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## ARTS

# Top 10 arts events this week in the Sarasota area, Dec. 14-20

*A one-man stage show celebrating Mark Twain, plus holiday musicals, concerts and more in this week's top arts events in the Sarasota area.*



**Jimmy Geurts**

Sarasota Herald-Tribune

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### Englewood tops list of affordable snowbird destinations

Discover the most affordable beach town for snowbirds in Englewood, Florida with nightly rates as low as \$64 per person. Enjoy mild winter temps, soft beaches, and outdoor activities.

The [winter holiday season](#) continues to dominate [December's local events calendar](#), including at Sarasota area performing arts venues. "All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914" concludes its run at Historic Asolo Theater, followed by a free "All is Calm: In Concert" event at Sarasota National Cemetery's Patriot Plaza. Selby Gardens' [Lights in Bloom holiday light show](#) continues this week, as will local productions of holiday classics such as "A Christmas Carol" and "Black Nativity."

Outside of the holidays, there's a revival of the late Hal Holbrook's one-man show "Mark Twain Tonight!" with Emmy-winning "The Waltons" actor Richard Thomas at Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall; Sarasota

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*you think.*

Ballet's latest program, with live music by Sarasota Orchestra, at Sarasota Opera House (where artistic director Victor DeRenzi recently announced his impending departure after 44 years); and Asolo Rep's continuing production of the hit musical "Come from Away." Here are this week's highlights. Event details are subject to change.

**100-plus things to do in December** in Sarasota, Bradenton, Venice, Punta Gorda



29 Photos

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**See photos of Selby Gardens' spectacular holiday lights in Sarasota**

Take a tour of Lights in Bloom, which features more than two million lights illuminating the gardens and walkways of Selby's downtown Sarasota campus.

## 1. 'Mark Twain Tonight!' at Van Wezel



"Mark Twain Tonight!," starring Emmy-winning actor Richard Thomas, visits Sarasota's Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall on Dec. 19-20. *PROVIDED BY VAN WEZEL*

While the late Hal Holbrook, known for his onscreen roles including Deep Throat in "All the President's Men" and his Oscar-nominated turn as Ron Franz in "Into the Wild," is sadly no longer with us, his Tony-winning one-man stage show "Mark Twain Tonight!" lives on. Richard Thomas, best known for his Emmy-winning role as John-Boy Walton in "The Waltons," assumes the role of the iconic humorist Twain. 7 p.m. Dec. 19-20; Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, 777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota; \$56-\$116; 941-263-6799; [vanwezel.org](http://vanwezel.org)

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## 2. 'All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914' at Historic Asolo Theater, Patriot Plaza



"All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914" runs through Friday at the Historic Asolo Theater, followed by a free "All is Calm: In Concert" event Saturday at Sarasota National Cemetery's Patriot Plaza. *Photography By Kayla Erny/Provided By The Ringling & Asolo Rep*

"All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914" concludes its run at Historic Asolo Theater, followed by a free "All is Calm: In Concert" event at Patriot Plaza. Written and directed by Asolo Repertory Theatre's producing artistic director Peter Rothstein, "All is Calm" tells the true tale of a Christmas truce during World War I, through the words and songs of the men who lived it. Through Dec. 19; Historic Asolo Theater at The Ringling, 5401 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota; ticket prices vary; 3 p.m. Dec. 20; Patriot Plaza, 9810 State Road 72, Sarasota; free with registration; 941-351-8000; [asolorep.org](http://asolorep.org)

## 3. Lights in Bloom at Selby Gardens



Lights in Bloom, pictured here, continues through Jan. 3 at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens' downtown Sarasota campus. *Mike Lang, Mike Lang / Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens' annual holiday light show continues, featuring more than two million lights illuminating the gardens and walkways of its downtown Sarasota campus. There'll also be festive photo opportunities and family-friendly activities and entertainment, as well as food and beverage available for purchase, including at [The Green Orchid by Michael's on East](#). 5:30 p.m. early entry, 6:30 p.m. general entry (no entry after 8 p.m., event closes at 9 p.m.) through Jan. 3 (excluding Christmas Eve, Christmas and New Year's Eve); Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 1534 Mound St., Sarasota; \$34-\$44, \$29-\$39 members, \$19-\$24 ages 5-17, free ages 4 and under; 941-366-5731; [selby.org](http://selby.org)

#### **4. Sarasota Ballet 'P3 — Masters of Movement' at Sarasota Opera House**



The Sarasota Ballet performing George Balanchine's "Divertimento No. 15." *Photo By Frank Atura*

Sarasota Ballet's Program Three features George Balanchine's "Divertimento No. 15" and "Mozartiana" (the latter a company premiere), each inspired by Mozart's music, though "Mozartiana" is set to a score by Tchaikovsky. Sir Frederick Ashton's "Jazz Calendar" brings the program to a light-hearted close with a performance inspired by the nursery rhyme "Monday's Child" and set to Richard Rodney Bennett's jazz score. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 20; Sarasota Opera House, 61 N. Pineapple Ave, Sarasota; \$35-\$125; 941-359-0099; [sarasotaballet.org](http://sarasotaballet.org)

## 5. 'Come from Away' at Asolo Rep



Asolo Repertory Theatre's production of "Come from Away" continues through Dec. 28. *Photo Provided By Asolo Rep*

Along with "All is Calm," Asolo Rep continues its production of the musical about 7,000 airline passengers who were stranded in the town of Gander, Newfoundland, in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, and the residents who cared for them. "Come from Away" earned seven Tony Award nominations including Best Musical following its 2017 Broadway debut, released a filmed performance on Apple TV+ in 2021, and has visited Van Wezel on its national tour. Through Dec. 28; Asolo Repertory Theatre, 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota; ticket prices vary; 941-351-8000; [asolorep.org](http://asolorep.org)

## 6. 'A Christmas Carol' at Venice Theatre



"A Christmas Carol" runs through Dec. 21 at Venice Theatre. (Last year's cast is pictured here dancing at Fezziwig's Christmas ball.) *Photo Provided By Venice Theatre*

Venice Theatre's musical version of Charles Dickens' holiday classic returns for its 25th year, with Brad Wages starring as Ebenezer Scrooge for his seventh year. The story follows the miserly Scrooge as he is visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. Through Dec. 21; Raymond Center at Venice Theatre, 140 Tampa Ave. W., Venice; \$30, \$25 college/educators, \$18 youth; 941-488-1115; [venicetheatre.org](http://venicetheatre.org)

## 7. 'Black Nativity — Reimagined' at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe



"Black Nativity — Reimagined" runs through Dec. 21 at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe. *Photography By Sorcha Augustine/Provided By Worldslinger Marketing/WBTT*

Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe once again stages their own version of Langston Hughes' 1961 show "Black Nativity," celebrating the nativity story with gospel/spiritual, blues and Christmas music, Hughes' poetry and "the creativity of WBTT." WBTT founding artistic director Nate Jacobs adapts and directs, with Matthew McKinnon serving as music director and Donald Frison as choreographer. Through Dec. 21; The Donnelly Theatre at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, 1012 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota; ticket prices vary; 941-366-1505; [westcoastblacktheatre.org](http://westcoastblacktheatre.org)

## 8. 'Sounds of the Season' at Venice Performing Arts Center



"Sounds of the Season" will take place Dec. 19-21 at Venice Performing Arts Center. *Photo Courtesy Of The Venice Symphony*

Venice Symphony's annual holiday concert features songs such as "Good King Wenceslas," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "Sleigh Ride" and "Mary, Did You Know?" They're joined by Key Chorale, guest vocalist Christal Rheams of the United States Army Band and Voices of Service (the latter appearing on "America's Got Talent") and guest conductors including Venice mayor Nick Pachota for "Sleigh Ride." 7:30 p.m. Dec. 19, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. Dec. 20, 3:30 p.m. Dec. 21; Venice Performing Arts Center, 1 Indian Ave., Venice; \$45-\$85; 941-207-8822; [thevenicesymphony.org](http://thevenicesymphony.org)

## 9. 'Nutcracker Breakfast with Santa' at Sarasota Cuban Ballet



Dancers from the Sarasota Cuban Ballet School perform an excerpt from its production of "The Nutcracker" at the Sarasota Rising Living Arts Festival Celebration of Youth at the Circus Arts Conservatory. JAY HANDELMAN/HERALD-TRIBUNE PHOTO

Here's a fun winter holiday arts event for those with kids, featuring two staples of the season in "The Nutcracker" and Santa. The event starts with breakfast, cookie decorating and fun from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. then, from noon to 1 p.m., "The Nutcracker Suite" performed by the Sarasota Cuban Ballet. 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Dec. 20-21; Sarasota Cuban Ballet Auditorium, 4740 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota; \$45, \$35 children ages 6 and under; 941-365-8400; [srqcubanballet.org](http://srqcubanballet.org)

## 10. 'Yule Love the Marimba 2: The Untold Story of Krampus' at Fogartyville



Modern Marimba's "Yule Love the Marimba 2: The Untold Story of Krampus" takes place Dec. 14 at Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center in Sarasota. Photo Provided By Fogartyville

Sarasota's Modern Marimba presents this second annual holiday concert blending live music, spoken word and theatrical storytelling. Starting in the snowy Alps and resurfacing on Florida's Gulf Coast, the production follows the horned holiday folklore figure Krampus as he "rides a bone-and-driftwood jet ski in search of justice," with a score that includes "Carol of the Bells," "Feliz Navidad," Kwanzaa celebrations, Hanukkah melodies and, of course, marimba. 5 p.m. doors, 6 p.m. show Dec. 14; Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center, 525 Kumquat Court, Sarasota; free, indoor reserved seating fully booked, but patio general admission seating open; [modernmarimba.org](http://modernmarimba.org)

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