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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

sARTeé Wraps Ringling International Arts Festival in Regional Flare

Events, Grant, Magazine Sponsor Creating Major Collaborative Effort

BRADENTON/SARASOTA, Fla. (August 19, 2010) – As the inaugural **Festival sARTeé** (sar-tay) approaches, both Manatee and Sarasota Counties on Florida's southwest Gulf coast are pleased with growing participation in the collaborative, two-county showcase of the region's arts and cultural assets. Scheduled for October 8-24, Festival sARTeé runs before, during and after the **2nd Annual Ringling International Arts Festival** (Oct. 13-17). To date, a total of 63 theater, music, dance and art events have been scheduled in venues throughout both counties – 45 events in Sarasota County and 18 in Manatee County.

In Manatee County, some of the major events include the International Film Series at the South Florida Museum on Oct. 14; a "World Party" Cultural Celebration, featuring music, performances, activities and delicacies from around the globe, on Oct. 15; and a Village of the Arts ArtWalk, with more than 35 shops participating, on Oct. 15.

Sarasota County will feature events such as the SRQ Hot List event on Oct. 9, highlighting fashion, food and people that make the area unique; Art & Backstage Tour of the Van Wezel on October 14; and Afterglow: Where Art Meets Food, offering a unique evening of artistic and culinary delights in downtown Sarasota, on October 15. For a full list of sARTeé events, visit www.sartee.com. The event calendar is being continually updated, as arts organizations enter new events through October 1.

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"Our arts and cultural treasures are vital to our local economy, bringing in nearly $160 million in Manatee and Sarasota counties combined," said Elliott Falcione, Executive Director of the Bradenton Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. "Festival sARTeé is truly a showcase of the best artistic and cultural highlights Manatee and Sarasota Counties have to offer."

Festival sARTeé recently received a $5,000 matching grant from VISIT FLORIDA, as part of the Cultural Heritage and Nature Tourism Grant Program. The grant will be used to produce a bi-county arts and culture map featuring Festival sARTeé. SRQ Media Group has also recently come on board as the official Magazine Sponsor of the Festival.

Additionally, the Festival has finalized details on a major event. The Sunday Soiree will take place on October 17 from noon to 4 p.m. at the Ringling Museum of Art Courtyard.

For additional information about sARTeé, the schedule of events, and more, visit www.sartee.org.

About Festival sARTeé

The Festival sARTeé expands the energy and excitement of the Ringling International Arts Festival (RIAF), in Sarasota-Manatee Counties, October 13-17, 2010. For two weeks surrounding the RIAF, Festival sARTeé, being held October 8-24, showcases the region's world-class arts and culture ranging from theatre, dance, music, visual art, live music, circus arts and more in a variety of venues throughout Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Festival sARTeé derives its name from both Sarasota and Manatee Counties, joined by the common element of art. The counties are situated along Florida's west coast. The first Festival sARTeé is organized through a partnership between the Arts Council of Manatee County, Bradenton Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, Realize Bradenton, Inc., Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Sarasota County Arts Council.

- Festival sARTeé -