

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

SARASOTA GETS CULTURED IN THE 2009-10 SEASON

SARASOTA, Fla. – The 2009-10 seasons of Sarasota's cultural groups have been announced. A full calendar of music, theatre, dance and visual art awaits patrons this year.

The **Asolo Repertory Theatre's** season begins **October 23, 2009** with *Contact*, a Tony award-winning dance musical. The Asolo collaborated with the Sarasota Ballet to bring the production to the local stage. The romantic musical tells the tale of love through dance.

Contact runs from **October 23-November 22, 2009** in the Mertz Theatre.

Other plays to hit the stage this season include *The Perfume Shop*, a romantic comedy that inspired feature films (running **December 4, 2009-April 1, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre), *Life of Galileo*, a scientific drama (running **December 11, 2009-February 17, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre), *Searching for Eden: The Diaries of Adam and Eve*, a modern twist on age-old romance (running **December 18, 2009-February 25, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre), *The Last Five Years*, an emotional musical (running **January 21-February 28, 2010** in the Historic Asolo Theater), *Hearts*, a drama about friendship and forgiveness (running **January 22-April 11, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre), *Managing Maxine*, a funny love story (running **March 12-April 18, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre), *Backwards in High Heels: the Ginger Musical*, a musical about Ginger Rogers (running **May 7-30, 2010** in the Mertz Theatre) and *Menopause the Musical*, an off-Broadway musical for women (running **June 2-27, 10** in the Mertz Theatre).

The Asolo will also bring *Unplugged! Theatre in the Raw*, a festival celebrating American theatre, to Sarasota for the first time. The Asolo's own acting company will work with playwrights to develop plays; patrons will have the opportunity to attend read-throughs and interact in the theatrical process leading up to the performances.

Unplugged! begins **March 13, 2010**. Table readings will take place on **March 14, 16, and 17**. Staged readings will take place **March 26-27** and **April 2-3** in the Cook Theatre.

The Asolo also welcomes a groundbreaking new project, *Life in the Middle*, created with the help of middle school students in Sarasota and Manatee Counties. The intent of the project, which gives adolescents and teens a voice, is to help students grow, lean and incorporate theatre into their daily lives.

Life in the Middle runs **October 16-30, 2009** in the Historic Asolo Theater.

Subscriptions to the Asolo Rep are available now. Play passes are available for \$99; student passes are available for \$35. Call (941) 351-9010 ext. 4812 for more information.

Single tickets are also available. Contact the box office at (941) 351-8000 or 1-800-361-8388 or visit www.asolo.org.

The **Sarasota Ballet** has a jam-packed calendar this season, as well. In addition to collaborating with the Asolo on *Contact*, the Ballet presents *Giselle*, a famous romantic ballet (running **November 27-29, 2009** at the Sarasota Opera House), *The Nutcracker*, a holiday classic (running **December 4-5, 2009** at the Sarasota Opera House), “Triple Bill with Ashton, Darrell and Bourne”, which includes *Les Rendezvous*, *Othello*, and *Boutique* (running **January 29-31, 2010** at the FSU Center), “Triple Bill with Prokofsky, Divertissements and Walsh”, which includes *Vespri*, *The Dragonfly*, and *I Napoletani* (running **February 19-21, 2010** at the FSU Center), “Triple Bill with *There Where She Loved*”, including *Rococo Variations*, *There Where She Loved*, and *Pineapple Poll* (running **April 2-3, 2010** at the Sarasota Opera House) and “Triple Bill with Balanchine’s *Donizetti Variations*”, which also includes *The Infernal Galop* and new work by the Sarasota Ballet dancers (running **April 23-25** at the FSU Center).

Both subscription tickets and single tickets to the Sarasota Ballet are available. Call (941) 359-0099 ext. 102 or visit www.sarasotaballet.org for more information.

The 2009-10 line-up at **Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall** will have patrons singing and dancing in the aisles. Boyz II Men take the stage on **October 30, 2009** and Jewel performs on **November 4, 2009**, followed by the Ten Tenors on **November 6, 2009** and The Bacon Brothers on **November 20, 2009**.

Van Wezel’s Broadway line-up includes *Camelot* on **November 29, 2009**, *Avenue Q* from **December 10-11, 2009**, *Hairspray* on **February 9, 2010**, *Mamma Mia!* from **February 23-28, 2010** and *Xanadu* from **April 20-21, 2010**.

To purchase tickets and view the full event calendar, visit www.vanwezel.org. Contact the Box Office at (941) 953-3368 or 1-800-826-9303.

Spend a night at the opera with Italian tradedy *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci* (running **February 6-March 21, 2010**), *Hansel and Gretel* (running **February 27-March 13, 2010**), Mozart’s *The Magic Flute* (running **February 13-March 21, 2010**), and Verdi’s *Giovanna d’Arco* (running **March 6-20, 2010**).

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.sarasotaopera.org or call (941) 366-8450 or 1-888-OPERA-12.

Experience *Venice in the Age of Canaletto* from **October 8, 2009-January 10, 2010** and *Gothic Art in Gilded Age* from **December 9, 2009-April 10, 2010** at the **John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art**. *Venice in the Age of Canaletto* focuses on Canaletto’s paintings, as well as work by other artists in Venice. *Gothic Art in Gilded Age* showcases the items from the Gothic Room in the old home of Alva and William Vanderbilt.

Visit www.ringling.org or call (941) 359-5700 for more information.

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