reach the front entrance.

# Manatee Opera Guild Calendar 2024-2025

## SEPTEMBER

**September 11**  
**Board Meeting**

**September 18**  
**Member Meeting**

10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC

Welcome Back!

Hear about  
Sarasota Youth  
Opera with Maestro  
Jesse Martins and  
Martha Collins.

## OCTOBER

**October 9**  
**Board Meeting**

**October 16**  
**Member Meeting**

10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC  
Featuring singers  
from Sarasota Opera

**October 18**  
Prelude: *Music of*  
*Verdi with Maestro*  
*DeRenzi*  
10 a.m.  
Westminster Shores

**October 22**  
**On Stage Concert**  
Sarasota Opera  
House  
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

## NOVEMBER

**November 13**  
**Board Meeting**

**November 14\***  
**Member Meeting**

10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC  
Featuring singers  
from Sarasota Opera

**November 22 \*\***  
**Prelude: Cavalleria**  
*rusticana and*  
*Pagliacci* 10 a.m.  
Westminster Shores

\*Thursday, not our  
usual Wednesday.

\*\*Not the Friday after  
our member meeting

## DECEMBER

**December 8**  
Holiday Party  
4 - 6:30 pm  
Maryanne Hazen's  
\$30

**December 4 (1<sup>st</sup> Wed)**  
**Board Meeting**

**December 11\*\* (2<sup>nd</sup> Wed)**  
**Member Meeting**  
10:30 a.m.  
Opera House  
Courtyard with catered  
picnic lunch or byo  
lunch  
Featuring singers from  
Sarasota Opera

**December 13\*\* (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday)**  
*Prelude: Barber of*  
*Seville*  
10 a.m. Westminster  
Shores

## JANUARY

**January 4**  
**Ghosts of**  
**Versailles,** (Third  
opera in the Figaro  
trilogy)

2:00 p.m.  
Westminster Shores

**January 15**  
**Board Meeting**

**January 16**  
(Thursday)  
**Member Meeting**  
10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC.  
Featuring singers  
from Sarasota Opera

**January 17**  
**Prelude: Marriage of**  
*Figaro*  
10 a.m.  
Westminster Shores

## FEBRUARY

**February 9**  
**Stars of Tomorrow**  
**Concert**  
**Location Manatee**  
**School for the Arts**

**February 12**  
**Board Meeting**

**February 19**  
**Member Meeting**  
**Sweetheart**  
**Celebration**  
10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC  
Featuring singers  
from Sarasota Opera

**February 21**  
**Prelude: Stiffelio**

**February 26**  
**Fashion Show**  
11:30 a.m.  
Lakewood Ranch  
CC

## MARCH

**March 12**  
**Board Meeting**

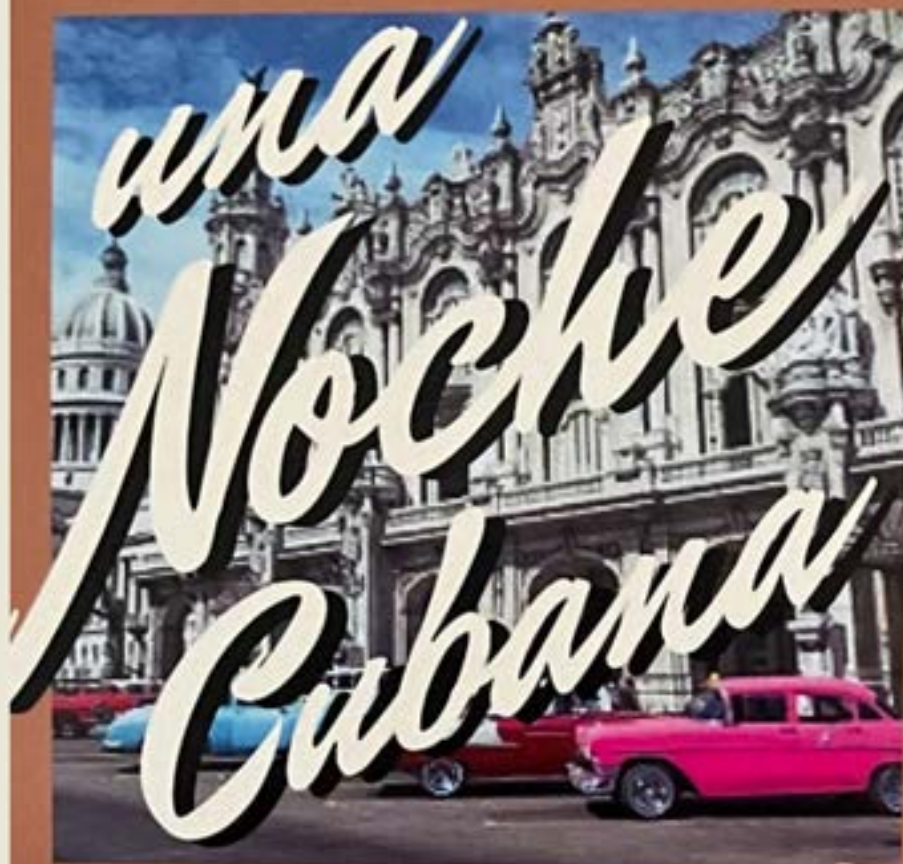
**March 14**  
**Member Meeting**  
**Helen Jepson**  
**Dellera and Deane**  
**Allyn Awards**  
**Brunch**  
10:00  
Palm Aire CC

## APRIL

**April 9**  
**Board Meeting**

**April 16**  
**Member Meeting**  
10:30 a.m.  
Palm Aire CC  
Welcome New  
Members!





**Manatee Opera Guild**  
presents

***Edel Muñoz***

**October 22, 2024**

**Sarasota Opera House**

**61 N Pineapple Ave**

**Sarasota, FL**

**Doors open at 5:00 PM.**

**Limited seating available.**

**Admission:**

**\$75 for guests,**

**\$100 for patrons**

**Tickets: (941) 328-1300  
or [sarasotaopera.org](http://sarasotaopera.org)**

## *una Noche Cubana*

### **Details**

- 5:00 PM** — Doors open, authentic Cuban appetizers and *Cuba Libre* on second floor
- 6:00 PM** — Audience seated on the Opera stage for Muñoz's performance with engaging audience conversations
- 7:00 PM** — Return to second floor for champagne and desserts

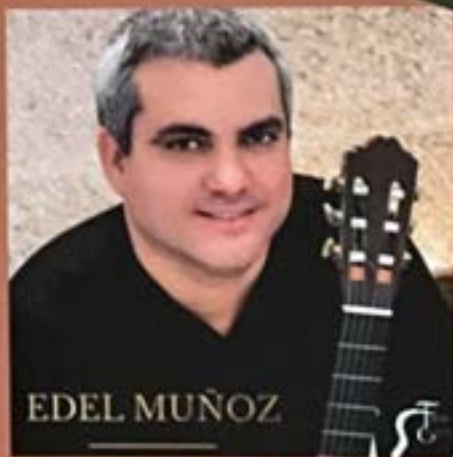
### **Sponsors**

#### **GOLD SPONSORS**

Sally & Robert Arthur • Elizabeth & Rocco Aversa  
Katherine Benoit & John Brooks • Aline  
Blanchard & Art Siciliano • Carol & Les Bruahli  
Edie & David Chaifetz • Terry Brennan Davis  
Syble & Peter DiGirolamo • Maria Cora Gaffar  
Maryanne & Ray Hazen • Kathleen Knight &  
Peter Ferentinos • Angela Korsmo • Katherine  
Martinez & Jules Herbert III • Janet Stern  
Solomon & Lewis D. Solomon • Sheila & Joe  
Varady • Rachael & Don Worthington

#### **SILVER SPONSORS**

Juanita Connell • Rich DeGennaro &  
Sandy Bath • Rae & Sandy Frankel  
Valerie Giuliani • Patricia Gulemme  
• Tamara Jacobs & David Epstein  
Sandy & Fred Jones • Sara & Paul  
Osher • Maggie Romanes • Clara  
Steffan • Susan Strauss • Rebecca &  
Bill Tompkins • Meg & Gary  
Weinberg • Jeanne Yeagle



### **About Edel Muñoz**

A Cuban-American, Edel Muñoz is the first prize winner in more than 20 international guitar competitions. He has taught master classes at major music festivals, courses, seminars and workshops in prestigious universities around the world. He is currently on faculty at the Sarasota Conservatory of Music. Edel Muñoz is a world acclaimed performer who is known for his unique interpretations that touch and move audiences while creating a warm and magical atmosphere.

**Thank you to members who have renewed their membership for the 2024-2025 year, listed below:**

Bill and Virginia Andersen, Elizabeth and Rocco Aversa, Mimi Bagley, Linda Buchhart, Marilyn Carminio, Syble DiGirolamo, Rae and Sandy Frankel, Arthur Gaisser, Valerie Giuliani, Patricia Golemme, Maryanne and Ramon Hazen, Carol and Ed Heckman, Jules Paul Herbert II and Kate Martinez, Catherine M. Knobel, Angela Korsmo, Gretchen Littlefield, Marge Melun and Ky Thompson, Beverly McRae, Patricia Paul, Janis Rauch, Todd J. Roberts, Sandy and Richard Romley, Jeanne Scacchetti, Janice Sladzinski, Clara Steffan, Kathleen Ulman, Joe and Sheila Varady, Dr. Gary and Meg Weinberg, Diana Walters, Penelope Williams, Eileen Witzgall, Jeanne Yeagle.

If your name is **not** on this list, please fill out the form at right and mail it with your dues as soon as convenient, or bring your dues to the next meeting. Checks should be made out to MOG.



Westminster residents enjoyed a tour of the Sarasota Opera House in September. From left, Becky Rench, Catherine Phelps, Judy Vergason, Carol Zeszotarski, Ruth Robinson (MOG member), Clara Steffan (MOG member), Mary Peterson, Anita Rogers, Manuel Gonzalez, Jean Appelt and Larry Steagall

## **Manatee Opera Guild Membership Application**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip:\_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone:\_\_\_\_\_

Email:\_\_\_\_\_

New Member ☐

Renewing Member ☐

**I (we) can help the Manatee Opera Guild in these ways (please check all appropriate boxes)**

Literature design ☐

Publicity ☐

Event planning ☐

Refreshments ☐

Fundraising ☐

Serving on the Board ☐

Greeting ☐

Developing membership

Telephoning ☐

Writing ☐

Photography ☐

Setting up/cleaning up☐

Hosting parties☐

Hospitality ☐

Modeling at fashion show ☐

Soliciting advertising and gifts ☐

Editing (newsletters, brochures, letters) ☐

Other talent ☐

### **Membership Level:**

**Single Regular** Membership \$40

**Single Sustaining** Membership \$50

**Couple Regular** Membership \$60

**Couple Sustaining** Membership. \$70

Make checks payable to **Manatee Opera Guild, or MOG**

Send application and payment to:

**Jeanne Yeagle**

**1700 3rd Avenue West, Apt 111**

**Bradenton, FL 34205**

**or bring to our next meeting.**