



A Literary Journal and Resource for the Fine and Performing Arts

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Travel and Culture:

The Ringling International Arts Festival

By Cornelia Seckel

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Several months ago I had an email inviting me to be the guest of the **Sarasota Convention and Visitor's Bureau**

www.sarasotafl.org to attend the **Ringling International Arts Festival**

(www.ringlingartsfestival.org) in **Sarasota, Florida**. It was to be

5 days of over 100 artists

presenting 45 mainstage productions in 4 venues on the **Ringling Campus** —a total of

60 events. Artists came from the

Czech Republic, Slovakia, Britain, Russia, Romania, Canada and the

US. The Festival is a collaboration between The John and Mable Ringling Museum

of Art www.ringling.org and the **Baryshnikov Arts Center, NYC**

www.bacnyc.org, established in 2005 to house the core activities of the

Baryshnikov Dance Foundation, incorporated in 1979 by **Mikhail**

Baryshniko. BAC serves as a creative laboratory, meeting place, and

performance space for a vibrant community of artists from around the world. BAC

is also dedicated to building audiences for the arts by presenting contemporary,

innovative work at low or no cost to the public. Accepting this invitation was an

opportunity to see the Art Museum, hear music, see plays and dance

performances, talk to new people and explore new places. Mikhail Baryshnikov

would be dancing. How could I refuse?



*John and Mable Ringling Art Museum inner courtyard,
Sarasota, Florida*

I flew into Tampa from Newburgh, NY (such a convenient airport), got a car and headed down to Sarasota. My hotel was the brand new **Hampton Inn** right next to the **Sarasota Bradenton Airport** (this would have been my first choice to fly into but the schedules just didn't work for me). This is the newest of the Hampton Inn & Suites (you see them across America at most every exit off major highways) and became the first Hampton Inn and Suites in the country to earn the

prestigious certification awarded by the **US Green Building Council** for energy efficient and sustainable buildings. The hotel developers, **Finergy Development LLC**, strove to reduce the environmental impact of the project from the point of site selection, throughout the construction process, up to the day-to-day operations of the hotel. (www.hamptoninnsrq.com). **Michelle Siese**, General Manager, was welcoming and gracious. I was concerned about the noise level next to this International airport with major daily scheduled service from domestic and commuter airlines. Michelle had assured me that the airplanes were not heard inside the Inn and I never heard one. The location was perfect as I could walk the 1/2 mile to the Ringling Campus —I say campus because in July 2000 **The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art** comprising 66 acres and buildings were turned over to **Florida State University**, a decision that worked well for the Museum's fiscal health. One can fly to Sarasota, visit the museum, get public transportation to the beach or any of the many attractions (or transportation from any of the 1/2 dozen hotels within walking distance of the airport) and never need to rent a vehicle.

Read the rest of the article on the Art Times website:

<http://snipurl.com/1ftcfi>