

OPERA NAPLES

Ramón Tebar, *Artistic & Music Director*

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OPERA NAPLES UNVEILS 2025-26 SEASON CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF WORLD-CLASS OPERA

Highlights include “Imperial Enchantment: A Night in the Mystical Palace” Gala, multiple concerts featuring the Opera Naples Resident Artists and Chorus, and a five-week opera and performing arts festival which includes the second Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition.

NAPLES, FL (August 8, 2025) – To further its mission of presenting quality opera, musical performances, education and community engagement programs, Opera Naples announces exciting plans for its 2025/26 season in celebration of its 20th Anniversary. The season, conducted by Opera Naples Artistic and Music Director and City of Naples Cultural Ambassador Ramón Tebar, includes the sixth annual Festival Under the Stars which this season extends over five weeks with performances and events at both the Wang Opera Center and downtown Naples’ Baker Park. Opera Naples also remains committed to providing extensive in-school and community music education programs, impacting over 3,000 students each year, supported by events such as EuroFest on August 26, 2025, as well as the annual gala fundraiser “Imperial Enchantment: A Night in the Mystical Palace,” on December 11, 2025.

Commenting on today’s announcement, Opera Naples Executive Director Melanie Kalnins said: “Now in our 20th Anniversary milestone year, we plan to continue to elevate our artistic standards in partnership with the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation and are proud to now extend our popular Festival Under the Stars over five weekends from mid-February through mid-March with performances at both the Wang Opera Center and Baker Park, which is a gorgeous setting and was actually the site of our very first Festival Under the Stars in 2021. Throughout this upcoming season, we will showcase the talents of our Opera Naples Resident Artists and Chorus while also inviting top-notch talent from around the world to perform in our operas.”

Artistic and Music Director Ramón Tebar added: “This season, we look forward to exploring a theme of ‘Trials of the Heart’ as all operas we are performing explore both literal and metaphorical trials. To open our festival, our Resident Artists will be performing the opera *Scalia/Ginsburg* which focuses on the constitutional and philosophical debates between the two famous Supreme Court justices who

were also friends bonded through their love of opera. We will also experience the many riddle trials of *Turandot* as well as the character Nemorino's love gamble in *The Elixir of Love*. And our second Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition is quite literally a passionate trial among world-class voices! All of these exciting performances and more will happen at the Wang Opera Center and Baker Park as we celebrate our sixth annual Festival Under the Stars."

President of the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Nicoletta Pavarotti also commented, "We were overjoyed with the phenomenal success of our inaugural Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition last season which captured the attention of opera lovers around the world. As we plan to again partner with Florida Gulf Coast University with this project, we look forward to welcoming young singers from around the globe to join this competition. And this season, we are thrilled to open both the semifinal round (at FGCU) and the final round (in Baker Park) of the competition to the public. We are not just discovering new young voices, we are putting Naples firmly on the global opera map, and we couldn't be prouder!"

2025/26 Season

2026 OPERA NAPLES FESTIVAL UNDER THE STARS

Wang Opera Center and Baker Park, February 13 to March 15

Opera Naples Artistic and Music Director Ramón Tebar leads the festival's musical activities, conducting the Naples Festival Orchestra. The festival is notable for being the only outdoor winter opera festival in the United States. Festivalgoers will enjoy three operas featuring internationally renowned artists, special concerts featuring the Opera Naples Chorus and Resident Artists, the second Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition and a performance of *Don Quixote* by the Gulfshore Ballet. Tickets: Reserved Seating \$38-\$157. VIP Tables start at \$390, including access to a VIP reception from 6-7pm.

Feb 13	Voices of Triumph: A Celebration of the Opera Chorus, 7pm, Wang Opera Center
Feb 21	<i>Scalia/Ginsburg</i> by Derrick Wang, 7pm, Wang Opera Center
Feb 22	<i>Scalia/Ginsburg</i> by Derrick Wang, 2pm, Wang Opera Center
Feb 28	<i>Don Quixote</i> by Ludwig Minkus with Gulfshore Ballet, 6:30pm, Wang Opera Center
March 7	Stars and Standards: An American Songbook Celebration, 7pm, Wang Opera Center
March 11	<i>Turandot</i> by Giacomo Puccini, 7pm, Baker Park
March 12	<i>The Elixir of Love</i> by Gaetano Donizetti, 7pm, Baker Park
March 13	<i>Turandot</i> by Giacomo Puccini, 7pm, Baker Park
March 14	Semifinal Round of the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition, 1pm, FGCU's Bower School of Music & the Arts
March 14	<i>The Elixir of Love</i> by Gaetano Donizetti, 7pm, Baker Park
March 15	Final Round of the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition, 7pm, Baker Park
Date TBD	Family & Community Day

Voices of Triumph: A Celebration of the Opera Chorus

Join the Opera Naples Chorus and Resident Artists for an unforgettable evening celebrating the power and beauty of the human voice with famous opera choruses. Featuring highly recognizable repertoire with selections from popular works such as *Carmen* and *La Traviata*, this uplifting program showcases timeless works that have inspired audiences for generations. Experience the rich harmonies that only a full chorus can deliver.

***Scalia/Ginsburg* by Derrick Wang**

Scalia/Ginsburg is a witty and heartfelt comic opera that brings Supreme Court justices Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg to life in a powerful musical dialogue about law, friendship and the Constitution. Blending operatic drama with sharp legal humor, this unique production celebrates the unlikely bond between two ideological opposites united by mutual respect. The composer Derrick Wang will also be in attendance at the Toast to Opera event on February 19 to provide more insight into his opera. More details about Toast to Opera events are included below.

***Don Quixote* by Ludwig Minkus, performed by Gulfshore Ballet**

Don Quixote is a three-act ballet based on Miguel de Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, featuring choreography by Iliana Lopez and Franklin Gamero after Marius Petipa and music by Ludwig Minkus. Gulfshore Ballet presents a ballet renowned for its Spanish theme and Spanish-inspired melodies. Join us for an unforgettable evening of bold adventure and fiery spirit!

Stars and Standards: An American Songbook Celebration

Step into an evening of timeless tunes as Opera Naples brings iconic melodies to life, featuring beloved classics from composers such as Berlin, Bernstein, Gershwin and Porter. It's a night of nostalgia, charm and pure American musical magic.

***Turandot* by Giacomo Puccini**

Puccini's *Turandot* is a grand and emotionally charged opera set in ancient China, where a cold-hearted princess challenges suitors with deadly riddles. Featuring the iconic aria "Nessun dorma," this visually stunning production delivers a powerful blend of passion, mystery and unforgettable music. Sung in Italian with English supertitles.

***The Elixir of Love* by Gaetano Donizetti**

Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* is a charming romantic comedy filled with playful twists, heartfelt melodies and irresistible humor. When a lovestruck young man tries to win the heart of his beloved with the help of a "magic" potion, chaos and laughter ensue. This delightful opera sparkles with warmth, wit and timeless appeal. Sung in Italian with English supertitles.

Semifinal Round (at FGCU) and Final Round (at Baker Park) of the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition

The second Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition, presented by Opera Naples in partnership with the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation and The Bower School of Music & the Arts at Florida Gulf Coast University, continues to take the opera world by storm bringing together talented up-and-coming singers from around the world to compete for coveted contracts with top opera houses. Get ready to be awestruck by astonishingly virtuosic voices from across the globe.

FREE Family & Community Day!

This event features activities and special performances for the whole family. A children's-themed opera performance presented by the Opera Naples Resident Artists, plus fun activities and games, bounce house, face painting and balloon artistry. Admission is free; no tickets required.

Additional Performance

An Evening of Opera's Greatest Hits

Wang Opera Center, January 24, 7pm

Experience the rising stars of opera as the Opera Naples Resident Artists take the stage for an evening of beloved arias and scenes from the operatic canon. Showcasing exceptional talent and passion, this performance offers a fresh take on timeless classics. Don't miss this captivating night of vocal artistry and dramatic flair.

Other Engagement Events

EuroFest 2025

Del Mar, August 26, 2025, 6pm

Join us for an unforgettable evening of fine dining and opera at EuroFest, a sumptuous culinary experience paired with live opera performances, all while supporting Opera Naples' vital Education and Community Outreach programs.

Imperial Enchantment: A Night in the Mystical Palace

Royal Poinciana Golf Club, December 11, 2025, 6pm

Join chairs Elizabeth Harrington and Nicky Pepe, Opera Naples Board members and fellow opera enthusiasts as we celebrate and support Opera Naples' impact in the community, with an evening of classic operatic performances curated by Artistic and Music Director Ramón Tebar, plus cocktails, dinner, live auction and dancing.

Friends of Opera Naples TOASTS TO OPERA

Wang Opera Center, January 22, February 5, February 19 & March 5 at 4pm

Learn about the composer, historical context, story, characters and musical themes of upcoming productions including *Turandot*, *The Elixir of Love*, and *Scalia/Ginsburg* (with special guest appearance by composer Derrick Wang) as well as historic background of voice competitions which inspired the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples International Voice Competition. Dr. Tom Cimarusti, Florida Gulf Coast University Professor of Musicology in the Department of Bower School of Music & the Arts, will present an entertaining, informative and educational lecture with Q&A. Afterwards, wine and light bites will be served as together we TOAST the upcoming Opera Naples production.

Ticket availability varies by event. For tickets, please visit OperaNaples.org. **Millennium Club and members may purchase tickets with Concierge Ticketing by calling Rita Albaugh at 239-844-SING or emailing ralbaugh@operanaples.org.**

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Opera Naples is an artistic powerhouse, dedicated to presenting high-quality opera productions and concerts featuring prominent international, national and regional performers and directors. Opera Naples has presented well-known grand operas such as *La bohème*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *La Traviata*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Tosca* and more. An advocate of community service and education outreach, Opera Naples introduces opera to thousands of children each year through various programs, including in-school programs and performances in Collier and Lee counties, the Resident Artists Program and Summer Youth Program. The company is also committed to nurturing promising young talent through the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation Opera Naples Academy led by a faculty of prominent opera luminaries who offer an immersive program of vocal instruction, lectures and masterclasses. In collaboration with the Luciano Pavarotti Foundation, Opera Naples also hosts an International Voice Competition, in partnership with Florida Gulf Coast University. The company has earned local, regional and state government support. For more information, visit OperaNaples.org.