



Media contact:

Melanie Kalnins, mkalnins@operanaples.org, (239) 359-4956

Website: operanaples.org

Facebook: facebook.com/operanaples

Instagram: @opera_naples

Images can be found [here](#)

OPERA NAPLES ANNOUNCES ADDITION OF SAMANTHA HANKEY CONCERT TO 2025/26 SEASON

**As an extension of the 2026 Festival Under the Stars (February 13 to March 15),
Opera Naples plans to conclude performance season with intimate concert
featuring renowned mezzo-soprano on April 7**

NAPLES, FL (January 20, 2026) – Opera Naples is pleased to announce the addition of a special concert to its 2025/26 season: an intimate recital featuring acclaimed mezzo-soprano Samantha Hankey on April 7, 2026, at Moorings Presbyterian Church. A much sought after recitalist who has been praised by the *Financial Times* for her “much elegance and youthful tone,” Hankey has enjoyed a rapidly rising career with appearances at The Metropolitan Opera, Vienna State Opera, Royal Opera House, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center, among other premier performance halls around the world. Hankey will be joined for this performance by Opera Naples Artistic and Music Director Ramón Tebar at the piano. Maestro Tebar commented, “I have been following Samantha’s career for some years now, and she is an artist I wanted very much to perform with. When I found out that she spent many summers in Naples during childhood, I couldn’t resist adding a performance with her as soon as possible. I am very happy that she made herself available between her international engagements to perform in this recital.” Details:

An Evening with Opera Star Samantha Hankey

Moorings Presbyterian Church, April 7, 7pm

Samantha Hankey *mezzo-soprano*

Ramón Tebar *piano*

VIP tickets: \$250 (includes premium seating plus pre-concert and post-concert receptions)

GA tickets: \$50

Previously announced 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, which includes several musicians from The Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera, including the San Francisco Opera's concertmaster. 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	Family & Community Day, 10am, Baker Park
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

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!

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.

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.

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

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.**

Opera Naples is grateful for sponsorship support from Larry and Louise Ost, Sally Gleason, John and Nicoletta Pepe, Melody Sawyer Richardson, Cindy Stegemann, Susan Gibbons, Kathleen Field Orr and Roy Beck, Steve and Kathy Nichols, Bruce and Lois Selfon, Ronald C. Smith, Ice Miller, PNC Private Bank, Starkweather & Shepley Insurance, Freeman's, Bentley Naples, Ciccarella Advisory Services, FineMark National Bank & Trust, Florida Trust Wealth Management, Peacock + Lewis Architects and Planners, Stock Development, Luciano Pavarotti Foundation, Gulfshore Life, The Naples Press, Naples Daily News, Gulfshore Ballet, Winfield Coffee, City of Naples, National Endowment for the Arts, Florida Theatrical Association and the Naples, Marco Island, Everglades Convention and Visitors Bureau, Florida's Paradise Coast.

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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.