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# A Worldly Experience

*Annual arts festival adds cultural enrichment to Florida's Gulf Coast*

BY LAUREL MENY

**T** rue to its tagline, "Stay in May, we'll bring the world to you!" ArtsNaples World Festival provided ten days of chamber music, opera, cuisine, fashion and all things creative to over 10,000 Southwest Florida-based art enthusiasts at a variety of venues in Naples, from May 1-10.





For its third season, ArtsNaples centered on the arts culture in Italy. The festival's artistic director, Maestro William Noll, mixed classical concerts with a dash of fresh performances for events area residents could fully appreciate.

For one of the days, he commissioned guest violinist Nadir Khashimov, who played the 24 Caprices for Violin by Italian composer Niccolò Paganini. Large-scale performances like Opera Naples' production of *Nabucco* and Naples Philharmonic's *Mendelssohn – The Italian Symphony* celebrated local endeavors, while more intimate events, like Italian cooking demonstrations and the festival's opening Two O'clock Concert series sold out weeks in advance.

"By mixing up the festival's offerings this year, we truly created an immersion into the life and culture of Italy today, and hundreds of years ago," says Trey Farmer, president and chairman of ArtsNaples World Festival, Inc.

ArtsNaples began in 2010 with the mission to not only heighten the community's exposure and interest in culture abroad, but to teach youth about artistic expression through educational outreach programs. "We feel that by bringing students and teachers together with visionary and passionate individuals and organizations in the arts, we have an opportunity to inspire and impact the lives of young people," says Judy Evans, director of education for ArtsNaples.

In the last few years, ArtsNaples has produced two other full world-class festivals. In that time, the organization has managed to secure deep roots within the community, and create worldwide partnerships that enhance Southwest Florida's reputation for the arts. For tickets and information on next year's France-themed festival, call 239-390-2788 or visit [artsnaplesworldfestival.org](http://artsnaplesworldfestival.org).

*Laurel Meny is the public relations director for IMA Creative, Inc., and a frequent contributor to the publications of TOTI Media.*

