



Ringling: The Florida Years, 1911-1936

David C. Weeks

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John Nicholas Ringling's years in Sarasota spanned the final quarter-century of his life. On Florida's west coast, as the Ringling's Circus became "the greatest show on earth," he collected Baroque paintings, European decorative art, and Italian statuary, built the ostentatious mansion Ca'd'Zan, developed and marketed most of the barrier islands around Sarasota Bay, and became the focus of a confusing pastiche of acclaim, misconception, and suspicion. Sarasota's Ringling Museum is his priceless cultural legacy to the people of Florida and the world of art--an inheritance at risk for the ten years that Ringling's estate was in probate.

The author of this first intensive look at Ringling's presence in Sarasota sets the man against the backdrop of Florida from World War I through the land boom and the turbulent twenties into the depression years and Ringling's lapse into obscurity.

Illustrated with nearly fifty black-and-white photographs, many never before published, this is the chronicle of a man, as the foreword claims, "who was not afraid to think or live on a grand scale, who knew what he wanted from life, and from art."

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