



MARTINEZ OPERA CONTRA COSTA 2007 ANNUAL REPORT NEWSLETTER

Martinez Opera Contra Costa is alive with excitement as we look forward to our 6th season in the City of Martinez! Our accomplishments have been extraordinary in all divisions of the opera company. Our productions and community outreach programs are in the process of cultivating a diverse and



2005 The Lovely Galatea , Roberto Gomez, Ben Bongers, Rebecca Garcia and Brian Frutiger.

appreciative opera audience for the next generation. This year alone we have exposed thousands of newcomers to opera. In addition to our yearly productions and free outreach programs for the community, we have shared the beauty of opera through our “Sing Me a

Story”, “Culture for Kids”, “Production” and “Singers for Seniors”.

Through these exciting opportunities we have engendered more support from our community and our community partnerships which include the City of Martinez, Martinez Unified School District, Martinez Arts Association, First Night Martinez, LITA of Contra Costa, First Five of Contra Costa, Main Street Martinez and the Martinez Historical Society. 2007 generated tremendous results with great interest from a variety of foundations and corporate sponsors. MTZO and all whose lives have been touched by our programs are so grateful. Our vision for the community is becoming a reality!

When we resurrected the Martinez Opera in 2002, our mission was not only to entertain, but also to engage the community. We are happy to say that this year we created opportunities for volunteers to actively participate in the production and performance in opera, sponsored free programs for local residents and their children, but most importantly, we made opera readily

accessible to people who may have never attended simply by exposing them through non-traditional venues.

A Glance at the 2007 MTZO PROGRAMS AND PERFORMANCES

During the 2007 year, MTZO performed several free concerts: “Art in the Park”, in partnership with the Martinez Arts Association, Festa Italia featuring “The Three Sopranos” for First Night, and a delightful duo for the Kiwanis Club. We also launched our first annual “Opera Rhapsody” performed in September in honor of the late Luciano Pavarotti featuring fine artists from all across the country.



2007 “A Picnic with Mozart”. Susana Park Martinez

In September, MTZO performed the annual “A Picnic with Mozart” at the Susana Park. This outreach served over 400 children under the age of five years from local low-income and head-start day care centers in Contra Costa County. Then in December we partnered with LITA, “Love Is The Answer”, a non-profit senior entertainment organization. MTZO entertained over 200 elderly in their respective facilities.



Artistic Director Cesare Curzi with Executive Director Maria Billingsley

MTZO’S FUTURE : Our Next Step In Realizing our Vision

Having a center where children, teens and adults can experience and be part of a classical arts organization dedicated to education and appreciation of the fine art of opera has been a goal since our inception. Thanks to the Generous support of Nader Chrysler, MTZO is pleased to announce our new **“Pro-Production”** facility located in the heart of downtown Martinez! Our facility will be for building sets, storing costumes and props holding rehearsals and auditions but most importantly, the facility will house the mock-stage of Alhambra Performing Arts Theatre to teach youth the behind the scenes activities of theatre production. This is a huge boon in our efforts to reinforce arts in education.



2007 “Singers for Seniors”

“Pro-Production” is a California State pilot program in partnership with the Vicente-Briones Alternative School located in the City of Martinez. This program is designed to bring “at risk” youth into a workshop environment with professional set, stage, costume and technical staff.



”Pro-Production” 908 Ferry Street Martinez

We would like to acknowledge our important partners who donated their time and resources to our new facility.

Nader Chrysler for their contribution of 908 Ferry Street as our facility, **Contra Costa Electric** for the electrical work that was in dire need of upgrading, **America’s Glass Center** for new windows, **Sign Solutions** for our beautiful signage, **New Look Painting and Decorating** for supplying us with paint, **Absolute Air** for heater repairs, **Home Depot** and **Industrial Lumber** for donating building materials, **Roy Jeans Painting** for painting the facility and **Christ Lutheran Church** for connecting homeless individuals to work in our facility and all the special people who have given their donations, time and energy to make this facility our home.

Through our **Arts in Education** division MTZO will perform “Opera Night Madama Butterfly” to over 350 high school youth. We will deepen our commitment to the Music!Words!Opera! program in the Martinez schools and add another performance of “A Picnic with Mozart” for East County Children.



2006 Main stage opera “La Traviata” Arthur Shen and Joohee Choi.

Up-Coming Production May 2008

In May 2008 MTZO will be performing **“Madama Butterfly”** at the Alhambra Performing Arts Center. Tickets are now on sale at www.mtzo.com.

We are proud to introduce Olga Chernisheva as Cio-Cio-San. Described by critics as possessing “a pure, strong soprano with phrasing of sumptuous elegance” (San Francisco Chronicle) and “a lyric voice focused and alluring... subtly expressive” (Opera News), Olga Chernisheva is one of most interesting and distinctive young singing actresses to emerge on the American scene during the past few years.



Soprano Olga Chernisheva as Cio-Cio San in May 2008 “Madama Butterfly”

“Madama Butterfly” is sure to bring the house down with this soprano as the clash of cultures take the Japanese geisha from a blissful happiness to the point of suicide. “Madama Butterfly” demonstrates what can happen when two people truly do not understand each other’s backgrounds, philosophies and cultures. To purchase tickets please visit our web site at www.mtzo.com.



We offer our sincere thanks to our generous patrons and donors who give so much. From the many volunteers who help through our guild, to our board of diectors and our audiences who give of their time and financial resoures, we at Martinez Opera Contra Costa are grateful for your attention and thankful for your generosity.



Artistic Director Cesare Curzi



La Traviata 2006

We especially want to thank the **Ciy of Martinez, Shell Oil Products, The Lesher Foundation, The May and Stanely Smith Charitable Trust, The East Bay Community Foundation, J Hettinger Interiors, Potrero Nuevo Foundation, The Martinez Community Foundation, Alba Witkin Foundation, Target Foundation, Union Pacific, Lowell Berry Foundation, RSF Innovations in Social Finance , Kiwanis Club of Martinez, US Bank, The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation** and the **California Arts Council** for their continued leadership as our company sponsors. On behalf of Martinez Opera Contra Costa , thank you all for being part of another magnificent season.



MTZO artists

Thank you all for participating in another magnificent season of the Martinez Opera!